George Toma, one of the founders of STMA, was honored at the Pro Football Hall of Fame Celebration in Canton, OH. He won an award that's only been given four times in nearly 30 years.

The Hall of Fame's announcement notes, "Toma, considered a master at his trade, is sport's preeminent groundskeeper. His innovations, expert care, and preservation of pro football's championship fields, including all 35 Super Bowls, has earned him widespread recognition and acclaim. It is a reputation he has earned over a career that spans nearly 60 years."

Emil Bossard was mentor

Toma landed his first groundskeeping job at the Class A Eastern League home of the Wilkes-Barre (PA) Barons. Legendary Cleveland Indians groundskeeper Emil Bossard was his first mentor. After serving in the Army during the Korean War, Toma returned to sports turf management, moving through the ranks of several minor league teams. In 1963 he was hired to provide his expert services for the Kansas City Chiefs. His first direct connection with the NFL came with field preparation for the first Super Bowl. Toma has demonstrated his field expertise on baseball, football, and soccer venues around the world.

In 1981, he lent his expertise to the formation of STMA. He remains active and his name is seen regularly on the "referred by" line on STMA membership applications.

Congratulations, George, on a job well done "and then some!"