

president's message

Thank you for the honor

This is my first column as President of the Sports Turf Managers Association. I hope it finds everyone well and recovering from a great Conference in Vegas. If you were unable to attend never fear because we are heading to San Antonio next January and that is shaping up to be as good or better than Vegas.

I am truly excited and honored to have the privilege of being a part of this great industry. When I became a head groundskeeper for the Salem Pirates (Class A affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates) in 1975, I had no idea I would be maintaining athletic fields for the next 27 years. I loved it then and I love it now!

Obviously, I had some help along the way. About 4 years ago I tried to tally up the amount of games I had worked as a sports turf manager. I lost count after I left the Disney Sports Complex, but then it was around 8,000. A great wife, Donna, wonderful children, Kate, Cameron, and Scott, and a cool mother-in-law (Betty) have given me the balance in life one needs to succeed. In our industry that balance is difficult to maintain but we all need to realize our priorities: it's family!

The STMA has come so far in just a few years and that would not have been possible without the great leadership from our former presidents, board members, and the headquarters staff. But the main reason for our success is you! Each one of our members has a voice and a vote in the direction our industry will take us. You make it happen and we have only just begun.

I have a challenge for each of you to enlist one person as a member of the STMA this year. One person joining each member will cause a drastic change in our industry. There is a little salesman in all of us and I know it is not asking too much. If you do this, it will come back to you tenfold.

As our organization grows our superiors, owners, coaches, etc will look us upon in a different manner. From each other we will begin to develop the positive image we deserve as a professional in a growing industry. As our image of "professionalism" elevates so will the image of the "profession." This in turn will raise our salaries and pay scales as specialized technicians in a very dynamic market.

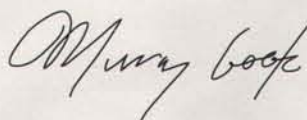
Your Board of Directors is your voice. They are great leaders and good people putting numerous hours

of personal time into this non-profit organization. The backbone in the growth of our industry is the commercial membership. Please take the time to talk with them and read their advertisements to learn what they have to offer. They are our backbone; but you are our heart and the STMA needs both to survive in this fast-paced business world.

GET INVOLVED!

We have some wonderful committees needing help at both the Chapter and National levels. Just send your name into headquarters so they can see where your skills and background could be fully used in moving our strategic plan and objectives forward. And consider working towards your Certification as a sports turf manager and raising your own professionalism.

Please feel free to contact headquarters or to email me at murrayc@brickmangroup.com.



Murray Cook,
STMA President

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