

president's message

A lot to celebrate

Over the past couple of years I have had the privilege of working with Cal Ripken and his staff on the development of the Ripken Stadium & Youth Baseball Complex. Since retirement he has approached the business world with the same simple principles he used during his baseball career, "Work hard, play hard and have fun!"

When you do something you really enjoy and apply those simple principles, similar successes are possible. One example is Kevin Vos, CSFM, of Muscatine, IA. Under his direction, the Muscatine Soccer Complex earned the 2001 STMA Soccer Field of the Year award in the Parks and Recreation Division (see story on p. 8). His complex represents what you can achieve with hard work and the determination to tackle the challenges whatever they might be.

Soccer is a fast-growing sport in the USA. As I write this, the 2002 soccer World Cup is taking the U.S. by storm. Fans are sacrificing sleep to watch the games in "real time" as TV screens transport them across the time zones. With a stunning performance against Portugal at the time of this writing, the USA team is in good shape to head into the next round.

When I managed the municipal field in Salem, VA, for the Pirates many (many) years ago, one of my daily tasks was to raise the flag in the morning and take it down after the game. I took great joy in this privilege to honor our flag. I am sure many of you had the honor of raising and lowering the Stars and Stripes at your facility this 4th of July. The long-standing U.S. tradition of taking in a game over the Independence Day holiday is growing even stronger. And there's an added attraction when ballparks around the country stage major fireworks displays while celebrating our country's independence.

The nation's birthday deserves a second look this year being it is the first after 9/11. Our country and world suffered from a very difficult occurrence that has changed our way of life forever. But it has not changed our hearts or our commitment to freedom and justice for all. Our prayers are with those families who have lost loved ones as well as with those who have family members serving in our armed forces and cannot be home for the holiday.

This issue includes several interesting articles that may assist you with your daily work responsibilities. Dr. Jeff Krans' provides information on turf green up as it relates to

a time schedule for peak performance. Also take a look at the maintenance and safety checklist forms that you may want to adapt for use at your facility. Safety is the top field maintenance priority in our industry. It's the primary focus in providing the best sports surfaces for all levels of play.

July marks the halfway point of our year and only 6 more months until the annual conference in San Antonio (January 15-19, 2003). Be sure to keep the STMA web site a favorite on your browser and watch for conference updates. I can assure you we will work hard, play hard and have a blast in San Antonio!



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Murray Cook

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