

president's message

Be thankful

Remember the Alamo. Or, even better, instead of just remembering it, you can see it in person right outside your hotel lobby. The STMA 14th Annual Conference and Exhibition to be held in San Antonio January 15-19 is going to be a real Texas treat. We have a slate of speakers that will provide you with so much great information that your boss will have to give you a raise! The trade show is reaching an STMA record for total booths sold to date. It's going to be fun (and educational) so take a look at all the information included in this issue. Once you read about the sessions and workshops, the facility tours, the baseball field seminar conducted by sports turf managers of Major League Baseball facilities, the Textron-sponsored SAFE Golf Tournament at the Quarry, you'll want to "ink" your calendar with the dates.

We all have a lot to be thankful for during this holiday month but a few are less fortunate. All of you have probably seen in the news lately the shocking saga about the sniper in the Maryland area. Our county borders Montgomery where the first six shootings took place. Athletic fields in the area have been in what is called "lock down," eliminating high school and recreation sports activities until the sniper is caught. We have a strong chapter in the Maryland area that still needs to get out and take care of their fields. If you keep a prayer list, I think it would be good to add the families of the victims and also add an extra prayer for the protection of others. While you're at it, I hope that you also keep all law enforcement officials in your prayers as they work to catch offenders that are trying to take away our freedoms.

Everyone has plans for developing their careers. As the year closes, it's a good time to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses. Our Association has grown despite a weak economy. Our conference is pretty much guaranteed to be a success based on current projections. I really need to thank the Board for a wonderful job in tracking their committees and categories in preparing for this event. In addition to the Board I have to thank our Headquarters management team for their commitment and devotion to the STMA. Of course the real thanks goes out to the members for sharing your knowledge with your peers (and attending the conference). I can only tell you everything that you put into this Association and your profession will come back around ten fold as your career in sports turf grows.

Internationally we have taken another step beyond our waters, this time to Paris, for the first baseball field maintenance and construction clinic. International baseball federation sports turf managers from the Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, and Great Britain will be in attendance. We will spend 3 days on the field and in the classroom reviewing field maintenance techniques and construction. Information has been translated into three languages. Soon we will need to have a bilingual brochure for our Association!

With that said, make a note to put boots and a cowboy hat on your Christmas list so you can get into the real Texas mode at the conference. See you soon, be safe and have a Happy Thanksgiving.



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