

president's message

September's a Great Month on God's Green Earth

Well it's budget crunch time for many of you this month. With last-minute requests from your superiors to take yet another look at your budget to determine if there is any way on "God's GREEN earth" you can save the company or facility some more funds. It's a request we all receive from our bosses and it is answered in a million different ways. The first question you ask yourself is, "How will I get my job done if I cut the budget any more?" Sometimes there isn't a clear answer, but there are a couple of thousand other sports turf managers in our organization that may have a suggestion or a thought on how you could do something with a little more efficiency. And to borrow a line from a phone company, "They're only a phone call away."

College and professional football take the snap and get the ball moving on their fields as many of you head back to school. The seasonal transformation from summer to fall for minor league baseball teams means a breather for about half of our professional team and facility members yet, on the other hand, our college and university members are cranking it up. Those with high school and middle school football programs also are in the thick of the season. Many of these fields may be the focus of the community, with onsite attendees and radio, newspaper and TV coverage as important to the local crowd as any of the university or professional team sports news.

Sports turf international took another step forward this month. From down under I was put to the test to illustrate a few "groundsman techniques of ball field maintenance" for the Australian Baseball Federation. There was a great turnout from staff, field managers, and owners. Though the terminology (and the language) may differ, the concepts and concerns about field condition, playability, and safety are the same worldwide. They were very keen on the concept of developing an Australian sports turf chapter. More to follow on this wonderful experience and the development of sports turf in other countries.

Your STMA Board met in Florida this past month. One of the main items of discussion was future sites for the annual conference. We determined that in 2005 we would return to Arizona at a location to be determined. Your Board took the time to evaluate the Florida hotels and convention centers that had submitted proposals for the conference that fit our date requirements and space needs, but felt the cost for the rooms and overall costs would be too great of a burden on many of our members. We are now looking at year 2006. We are growing so rapidly it is difficult to project how big we will become by 2006, so that's about as far as we can look ahead. Our hopes are to be in Florida in 2006 but that's down the road.

How about January 2003! Texas is getting ready for us in a BIG way! So while you are working on those budgets be sure to keep enough funds in there to bring yourself and one or more of your crew members to San Antonio for our National Conference, January 15-19, 2003. Check out the ad in this issue (page 19), the website www.sportsturfmanager.com or give Headquarters a call for more details.



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Murray Cook

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