

A Simple and Sincere 'Thank You'

It is with much appreciation that I write this column recognizing all the companies and organizations that support the STMA. With their support, our organization has been able to grow in size and importance in the world of sports and turf.

Many of these companies provide us with advertising revenue to offset the cost of producing this magazine. As you read through this issue of SPORTSTURF, you'll see more than 40 companies that provide our members with product information through their ads. Some companies help us to enhance our membership programs and services through sponsorship.

These sponsorships help to bring more visibility to the STMA. Most companies supplying this industry purchase booth space at the STMA Annual Conference and Exhibition where they showcase their products and services. Some of them sponsor specific events during the Conference, which helps us to offset our food, beverage, and convention site costs. Others are helping to build the Foundation for Safer Athletic Fields Environments (SAFE), STMA's charitable arm that funds research, scholarship, and education.

The association sincerely appreciates our sponsors, advertisers, and exhibitors for the value they add to STMA and to the industry. Yet, these companies do even more at the chapter level. Many of our 26 chapters would struggle without the leadership and financial support of industry. Those chapters that have strong industry involvement are thriving. Chapter events, field days, and educational sessions are all enriched by industry involvement.

Value from industry is also visible in the volunteerism of our commercial members. In addition to the commercial board member category on the STMA board of directors, some commercial members serve on committees to help guide the association's program development and services.

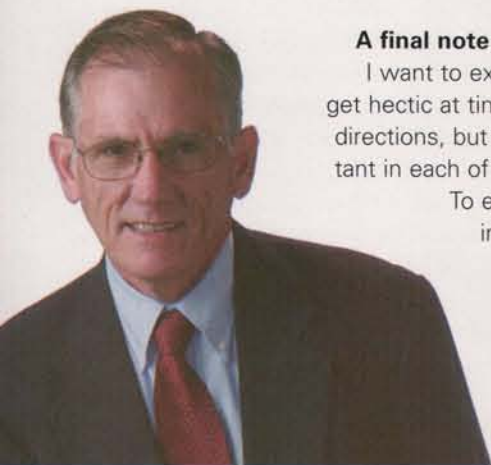
Most importantly, we rely on industry to advance the technology we need every day in our jobs. With our input and their research and development, much advancement has been made during the past 10 years in the products, equipment, and services so vital to the profession. Let's also not forget the times we have relied on the rapid service we have needed at one time or another for an equipment part replacement or a special product.

When you get right down to it, our relationship with industry is simply people doing business with people for the mutual benefit of each of us. We rely on them for great products and great service at cost effective prices. They, in turn, provide support to us personally and professionally, and our relationship often builds to friendship. Be sure to stop by our friends' booths in Phoenix and thank them for their support of STMA.

A final note

I want to extend each of you our best wishes for the holiday season. Things get hectic at times in our business, with all of us seemingly going in different directions, but the holidays are a time to sit back and reflect on what's important in each of our lives.

To each of you, all of us at STMA extend our warmest wishes during the holiday season.



Bob

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