

Regional Calls Benefit All

The STMA Chapter Spring Regional Conference Calls were conducted from April 7 through April 14. The Chapter Sponsors fund these calls: Gold level - John Deere; and Silver Level - Alpine Services, Inc.; Hunter Industries; Stabilizer Solutions; and Syngenta. The calls provide a forum for Chapter Presidents and other key Chapter leaders to interact with Dave Rulli, the Chapter Relations Committee Chair; Abby McNeal, CSFM, the STMA Board liaison to the Chapter Relations Committee; with STMA Headquarters personnel, and with each other.

The STMA Chapters have been divided into six geographic Regions to better facilitate the networking opportunities between Chapters and to insure that all the participants on each Regional call have the opportunity to provide input and to ask questions. Groups in the process of forming Chapters are invited to participate in the call for their Region. Each Region has a volunteer serving as the Regional



Contact to further facilitate Chapter interaction and this individual also participates in the call.

Discussions includes information updates from STMA Board initiatives, ideas for membership promotion on the national and chapter levels, information on services available to Chapters from STMA Headquarters, and any questions or concerns the Chapters may have. The greatest benefit of these calls may be the idea exchange between the Chapter leaders. This may range from suggestions for improving newsletters, to specifics on making a Chapter's golf tournament a great fundraiser, to ideas for interactive workshops that will draw bigger crowds. The Chapters also are willing to share their experiences with ideas that sounded wonderful, but didn't turn out that way.

This is just one more example of Chapters working together to make things even better for their members! **ST**



SAFE Springs to Action

The Foundation for Safer Athletic Field Environments (SAFE) was created by the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) to provide research, educational programs and scholarships geared to sports fields. The SAFE Foundation Board of Trustees met in Chicago last March with the primary objective to set definite parameters to help SAFE meet its goals. The Board recognizes that SAFE has much work to complete before it can supply the sports turf industry with the desired level of programs. Additional funding is needed to fulfill all three arms of our mission: the scholarship program, research, and education. SAFE's major thrust for 2004 will be seeking greater funding for sports specific research, finalizing the research criteria, and beginning assessment of research projects for funding. The Board made positive steps in all of these areas.

First, significant scholarship funding is available thanks to the funds raised through the combination of the Jacobsen-sponsored SAFE Golf Tournament, and the Raffle, Silent and Live Auctions held in conjunction with the STMA Conference in San Diego last January. The SAFE Board has authorized the allocation of up to \$18,000 in direct Scholarship dollars and funds toward travel and lodging expenses to allow the recipients to attend the STMA 2005 Conference in Phoenix. Scholarship application information and application forms are sent directly to STMA Student and Educator members as well as to 2- and 4-year Colleges and Universities offering turf programs. These materials also are posted in the SAFE section of the STMA website.

Next, progress is already being made on the research criteria and forms being developed for research grant applications. Sports turf managers are

encouraged to provide their input on specific areas of sports turf-related research needs by contacting SAFE via email: SAFE@st.omhcoxmail.com or by calling 800-323-3875. These research suggestions will augment the information gathered in an earlier call for research recommendations.

It is the intent of the SAFE Board and the SAFE Research Committee to identify key areas of research needs and then solicit these needs to the researchers. Thus it is important that this research needs information come from STMA members, STMA Chapters and other sports turf managers. SAFE intends to focus on research that is applicable and repeatable, i.e., practical research the meets the needs of sports turf managers.

To facilitate the level of fund raising necessary to make a major impact in the turf industry, the SAFE Board is in the process of seeking a dedicated fundraiser or fundraising organization. Work has begun on developing the request for proposals to be sent to targeted individuals and organizations for this purpose. A key component of the overall program and the decision-making process in making the selection is development and submission of a step by step program to reach the targeted goals and an achievable timetable for doing so.

A safe, playable field is the strong foundation of any game. Working together, we can build the SAFE Foundation into a strong resource for sports turf managers around the world. Contact Steve Trusty (Steve@st.omhcoxmail.com) with your ideas and for more information on making contributions to the SAFE Foundation. **ST**