

STMA Board continues strategic advances

The STMA Board of Directors is continuing its commitment to strategic planning. In late 2006, the Board formally met with a strategic planning facilitator who helped them to develop strategic initiatives for the association for the next 5 years.

Significant progress was made in completing the STMA 2005 Strategic Plan, due to the board's vigilance in focusing the association's efforts around that plan. Building on that plan's accomplishments, the Board has set a bold direction for STMA's future.

STMA embraces a planning culture and uses the plan to guide its daily business. The STMA board reviews the plan at each board meeting, then makes projections and adjustments. Committee work also advances the plan. The

plan guides the work of STMA's committees, subcommittees, and task groups. These groups are the arms and legs of the association and work together with staff to accomplish the plan.

Strategic Plan Executive Summary

Six strategic platforms have been identified that will catalyze the association and propel its members to a new position in the world of sports. Each platform is supported by an education-based focus. It is through education that members will experience greater success. These individual successes strengthen the association.

In addition, membership growth is critical to the vitality of the association. This growth will be achieved by enhancing the value of membership through fulfilling members' needs and

expectations. Thus, membership growth is a desired outcome of each strategic platform and is noted as such. The strategic platforms are:

- Enhance members' value to employers
- Position members as the authority on sports field management
- Use the chapter network to serve members
- Leverage synergistic partnerships
- Make the conference the "must attend" event for the industry
- Execute a well-functioning governance structure

This plan will lead STMA to a future that ensures solid growth and financial stability for years to come. To view the complete plan, go to www.STMA.org and click on Members Only.

Ethical behavior strengthens professionalism

It seems that with increasing frequency the news media is reporting more and more impropriety in business. Whether it is fraudulent financial schemes, theft, deceptive sales tactics, insider trading, or other antitrust or corporate scandals, each instance damages the public's trust in corporate America.

The same holds true for unethical and poor conduct within our own industry. Fortunately, reported instances of improper actions by sports turf managers are few and far between. The most reported breach relates to #5 below, which can be easily remedied by a change in sales tactics of commercial members who disregard the sports turf manager. In fact, companies have reported great success when they include the sports turf manager in purchasing decisions.

STMA members adopted a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Guidelines to show to their peers, to the industry, and to the sports world that they value honesty, respect, and fairness in their business and personal lives. Although the Professional Conduct Guidelines may not be enforced with membership sanctions (as can the Code of Ethics), adherence to the Guidelines encourages the highest standards of behavior for members and represents true professionalism.

Enforcement procedures are self-regulated. Members are asked to remind others of the Guidelines if they see a breach in professional

conduct, or contact STMA headquarters for help. A good way to judge your actions is to ask yourself two questions: "How would my fellow sports turf managers react to my conduct?" and, "How would I feel if my conduct were reported on the front page of the newspaper?"



The STMA Professional Conduct Guidelines

1. A member should always contact a fellow sports turf manager prior to visiting his or her facility regardless of the reason for the visit, other than when attending an educational meeting, association event or as a spectator at a public event at the facility.

2. A member should only submit an application for a position and/or accept an interview for a position currently held by a fellow sports turf manager if the applicant has contacted the current sports turf manager to verify the position is open, or if the applicant has

learned about the opening through an open position listing or through direct contact to the applicant by the facility's personnel.

3. A member should only accept a consulting assignment at a sports field facility if the current sports turf manager at that facility is aware of such impending consulting activity.

4. A member should make verbal consulting recommendations for a facility only with the knowledge of the current sports turf manager or make written recommendations only when issuing a copy of such recommendations to the current sports turf manager.

5. Commercial members, soliciting business for their company's products and services, should channel such solicitations through the current sports turf manager of the facility or ensure the current sports turf manager at that facility is aware of such impending solicitation.

6. Members should always conduct themselves in the highest professional manner at all sports turf related events and other public events where the member is representing the sports turf management profession.

7. A member should not render negative opinions or comments about fellow members.

To see a complete copy of the Code of Ethics and these Guidelines in an electronic format, go to the Members Only section of www.STMA.org.

Ralston leads volunteer renovation effort

STMA member Chris Ralston, head grounds-keeper for the Class A Lake Elsinore Storm, an affiliate of the San Diego Padres, led his crew earlier this year on a volunteer effort. They reconditioned a local community park for High Tech High, a charter high school in San Diego. High Tech High began in 2000 as a single charter high school launched by a coalition of San Diego business leaders and educators. It has evolved into a school development organization with a growing portfolio of innovative charter schools spanning grades K-12.

Two years ago the school started a baseball program and without a field on site for use, they leased a park in East Claremont from the City of San Diego to serve as its home field. The volunteer coaches and parents of the players, along with the players are currently maintaining the field themselves. However, the park was in dire need of some upgrades

and that is what the Storm Grounds Crew did.

"When we arrived at the field we found 2-4 inch lips around the baselines, a mound that was nearly flat and a playing surface that was like sand," said Ralston.

"We spent 4 days at the park, resodding all around the edges and the mound to bring the lips down to playing grade," he said. (The sod was courtesy of West Coast Turf.) "We rebuilt the mound and home plate and replaced them with all new bases, and added 25 tons of infield mix consisting of 50% clay and silt and 50% sand, and leveled out low spots.

"In the foul areas on both sides we added a bullpen consisting of two mounds and plates. We then cut out the old grass in front of the dugouts and replaced it with infield mix for cosmetics," said Ralston.

"We did an audit and repaired irrigation heads as needed. On the last day we overseeded the infield and collars with a perennial ryegrass and a starter fertilizer."

The Storm Grounds Crew includes Francisco Casteneda, Tyson Pulsipher, Greg Cummings, and Dave Carmichael. ■



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