

## Proud to be one of you

I've been humbled by my local chapter's efforts recently. On May 24 the small city of Parkersburg, IA (population 2,200) was essentially wiped off of the map by a category 5 tornado. This year has been an especially wicked weather year in the Midwest and beyond, so our state is not alone in dealing with destruction. Parkersburg has five alumni on NFL rosters right now and the players have solicited help to get the town back on its feet, with some good success.

Within 5 days of this storm, ISTMA leaders Joe Wagner and Dr. Dave Minner, with fellow member Pat Brown, approached the high school to offer ISTMA resources to help get the school back to some level of athletic normalcy. Commercial members from the chapter have been tremendous with their financial support and in-kind donations. Mowers and equipment were destroyed, but one call by Joe found an answer to that challenge. Help is coming to replace a scoreboard that was found in debris 45 miles away!

Coach Thomas, this high school's football coach honored by the NFL a few years ago, has publicly promised that there will be a home football schedule this fall. I guarantee that the chapter will help facilitate this. In true Sports Turf Manager optimism, when Joe heard the football season promise, he challenged the chapter to strive to have fields ready in Parkersburg for its summer softball and baseball seasons! Parkersburg may not have a school building for a few years, but the town will have something to cheer about very soon.

I can't begin to tell you how proud I am to be a part of this profession and this association. I know that the Colorado chapter has a similar effort for the town of Windsor, ravaged by a tornado only a week before the Iowa storm. Great work by all involved with CSTMA!

We've heard tremendous stories about member outreach during wildfires, hurricanes, flooding, storms, drought and other kinds of disasters. I only relate the Parkersburg story because it's happening 45 minutes from my home. Dave, Joe, Pat, our commercial members, and others with the ISTMA chapter, and the members of CSTMA—you're all heroes to the hundreds of kids and thousands of people who you impact. Public recognition of your amazing efforts is called for, but the most inspiring aspect of this association is that you'd have to stand in a long line of those who deserve the same type of recognition.

From my humble spot as author of a privileged magazine column, I can only say, 'Thank you.' What you did was leadership in its most profound sense. And, what you really gave was grace; grace to people you neither knew or had even thought about a few weeks ago. I've often said that our profession is made up of special people. Your job was important, but the volunteer work you did was very special. Thank you for representing the profession and your peers so passionately and honorably!



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