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## Education, networking opportunities keep coming

THE 2ND SPORTS TURF MANAGERS ASSOCIATION'S REGIONAL CONFERENCE was held in Ames, IA June 24 and 25. Nearly 150 attendees from eight supporting Chapters, and 51 commercial companies participated in 2 days of education, networking, and fun. STMA is committed to hosting more regional conferences throughout the United States to bring the national educational program to local areas. The association is fully aware of the tight budgets facing all of us, and these regional conferences are just one way STMA seeks to bring more value to sports turf managers. The regional conferences provide low cost and high quality educational opportunities to chapter and national members in these areas. The conferences also allow STMA to reach out to non-members, making them aware of the resources available to them through the national organization and the local chapters. The more education we can provide, the stronger our profession becomes. Please contact headquarters if you have any questions regarding the regional conference program.

Whether you have grass tennis courts, a lacrosse field, a baseball, football, or soccer field, have you thought about submitting a Field of the Year application? Now is the time. Think about all of the ways that you and your staff have been successfully preparing your field through the challenging schedules and tightened budgets. Submitting a Field of Year application is a great way to evaluate your field, your maintenance program, your staff, and your budget. Preparing an entry can be challenging, but well worth the time to fill out the streamlined application. Those who have gone through the process—whether the facility won or not—have reaped the rewards of validating their good work and that of their staff. And, for those who win, the honor is even greater visibility and recognition of your professionalism. Winning has also brought members new equipment, extra budgetary dollars and more staff. STMA provides to the Field of the Year winners a plaque, a conference registration, 3 nights of accommodations at the conference host hotel, signature clothing, recognition at the Annual Awards banquet, and a feature article in *SportsTurf Magazine*. I would encourage all members to consider submitting a Field of the Year application. Any natural grass field can be submitted. For more information go to STMA's website, [www.STMA.org](http://www.STMA.org).

Now is the time to also plan to attend the 21st STMA Conference and Exhibition at the Coronado Springs Hotel and Convention Center on the Disney property in Orlando. The Conference Education Committee has created a top-notch educational program for the January conference that is themed around value, sustainability and proactivity. You will not find a richer program, learn more practical ideas, connect with more peers, and view more industry technology, than at this event. Our conference program is developed for sports turf managers by sports turf managers and well-respected academics. Look for the complete brochure next month. I'm sure that you will agree it is the 'must-attend' conference in 2010.

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