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Memory graced

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE to compress all I have to say into this final column. First and foremost, thank you for allowing me the honor of serving as STMA President. In 1999, Mike Schiller, CSFM asked me to consider running for an open Board seat. The thought was overwhelming, but on the other hand too great an honor to dismiss. I'm humbled by the privilege STMA provided, but I also look forward to serving actively in other ways now.

Serving as President allowed me to represent the membership in discussions and to seize opportunities from a perspective I've never considered myself worthy of. I appreciate the good fortune to learn and grow that these last few years provided. I learned how important this association is to **our** success as sports turf managers. Your field is a place where dreams come true. Parents have faith in us that their child will play out "the dream" and not have a nightmare injury. The "child" can be the 4-year-old playing T-Ball in the park or the \$30 million athlete playing in front of 70,000 people.

Our fields are also used for branding the corporate logo into the fans who watch games. As supporters file into your stadium, your administration depends on you to project that "the house is in order" and your facility is hallowed ground where dreams do play out. To represent the great members of STMA that produce those kinds of feelings is truly an honor that I have not taken for granted.

I can't thank Kim Heck, CEO and our awesome staff enough for all they do on our behalf. During the past 2 years I've been privileged to see and hear first-hand how they've positively represented us. Besides being a small, but incredibly efficient professional staff, I sincerely appreciate that their passion for each of us and this industry is without peer in association management. They are family and their success is our success.

I wish President Abby McNeal, CSFM, and the new Board great success as we continue moving down a focused strategic path that began being charted years ago. Of course, the pace with which we tackle the Strategic initiatives and move to others lies in the strong minds and hands of volunteer committee members. The new structure of the Board, especially the one-year executive terms, will help STMA keep high energy in important roles on the Board. Having the Secretary/Treasurer election be a true funnel for choosing future STMA Presidents is healthy and transparent. The approved Bylaw changes will help ensure each future Board will stay unified as their work will be dictated by strategic planning. Expanding the Board roster by two At-Large seats will allow broader representation and more opportunities for leaders to come into the Boardroom. All of these elements lead to energetic leadership that will be able to focus on visionary and long range issues.

Grace is defined as an underserved gift. Thank you for gracing me with the honor of serving as President.