

## Student Challenge winners donate money, time

Little Leaguers played ball on new and improved fields last spring thanks to the efforts of Penn State turfgrass science students who won \$4,000 in the 2009 national SportsTurf Managers Association Student Challenge competition. PSU teams also won the 2010 2-year and 4-year competitions. The 2009 team was coached by Matt Naedel, research associate in the Penn State Turfgrass Project.

Penn State turf professor Dr. Andy McNitt said, "The students rated this event as an excellent learning opportunity. We plan to reach out to a different local little league organization this fall. We will do field assessments and develop a renovation plan, acquire and deliver the materials and equipment needed and then implement the plan. It really is an excellent chance for the students to use what they learn and help the community at the same time."

The students donated their winnings and worked alongside Matt Neri, groundskeeper for the State College Spikes, the Pittsburgh Pirates' Single-A affiliate, to overhaul two fields near Centre Hall, PA last fall. The crews spread a new infield mix and installed clay bricks below the pitcher's landing area and batter's and catcher's boxes. They set new pitching rubbers and bases, reshaped the infield and fertilized the outfield.



Penn State turfgrass science students put their education to work for a good cause.

The students also repainted foul lines using donated equipment from Doug Schattinger of Pioneer Athletics. Mark Dargay from E.H. Griffith of Pittsburgh and Valley Ag and Turf of Centre Hall provided equipment for the day. Other items were supplied by Steve Legros of Turf and Dirt. ■

## Ask a CSFM ▶ Rick Perruzzi, CSFM, City of South Portland, ME

### Benefits of certification verified

**Editor's note:** This is the third of six installments on how becoming a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) can benefit turf managers professionally as well as improve their facilities.

#### HOW DID YOU PREPARE FOR THE CSFM EXAM?

Perruzzi: I prepared for the exam by first looking over the comprehensive outline to try to determine what my strengths and weaknesses were so as to focus my attention on those weak areas. After determining my weaknesses I used three main resources to study with: the University of Georgia's Certified Turfgrass Professional course study guide to refresh up on agronomics and pest management; Sports Fields: A Manual for Design, Construction and Maintenance by Jim Puhalla, Jeff Krans and Mike Goatley; and Floyd Perry's book Turf Grows by the Inch and is Killed by the Foot. I felt that those three resources were the best that I had at my disposal so as to not overwhelm myself with too much information.

#### HOW DID YOU APPROACH YOUR EMPLOYER TO SUPPORT YOUR CERTIFICATION, BOTH FINANCIALLY AND IN THE TIME NEEDED TO PREPARE FOR THE EXAM?

Perruzzi: I approach my employer proactively for all things I do in my job, so in my mind this was no different than any other request I had submitted before. They were very supportive in allowing me to obtain this certification and allowed me to focus my energy on studying for the exam. Financially they viewed it as an investment into the department's future and credibility.

#### WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE CERTIFICATION?

Perruzzi: It can be difficult to be viewed as a professional at the park and recreation level when on paper I am a laborer. I felt that I needed to try to change that stereotype not just with management but within the community. Also I felt that being certified would allow me to have more influence in the decision-making process with management.

#### HOW HAS CERTIFICATION HELPED YOUR CAREER?

Perruzzi: Obtaining CSFM status has probably been the best thing to happen to me professionally. It has opened up more opportunities for me to be more creative in my job as a sports turf manager. My employer now knows that when I ask for resources or to try a new product that I have done the research. The increase in credibility has made that process easier, but with credibility comes the accountability, which is part of being a professional in any line of work. ■



## STMA Thanks you for 5 Years of Membership

**THE FOLLOWING** have been members of STMA since 2005. STMA appreciates your commitment and support of the profession!

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## Chapters Highlights

### This Month's Profiles: the Gateway, MO-KAN and Wisconsin Chapters

#### Gateway Chapter Update

The Gateway Chapter is already half way through what has been a great year for us. The year started with several members attending the STMA national convention in Orlando and bringing back a wealth of new knowledge that they were willing to share with the rest of the chapter. We have also hosted a number of successful events this year including one on mower maintenance, a field day with Billy Findley at Bush Stadium, our annual vendor day, and most recently co hosted a seminar with Beacon Athletics, Toro and Diamond Pro on baseball/softball field maintenance.

We are looking forward to other upcoming events including our annual Chapter Fundraising Golf Tournament in October, as well as the Missouri Green Industry Conference December 7 which will be a great chance for those who cannot attend the national convention to hear some great speakers and get new information locally. Our year end lunch will feature Dale Getz, CSFM from Toro as our guest speaker. Some of you may have also seen one of our members Mark Vessell, Sr. was highlighted in the June issue of *SportsTurf* discussing managing a large soccer facility. Mark does a great job and is an excellent ambassador for our chapter and sports turf managers everywhere.

### MO-KAN Chapter to Play Vital Role as Kansas City Police, NFL Team Up for Field Project

On June 17, the Kansas City, Mo. Police Athletic League (PAL) was presented a check for \$100,000 from the NFL Grassroots Program's Youth Football Fund, NFL Players Association (NFLPA), and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to build a football field adjacent to the current PAL Center in a highly distressed neighborhood of downtown Kansas City. The MO-KAN Chapter of STMA, its members and their companies will partner with PAL to oversee construction and provide labor for the project this summer.

Additionally, the chapter and members have volunteered to provide key elements of field construction including and ongoing maintenance, including irrigation and

soil amendments. Several chapter members' companies stepped up in a big way as well; design services will be provided by VSR Design, a MO-KAN Chapter member, and John Deere has agreed to provide equipment for maintenance and new models yearly.

"Sustainability is the most exciting aspect of the project," according to PAL and in order to keep up with their commitment to maintain the field surrounding common areas indefinitely, PAL will team up with the MO-KAN Chapter and the Metropolitan Community Colleges - Kansas City to develop a Turf Management Training Program available to PAL police officers and members at no cost. PAL officers and STMA volunteers will oversee the instruction, curriculum and application of the program, ensuring the long-term viability of the field as a community asset and providing career building skills to the participants.

PAL currently has more than 600 youth ages 8 to 18 compete in various sports throughout the year at no cost to the athlete or family. The PAL Board and leadership feel that this new field will allow them to expand to 1,200-1,500 athletes and dramatically increase the participation of the local community in the program.

"These fields are a tangible sign of our Youth Football Fund in action," said NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell. "They help us make an impact where assistance is most needed. We are proud to support projects that bring neighborhoods together and give children a safe place to play and be active."

## Join the Wisconsin STMA at the Ballpark!

Join the crowd at Miller Park on Thursday, August 12, as the Wisconsin STMA chapter hosts a day of networking, education, and fun at the ballpark. Bring your co-workers, supervisor, family, and friends for an action packed day at Miller Park. Morning activities will take place at Helfaer Field, a state of the art youth ball-field just north of the Miller Park home plate gate. We will begin with an overview of the field operations at the heavily used Helfaer Field to get conversations started. Then everyone is invited to join in a friendly game of softball.

Those who prefer the role of spectator can relax in the Helfaer Field stands, play games on the concourse, or network with other members in the air-conditioned meeting area. A tailgate style lunch will be provided in the adjacent parking area before we head into the stadium to watch the Brewers take on the Arizona Diamondbacks. The educational opportunities continue after the Brewers game when everyone is invited to take front row seats for discussions and demonstrations with the Milwaukee Brewers Grounds Crew led by Head Groundskeeper, Gary Vanden Berg. Visit [www.wstma.org](http://www.wstma.org) for details and registration forms. ■

## New STMA Resources

Natural Grass Athletic Fields for High Schools  
Adapt a PowerPoint presentation and accompanying technical resource to your high school or parks and recreation facility to endorse the benefits of maintaining natural grass athletic fields. It is designed to help parent groups, athletic directors, those considering building an athletic field, etc. convince the community of the benefits natural grass playing surfaces hold. See [www.stma.org](http://www.stma.org).

## STMA Affiliated Chapters Contact Information

**Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:**  
Chris Walsh [cwalsh@scottsdaleaz.gov](mailto:cwalsh@scottsdaleaz.gov) or  
Johnathan Knight, CSFM  
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**Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association:** [www.cstma.org](http://www.cstma.org).

**Florida #1 Chapter (South):**  
305-235-5101 (Bruce Bates)

**Florida #2 Chapter (North):**  
850/580-4026.

**Florida #3 Chapter (Central):**  
863-665-5800

**Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
[www.gatewaystma.org](http://www.gatewaystma.org). (See Expanded Profile included in Chapter Highlights)

**Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association:** [www.gstma.org](http://www.gstma.org).

**Greater L.A. Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
[www.stmalabasin.com](http://www.stmalabasin.com).

**Illinois Chapter STMA:** 847/263-7603.

**Intermountain Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
[www.imstma.org](http://www.imstma.org).

**Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association:** [www.iowaturfgrass.org](http://www.iowaturfgrass.org).

**Kentucky Sports Turf Managers Association:** [www.kystma.org](http://www.kystma.org).

**Keystone Athletic Field Managers Org. (KAFMO/STMA):** [www.kafmo.org](http://www.kafmo.org).

**Michigan Sports Turf Managers Association (MiSTMA):**  
[www.mistma.org](http://www.mistma.org).

**Mid Atlantic Sports Turf Managers Association (MASTMA) (formerly the Chesapeake Chapter STMA)**  
Ph. 410-704-2197 [www.mastma.org](http://www.mastma.org)

**Minnesota Chapter STMA:**  
[www.mstma.com](http://www.mstma.com).

**MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association:** [www.mokanstma.com](http://www.mokanstma.com).  
(See Expanded Profile included in Chapter Highlights)

**Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association:** 402/441-4425.

**New England STMA (NESTMA):**  
[www.nestma.org](http://www.nestma.org).

**Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey:** [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org).

**Sports Turf Managers of New York:**  
[www.stmony.org](http://www.stmony.org).

**North Carolina Chapter of STMA:**  
[www.ncsportsturf.org](http://www.ncsportsturf.org).

**Northern California STMA:**  
[www.norcalstma.org](http://www.norcalstma.org).

**Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association (OSTMA):** [www.ostma.org](http://www.ostma.org).

**Oregon STMA Chapter:** 503/953-9406

**Ozarks STMA:** [www.ozarksstma.org](http://www.ozarksstma.org).

**Pacific Northwest Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
[www.pnwstma.org](http://www.pnwstma.org).

**Southern California Chapter:**  
[www.socalstma.com](http://www.socalstma.com).

**South Carolina Chapter of STMA:**  
[www.scstma.org](http://www.scstma.org).

**Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association (TVSTMA):**  
[www.tvstma.com](http://www.tvstma.com).

**Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:** 866/897-8621.

**Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association:** [www.vstma.org](http://www.vstma.org).

**Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association:** [www.wstma.org](http://www.wstma.org). (See Expanded Profile included in Chapter Highlights)

**Forming Chapters:**  
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**Nevada STMA Chapter:** 702/884-2987.

**STMA International Affiliate Organizations:**  
**National Parks, Singapore:**  
[www.nparks.gov.sg](http://www.nparks.gov.sg)

**Sports Turf Association, ON, CANADA**  
[www.sportsturfassociation.com](http://www.sportsturfassociation.com)

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