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President's Message

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Constantly adjusting is our way of life

Some of us in the warm-season and transition zone climates may be seeing the results of our overseeding practices on our bermudagrass fields. As the ryegrass becomes more established and the fields change over, we adapt our management practices and “change our hat.” Constantly adjusting to whatever the season brings is the life of a sports turf manager. Although overseeding may not fit into every sports turf manager’s cultural practices, it is another tool that our professionals can use to provide playable and attractive sports fields. The technology and abundance of management practices we have available to us is remarkable. Sports turf management is a multi-faceted and ever-changing profession. For us to be successful in it, we must embrace our changing environment.

Smaller budgets, reduced staffing, wage freezes, more responsibilities...these are a few challenges that are affecting sport turf managers. Add to this the expectations of our employers, players and fans that our fields and facilities continue to be maintained to the highest level of quality. The situation is no longer one that we can simply adapt to, but one that we must develop new ways of conducting our work. Plato’s proverb, “Necessity is the mother of invention” definitely applies to us!

In just a few months STMA will be holding its annual conference. This is the one place that has it all—academicians who teach the science of turfgrass management, product and equipment suppliers who showcase their latest technology, and most importantly, your peers. It is through their presentations, and during the networking times when we exchange ideas, that we learn about new “best practices.”

As you can see from your conference brochure, this year’s educational program is very strong. More than 60 presenters are focusing on practical and impactful ways to solve your problems. The sessions have actionable “best management practices” that you can apply to your field and facility management programs. We are introducing roundtable sessions that focus on timely topics that are relevant to you. You will have the opportunity to ask questions of speakers and other practitioners in a relaxed and lively environment, as our conference education sessions wrap up.

I encourage you to check out STMA.org for ideas on how to secure funding from your employer to attend. You can see the featured speakers and also review and print out the learning outcomes that this conference promises to deliver. You will even find a ready-made trip report that helps you to provide information back to your employer and staff about what you learned and how it will benefit your facility.

Our profession is multi-dimensional and each one of us has a wide range of responsibilities. By attending the conference and continuing our education, we will be better prepared for the many changes we will encounter throughout our careers. And rather than just “changing our hat,” we’ll be redefining our profession.