

# President's Message

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## Education opportunities “spring” up

**L**IKE SPORTS TURF MANAGERS, chapters spring into action as warmer weather arrives. Many have educational workshops, field days, and charitable field re-builds. Your chapter is where you can establish your strongest network when you need advice. All agronomy is local, and these local educational events offer an excellent way to network and continue your education. Chapter gatherings are an ideal value for your crew, too. They are low cost and have tremendous worth in more than just education. By helping your crew members establish their own network, you are helping them succeed and furthering their job satisfaction.

You can also support your chapter in other ways. Offer to help plan an event, chair a committee, or write an article for the newsletter. Our profession becomes stronger through the work of our chapters.

Your Board recently met for its Spring meeting, and we spent time discussing the conference we just held in Austin and next year's conference in Long Beach. Thank you to those who filled out the post-conference survey. Your comments are invaluable to the development of our 2012 Conference and Exhibition. We had a great response to the call for presentations, and I know that your Conference Education Committee is working to develop an excellent program.

We have negotiated the best hotel rates for the greater Los Angeles area, \$189 per night at the host hotel, the Long Beach Hyatt, and \$179 at the Westin. Being on the West Coast in a major metropolitan area, STMA's costs are higher than in a Midwest city. However, your board did not increase conference attendee registration prices. For a full conference registration, the cost is \$375, and for our 1-day education/trade show combo, it is \$105. In fact, these are the same rates that we had in San José in 2009. For those of you who are within driving distance of Long Beach, our 1-day package offers an affordable and value-packed opportunity for you to bring your staff. Again, this is an effective way to provide staff training and strengthen their loyalty.

There is also an STMA regional educational event, June 15-16, at the University of Tennessee. The 2-day event features a tour of the new turf research center, hands on and classroom education, an exhibition and tickets to a baseball game—value priced at \$95. This is an event at which you will truly experience national level education.

For those of you who are within driving distance of our national or regional conferences, and all members of a chapter, I'd like for you to consider bringing your employer to a conference or to a chapter event. What better way to have him or her begin to understand the complexity of our profession, the importance of continuing education that provides value back to the facility, and the high level of professionalism that we as sports turf managers exhibit. This is a solid way to increase the respect for the job that we do.

Best wishes for a great spring season!