

President's Message

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The spirit of volunteerism

THIS MONTH I RECOGNIZE THE SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM. It is on prominent display by those helping their neighbors recover from Superstorm Sandy; we see it in person at the Salvation Army kettles this time of year; and volunteerism drives STMA through service by our members on 23 committees.

Those of you attending the conference in Daytona Beach will personally witness the efforts of our Conference Education, Seminar-on-Wheels, Student Challenge, and Chapter Relations committees. You will also see our volunteers in action serving as moderators for our presenters, leading our auction to raise money for SAFE, and staffing the Collegiate Challenge. Some of these volunteers will be seen, but as in the case of so many volunteers, most will be working in the background. You will find an update on the goals and activities of two of our committees, Conference Education and Environmental, in this issue of *SportsTurf*. More committee updates will appear in future issues.

As President, I have the challenge and privilege of placing our volunteers on committees. This is something that every President takes seriously because the STMA Board has the philosophy that good governance happens when we stay out of our committees' way. We regularly discuss and remind ourselves of our role as a Board when we meet, and we are committed to let the "committees do the heavy lifting." When you volunteer, we want you to understand that we recognize the time and effort required. Please do the best you can to serve, but everyone understands that sometimes there simply is not enough time in the day to do everything we would like to do. Committee sign up will be at the conference and online at www.STMA.org.

CEO Kim Heck led a great professional development exercise at our Fall Board meeting that placed the Board members in groups of "the early bird gets the worm" or "the second mouse gets the cheese." We all agreed there were times when we needed to be in each group, and I think our Board (and our committees) have nice blends of both groups of personalities. As part of our exercise, we each got a short but highly informative book called *Who Moved My Cheese* by Dr. Spencer Johnson. It would make a nice holiday gift for one's self-help library. The characters are mice and little people who live in a maze looking for their cheese. They have highly variable strategies in how they look for their cheese, but it is the little people (Hem and Haw) that struggle the most because they resist change. One comment made by Haw caught my attention: "What would I do if I weren't afraid?" I can think of lots of times that I probably should have answered that question; maybe you can, too. I told this to a friend, and he sent me a one-liner from comedian Stephen Wright: "Well, what happens if you are scared to death twice?" Hmm...

I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season and all the best for 2013! ■

Mike Goatley