

President's Message

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Help us help you in PR campaign

THERE ARE LOTS OF IMPORTANT INITIATIVES underway within STMA, with a particular focus for your Board being on enhanced recognition by the public at large about the jobs and importance of sports turf managers. Our goal is to apply this recognition to ALL sports turf managers, and not just those at our most visible venues, although these facilities will certainly be featured because of their levels of maintenance and the expectations associated with the playability and performance of these sports surfaces. For those coming to Conference in January, you will see our new "Spotlight On" video, a short, professionally produced video clip that will soon be airing nationwide on public broadcasting stations.

The Board also just had its first meeting with our new public relations firm (Buffalo Communications) that will lead us in the development and implementation of new PR strategies. If you are in San Antonio, you will have a chance to meet the representatives from BC that will lead these efforts, and they want you to introduce yourself and tell them more about what you do and why you do it. Read more about this initiative inside this issue on page 43. Whether you speak to them in person in Texas or contact them directly by a call or e-mail, they wish to hear about any sports turf-related story of personal interest that you can share. Please help them help us!

The turfgrass industry lost four pioneers in the past few months with the passings of Charlie Wilson, Dr. Jim Watson, Dr. Joe Duich, and Dr. AJ Powell, Jr. Let me share a little more about my mentor and dear friend, AJ, because for better or worse, he is responsible for my being in this business. AJ was a longtime supporter and educator of STMA and devoted a large part of his career as Kentucky's Extension Turfgrass Specialist to improving the quality and safety of sports fields across the transition zone. Although retired from UK, he remained active in STMA and was serving as Chair of our Standards and Criteria Committee and president of the KySTMA chapter when he passed. If you attended one of his presentations, you left knowing more than when you arrived, and you were entertained by one of this industry's best story tellers.

Bart Prather, sports turf manager at Mississippi State University, sent me a text that I was pleased to share with AJ's wife, Janie, and children Julie and Jeff: "Even though I never had the privilege of having Dr. Powell teach me a class in person, I felt like he instructed me many times over by having you lead class, Dr. G." I will never be as effective as AJ, but his legacy as a communicator will carry on with me as I continue to share with my students and audiences a little bit of the wit and wisdom that I gleaned from Dr. Powell.

I wish you the very best for the holidays and leave you with a favorite seasonal phrase of mine delivered by Linus Van Pelt... "And on earth, peace and good will toward men." ■

