

President's Message

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Seasons, senses, and experiences

SEPTEMBER ARRIVES with a change of seasons from both the climatic and sports perspectives. If you live in an area that truly has a change in seasons, your senses of sight, sound, and smell are often reinvigorated in the fall. In the mountains of southwest Virginia, fall colors are typically vivid and one of the most popular bumper stickers sold at the campus bookstore during this beautiful time of year says, "If God isn't a Hokie, why do all the trees turn maroon and orange in the fall?"

Think about the feel of that first clear, crisp night of the season. What about that first smell of a wood-burning fireplace or the roars of a crowd as a touchdown is scored? Fall can result in sensory overload, but in a very positive way! Unfortunately, the overload too often faced by sports turf managers is associated with work as your schedules don't slow down much for a few more months. The agronomist in me reminds you of the importance of balancing heavy fall use schedules with the absolute musts of fall fertility, aeration, and overseeding. These steps are absolutely critical for success in both field safety and performance issues not only for the rest of this season, but for the 2014 season as well.

As always, this issue of *SportsTurf* is full of news you can use to improve yourself and your fields. There are important updates on STMA's new sourcebook and exciting new initiatives to expand membership and increase the numbers of first-time conference attendees. Also be sure to take a look at the updates regarding next January's conference and exhibition in San Antonio. Your Board and headquarters staff continues to tweak our conference programming and allied activities in order to make the conference both instructional and entertaining.

A change in seasons also brings a logical time for reflection on your job on the field and at home for the year to date. Jeff Salmond, CSFM, Director of Athletic Field Management, University of Oklahoma and the STMA Higher Education Board rep, has written an outstanding article reminding us of the importance of friends and family as he details the personal effects and responses to the devastating tornadoes of earlier this year in Oklahoma. Jeff's thoughts will help restore some perspective to our busy lives.

I close with a thought on experiences shared with me by a recently retired extension colleague, Dr. Wayne Wells. Wayne shared a true story that took place early in his career that he used to guide his professional and personal life. Two teachers were being recognized by their peers for having more than 40 years of service, but one person was deemed by most to clearly have had the most rewarding career. Why? It was observed that one teacher had 40 years of experiences, while the other had what would be better described as having one year of experience 40 times. Dr. Wells' point is simple: reward yourself and others by constantly seeking new experiences. Take care! ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Goatley". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.