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A SOD-Urday Celebration

TPI member goes to the airwaves



WBEN's live broadcast from Lakeside Sod Supply gave listeners a great opportunity to learn more about turfgrass sod, lawn care and all that Lakeside has to offer.

For John and Ed Braddell of Lakeside Sod Supply Co., Inc. in Clarence Center, New York, Saturday, May 11 wasn't just any Saturday, it was a SOD-Urday.

Ken Brown, host of WBEN's garden show in Buffalo, New York broadcasted LIVE from Lakeside Sod Supply between 11:00 am and noon on what Lakeside declared as a SOD-Urday Celebration! The WBEN Promotions team was also on-site with prizes and giveaways!!

Ed Braddell's daughter, Becky, reported the event exceeded their expectations. She added, "Following the broadcast, customers came in referencing the airing of the show. Some customers were new to coming to us, stating, 'I didn't even know you were here!' whereas others who are regular customers would come in commenting on how nice it was to hear us on the radio.

What was particularly special, was that at least one caller stated they had received our sod before and how much they enjoyed it, still to this day. Overall, it was just a wonderful experience."

Becky also reported that WBEN's Ken Brown had requested that a representative of Lakeside Sod go on air with him to assist in answering sod and turf-related questions from callers. Mike Loberg, a Lakeside Sod sales consultant was more than happy to oblige. During the entire show, both Ken and Mike worked in conjunction with one another in not only answering the questions presented by callers, but also provided an overview on what services and products are provided by Lakeside Sod.

Cont'd on page 2

A SOD-Urday Celebration—cont'd from page 1



Lakeside Sod Supply serves customers as far as East to Rochester, all of Western New York, and Northwest Pennsylvania (to Bradford).

When asked, what was the benefit of doing this event from a marketing and promotional point of view, Becky said, “The purpose was to increase awareness of sod and to get the homeowner to consider sod in their landscaping plans and to ask their landscape contractor for a cost comparison from seed to sod. We also notified the local nurseries of the event, which triggered an increase in sales to them so they would have sod in supply. We encouraged all that were listening to go to their local nursery or landscape contractor, and ask for sod.”



WBEN's Ken Brown and Lakeside Sod Supply sales consultant Mike Loberg field questions from callers.

Just how successful was the event? It was very successful and the Braddell's hope that in the coming years they can expand the event to include specials for the customers or educational experiences such as “learn how we grow and harvest sod.”

Our thanks to Becky and the entire Braddell family at Lakeside Sod Supply for sharing their story and for providing photos.



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HITTING ROCK BOTTOM

When the turfgrass sod that was placed between two drive-ways in a new condominium complex began to wither away despite efforts of the homeowner association’s contracted lawncare provider to care for it, I removed the dying grass with the intention of laying new sod, or seeding the area. Upon removing the turf I discovered that instead of a bed of topsoil there were rocks, pebbles and chunks of asphalt beneath the dying turf.

The fact that the turfgrass lasted as long as it did is amazing, but what’s more amazing is that the building contractor, the original landscaping firm, or some cost cutting decision-maker actually approved the laying of sod over a bed of rocks.

While I have no way of knowing if such a decision was an intentional cost savings measure, laziness, or ignorance, the incident illustrates the importance of educating those individuals who are responsible for turfgrass installation.

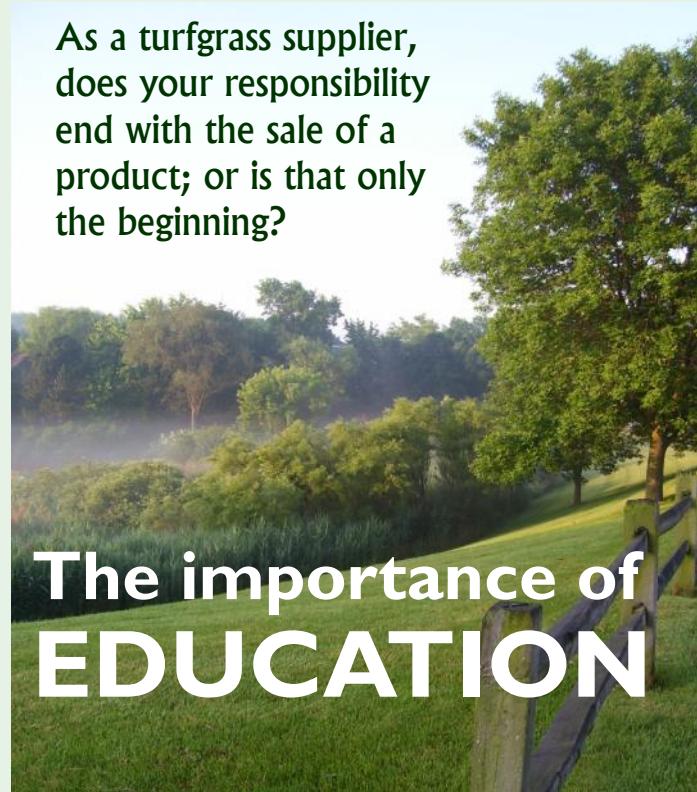
To some novice homeowners it’s often the turfgrass sod that gets the bad rap when in fact the problem is often an uneducated installation crew.

- J. Novak



Photos by Jim Novak

As a turfgrass supplier, does your responsibility end with the sale of a product; or is that only the beginning?



The importance of EDUCATION

Photo by Jim Novak

SOMETHING ELSE TO THINK ABOUT

“I think . . . education is really lacking in the homeowner field. It is unfortunate that you have uneducated individuals that put the wrong grass in the wrong place, then you have a homeowner who doesn't know how to take care of that 'specialty' grass, then you have the maintenance company who just wants to put too many products on the lawn. The poor homeowner ends up spending too much time, money and effort in having a nice lawn.

“We need to promote the right grass for the right place and then have the proper education materials to go along with the product when it is sold.

“It is frustrating to me that people do not understand all the benefits of a turfgrass lawn. Native plants certainly have their place but as with all things - in moderation. Education, education, education!!! What more can I say?”

Linda Moyer

Chair – TPI Public Relations Working Group
Sod Solutions
Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina

We've Got You Covered!

How do you protect an on-going multi-million dollar project from being trampled to death?



In all, nearly 100,000 square feet of ground cover including pedestrian-friendly Terraplas, were brought in from all over the country to protect the new turf on the National Mall.

Photos courtesy of: Wikimedia Commons

The National Mall has already had major renovations of the first 4 panels of turfgrass in front of the US Capital building. It is all part of an extensive multi-million dollar project to beautify the Mall.

The 6 ½ acres of newly installed tall type fescue turfgrass are doing fine, but how do they plan to keep it that way when big events draw massive crowds in the tens or hundreds of thousands?

It's an interesting challenge and they seem to have come up with a practical solution – you temporarily cover the turfgrass and protect it.

The concept was put to the test earlier this year during the Presidential Inauguration and it proved successful.

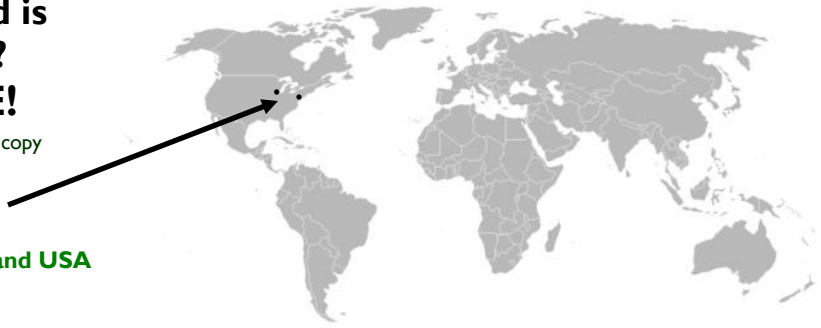
A combination of Terraplas, Arena Panels, and LD Panels were installed to protect the grass; similar to what is used in sports stadium for major events such as concerts.

Presented with the challenge of a million inauguration spectators in the middle of winter, park managers scrambled to find a solution that would preserve their restoration efforts. In all, nearly 100,000 square feet of ground cover including pedestrian-friendly Terraplas, quick and easy to deploy roll-up LD Panels, and heavy-equipment capable Arena Panels were brought in from warehouses all over the country. Terraplas is perforated which allows air, water, and light to pass through. Thus, depending on weather conditions, it can be left down for up to seven days without damaging the underlying turf and soil.

Supervisors managed the installation over two weeks, using lightweight equipment and labor to prevent damage to the grass. Despite special challenges such as uneven ground and cold weather, they were able to minimize trip hazards and build a durable surface by using special expansion joints that compensated for the shifting spaces between panels caused by changing temperatures and uneven field conditions.

Where in the world is TPI represented? EVERYWHERE!

An on-going series featuring photos and copy from TPI member websites.



Central Sod Farms Plainfield, Illinois & Centreville, Maryland USA

<http://centralsodil.com/>
<http://www.centralsodmd.com/AgriBoss/>

Central Sod Farms began its first operations in 1975. As owners, the Warpinski family embarked on a business journey that continues to this day. A five acre plot of grass would be meticulously mowed, irrigated, harvested, and replanted in developing suburban Chicago. Much of the work was performed by means of hard physical labor since much of the machinery to harvest and move sod had yet to be developed. Every year, the Warpinski family expanded their operations to keep up with the demand for their quality turfgrass to which the area had come to know.

As the Warpinski family grew, another turfgrass farm was opened near Annapolis, Maryland in 1988.

At the present time, Central Sod Farms, Inc. continues to expand its operations and utilize the latest technology available. This begins by selecting a wide range of grass seed varieties that each fulfill a different, specialized purpose while at the same time capturing all segments and needs of the turfgrass industry. Sod varieties are harvested using computer-controlled machinery that standardize operations for maximum efficiency and consistency in products sold. This is further complemented by a delivery fleet that increases its efficiency by the use of GPS guidance, which in turn ensures on-time deliveries. Adding all these things together results in a superior, tailor-made product delivered where it is wanted at the time requested. Golf courses, park districts, athletic fields, landscape contractors, and homeowners are now requesting Central Sod Farms turf on their job sites: it is their assurance that they are purchasing the best turf grass on the market.

Celebrating over thirty-five years in business, Central Sod Farms Inc. is now the premier and largest turfgrass grower in the Midwest. Chicago landmarks such as Soldier Field, Wrigley Field, Toyota Park, Grant Park,

and Navy Pier all boast Central Sod as their supplier. Central Sod Farms of Maryland has become one of the largest growers of turfgrass on the East Coast. Their sod is presently growing at The White House, Arlington National Cemetery, and The Washington Monument.



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