

SPORTS TURF MANAGER

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The President's Desk

ANDREW GAYDON



A Spring Welcome...

It has definitely been an interesting winter weather-wise! During the early part of February, the east end of Lake Ontario froze over completely for the first time in about 20 years due to a combination of very calm water and a few extremely cold days. The ice, of course, is now long gone now but it was very interesting to view at the time.

The Landscape Ontario Congress and Ontario Turfgrass Symposium were both very active shows this year and the chatter and responses heard from the many visitors and exhibitors is that Spring 2005 is going to be very busy for our industry.

Shows and exhibitions of all types these days are no longer simply places to just display and sell ones products and services. Decades ago, a 'show' was often a local function and the surrounding businesses and farmers all arrived, usually with their families in tow, for a great day out. It was an opportunity to kick tires, ask prices and discuss what was new for the season. It was a highly social event, a chance to meet most neighbours and friends in the span of one or two days.

Now shows tend primarily to be educational forums with the exhibition being the side attraction. We are all so

hungry for information, partly because it is so important for the efficient operation of our business or responsibility but also because there is so much 'stuff' today for us to absorb, review and understand that we have to be efficient information sieves. Sales and service representatives of all types of companies and organizations have to be highly informed in ever-changing markets to ensure that relevant information can be passed on in an intelligent but understandable fashion

Secondly, these educational forums are prime stages for marketing and they provide the atmosphere to: a) know your customer; b) know what your customer likes; c) know where, when and why your customer wants a product or service; and d) know what value your customer has placed on it. It is no surprise that these concepts apply to just about everything today whether it's business, customer service or just our own family relationships.

The reason I mention this is that as the Board of Directors of your Association, we are very aware of the importance of 'knowing our customers' (the members) and that we therefore adapt our actions, plans and the future to benefit all concerned.

We are now well into a new year and invoices for membership fees will be mailed this month. Thank you for remitting your dues in a timely manner. We accept American Express, MasterCard and Visa for your convenience.

If any members would like to participate more fully in our Association, such as volunteering on the Field Day Committee or the Newsletter Group, please put your name forward. You will be most welcomed.

Finally, the Sports Turf Association website is a great member resource and Lee, our Executive Manager, and Rob, our Webmaster, do an outstanding job keeping it current and interesting. Suggestions, of course, are always encouraged.

From all of us here, to all of you out there – have a great spring and think sunshine! ♦