

# American Sod Producers Association

*James K. Beard*

Vol. 1 No. 3

September, 1975

Hastings, Nebraska



A great crowd!

## KANSAS CITY SUMMER CONVENTION AND FIELD DAYS DRAW OVER 200

More than 200 sod producers from the United States and Canada took part in the 10th Annual American Sod Producers Association convention and field days in Kansas City, July 16-18. The Crown Center served as convention and meeting headquarters. The convention opened Wednesday evening with an open house in the exhibit area where the newest and latest equipment, supplies, and services were exhibited. The following morning a continental breakfast was served in the exhibit area, followed by a general business session. The meeting involved a discussion of ASPA activities, trends within the industry, as well as the election of the new officers.

Wednesday afternoon and all day Thursday, attendants visited various sod farms in the area for demonstrations of equipment and an opportunity to examine the equipment. Included in the demonstrations were the Princeton Turf Farm (Latta-Choles) Inc., J.L. Harris Sod Farm, Meyers Turf Farms, Briggs Turf Farms, Weeks Sod and Walnut Farm.

The Harris operation included 80 acres where all facilities and operations are handled by one man. The Weeks Sod and Walnut Farm combines the growing of walnuts and their harvesting, shelling, and packaging along with utilization of sod from between the rows in a sod production and sales operation.

Over 67 cases of beer and thirty-nine

cases of pop, along with watermelons, were provided at various stops along the way. Hosting the refreshments was the Mid-West Turf Grass Growers Assoc.

The annual banquet and fun night featured a "Down on the Levee Party," done in a style of the gay 90's, with keg beer, peanuts and popcorn, honky tonk piano, and a delightful levee band. A real hit of the show was the unscheduled but sensational appearance of Lars Jensen of Jensen Sod in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. His coronet was sensational and he added real zest with his impromptu appearance. Centerpieces utilized sod provided by host Mel Briggs.

The ladies had an opportunity to tour the Kansas City area by bus and see some of the picturesque facilities.

Kansas City was plagued by drouth conditions which made it extremely tough on the local people and caused them some concern as to the appearance of the sod and the condition of the field where demonstrations were given. However, everyone agreed that the demonstrations were extremely well done, several new pieces of equipment were shown, and some unique things in the various operations were well received.

A fine blade sharpener was awarded at a drawing by Raverty's Iron Works of St. Paul, Minnesota, and was won by Paul Whitters of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in the drawing.

## Membership Increase

At the report given at the annual business meeting of the American Sod Producers Association Convention in Kansas City July 17th and 18th, retiring President Charles Davis of Wharton, Texas reported a 20% increase in membership of sod producers in comparison to the same time one year previous. He complimented membership chairman Gerry Brouwer of Keswick, Ontario, for the excellent work he had done in promoting membership and his development of "Key-Man" Program throughout the states and the provinces. Through the program, most geographical divisions have a leading sod producer appointed whose responsibilities include new member promotion and related activities.

At the time of the convention, 244 sod producers are included on the membership rolls, along with 40 Class B producer members and 16 Class C "educator research, extension" members.

Commenting on the growth, newly elected President Norm LeGrande of Lincoln, Nebraska stated "It is evident that under the outstanding leadership of retiring President Charles Davis this past year, sod producers in the United States and Canada have really made many strides through their American Sod Producers Association. Davis has spent a tremendous amount of personal time and dedication to surveying the organization and industry and we want to make public recognition and express our thanks for his complete dedication. It is certainly apparent that sod producers recognize the need for continual improvement, better service, reduction of costs, better marketing, the willingness to benefit from the experience of others, and to look less at one another as competitors and more as colleagues."

"In our ASPA organization, we see the confidence that the members show, and the benefits they are receiving and the continual growth of membership serves as a challenge to the association leadership to continue to provide improved program and services to the membership. The new officers and Board of Trustees pledge to you that in the next year we will do our utmost."

# AMERICAN SOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

## Board of Trustees

**OFFICERS:**

- President** Norm LeGrande, Hendricks Sodding & Landscaping, 404 Hill Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502 Phone (402) 475-4076
- V-President** Charles Lain, Pine Island Turf Nursery, Inc. R.R. No. 1, Sussex, New Jersey 07461 Phone (201) 875-5125
- Secretary** Glenn Rehbein, Glenn Rehbein Excavating, Inc., 7309 Lake Dr., Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014 Phone (612) 784-0657
- Treasurer** Tom Thornton, Thornton Turf Nursery, Rt. 2, Box 72, Elgin, Illinois 60120 Phone (312) 742-5030
- Past President** Charles Davis, Wharton Turf Grass, Inc. Box 1029, Wharton, Texas 77488 Phone (713) 342-5433 - 532-4340

**ADDITIONAL MEMBERS:**

- Parker Shirling, Princeton Turf Farms of Maryland Rt. 3, Box 105A, Centreville, Maryland 21617 Phone (301) 827-8454
- E. John Hope, Manderley Turf Farms, LTD RR #3, North Gower, Ontario Canada Phone (613) 692-4067
- Paul Florence, Paul Florence Turfgrass Route 2, Box 232A, Marysville, Ohio 43040 Phone (513) 642-7487
- Jack Kidwell, Kidwell Turf Farm Inc. Route 3, Box 16A, Culpeper, Virginia 22701 Phone (703) 825-9401-825-1151
- Executive Director** Bob Garey, Association Building 9th & Minnesota, Hastings, Nebraska 68901 Phone (402) 463-5691
- Legal Counsel** Bill Harding Box 82028, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501 Phone (402) 475-6761

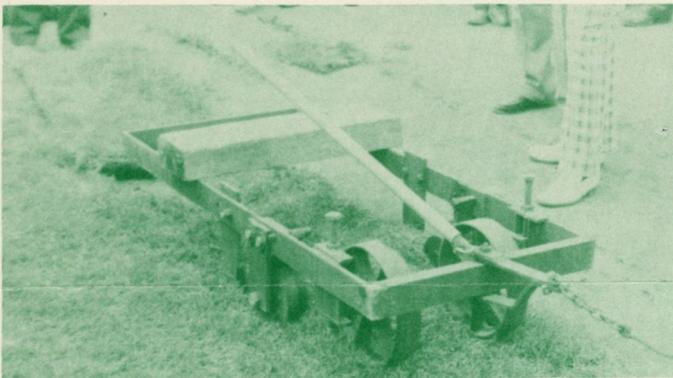
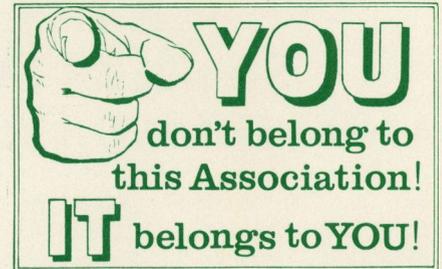
# LAND USE PLANNING DEFEATED

A federal land use planning bill was rejected by 23-19 vote by the committee.

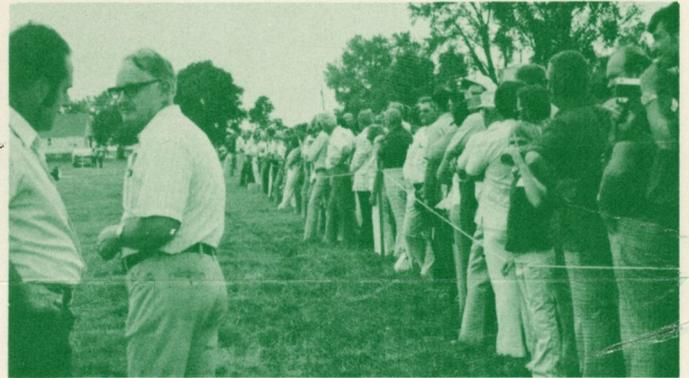
ASPA was involved in opposition to this bill and in conjunction with several other industry related groups, supported a coalition effort which was headed by former representative Dan Kuykendall of Tennessee. Kuykendall currently resides in Washington.

The strangle-hold that land use planning would place on sod farms was deemed to be of such considerable concern that our ASPA joined in opposition to Federal proposal.

This effort is just another of the activities of ASPA in serving its membership.



Old sod cutter, and it still works.



Demonstrations went smoothly. Mayor Latta stands by.



A "Week's Creation". A roller that runs like a charm.



"Red" Harris tells how one man does it all on his farm.

## ASPA CONDUCTING CONTINENT-WIDE INDUSTRY SURVEY

For some time, American Sod Producers Association has been conducting "An Inventory of Producers" in both the United States and Canada. The industry-wide totals will be used in a great many different ways that can be helpful to the producer-members. Factual information can be used effectively in preventing legislation and administrative rulings which can have seriously adverse effects on the operations and dated administration of the business of sod production.

Through factual information to be secured, ASPA legal council William Harding of Lincoln, Nebraska, can have the tools necessary to emphasize with government the importance of the industry and why its voice should be heard in important matters being considered by Congress and by the ever growing administrative bureaucracy, the later frequently making decisions not necessarily based on knowledge of the industry.

ASPA executive staff has for a number of months, been working with land grant, colleges, directors of agriculture and other sources and will soon be implementing a program through leaders in each state for verification.

When completed, the inventory of producers hopefully will be the most accurate available and can be used when answering requests as to the size of the industry and other total information.

From time to time, surveys will be sent which can report marketing trends, problems encountered and other information which again when tabulated in total can be of direct benefit to the individual producer.

Any information secured or provided in the survey or in subsequent surveys will remain strictly confidential and only totals will be made public.



Lars Jensen of Landsdale, Pa., sat in with the Levee Band and made his coronet talk. A great musician, he was a real "hit"!

## LE GRANDE OF NEBRASKA ELECTED SOD ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Norman LeGrande, of Hendricks Sodding and Landscaping in Lincoln, Nebraska, is the newly elected President of the American Sod Producers Association. The election took place at the annual convention of the organization which took place July 16-18 in Kansas City. LeGrande served previously as a member of the Board of Trustees and was the Board Liaison Director for the 1975 Convention and Field Days.

Elected Vice-President for the coming year is Charles Lain of Pine Island Turf Nursery, Inc. of Sussex, New Jersey. Glenn Rehbein of Circle Pines, Minnesota, will serve as Secretary; and Tom Thorn-

ton of Thornton's Turf Nursery of Elgin, Illinois, will serve as Treasurer.

Newly elected members of the Board of Trustees include Glenn Rehbein of Circle Pines, Minnesota; John Hope of Manderley Turf Farms, Ltd., North Gower, Ontario, Canada; and Charles Davis of Wharton Turf Farms, Wharton, Texas. Davis is the retiring President of ASPA.

Retiring Directors include Jerry Brouwer of Brouwer Sod Farms, Ltd., Keswick, Ontario, Canada; and Wallace Huggett of Huggett Sod Farms, Inc., Marlette, Michigan. Huggett also served as treasurer during 1974-75.

## Sod Specs Available

New copies of American Sod Producers "Guidelines Specifications to Sodding" have been printed and are available in quantity from the ASPA office in Hastings, Nebraska. Single copies are available on request, with additional copies available for 25 cents each plus mailing. These specifications are of great interest to landscape contractors, architects, and others interested in providing quality sod at an ASPA standard. For more information contact your Association Office: ASPA, Association Building, 9th and Minnesota, Hastings, Nebraska 68901.



New ASPA President Norm LeGrande of Lincoln, Nebraska; Secretary Charles Lain of Sussex, New Jersey; Director Glenn Rehbein of Circle Pines, Minnesota; and Treasurer Tom Thornton of Elgin, Illinois.

## AMERICAN SOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

The American Sod Producers Association represents sod producers and associated interests of a rapidly advancing sod industry. Organized in 1967, ASPA serves progressive (A) sod producers (B) manufacturers and suppliers, and (C) individuals involved in research, extension, and teaching in sod-related activities.

### Our Goals . . .

1. Serving as a medium for the discussion of mutual problems, the exchange of ideas and information, and development of cooperative effort.
2. Educational programs utilizing recognized authorities in the field so as to provide practical, valuable, and useful information for the sod industry.
3. Providing a forum for producers, manufacturers and suppliers, and research, extension and teaching specialists to work together in resolving common problems, stimulating awareness of the importance of all categories of membership, developing personal contacts and acquaintances and communicating for the mutual advantage of all. International members are invited, with such countries as Sweden, Holland, South Africa and Puerto Rico currently represented.
4. Annual midwinter conference is held in a temperate climate and is devoted exclusively to practical discussions, papers, and authoritative speakers.
5. Annual Summer Convention and Field Days in July, normally, includes not only necessary official business of the association but also is highlighted by field trips to see various sod farms, equipment and demonstrations by suppliers, and "on-site" inspections. Sociability and informality are the keynote of all sessions.
6. Has developed, printed, distributed and has available a national "Guideline Specifications for Sodding" that has attracted the interest of landscape architects, spec writers, landscape contractors, educational institutions, and professional turfgrass

managers associated with golf courses, parks, cemeteries, school grounds, military installations, highways, industrial grounds and municipal buildings.

7. Developed an accounting manual and system that will simply and accurately provide a sod producer with records pertinent to determining the financial status of his sod operation at all times.
8. Through ASPA's legal counsel, maintains direct contact with various governmental agencies, provides factual information and secures rulings, interpretations, rules and regulations which are fair and equitable to the industry. Advises the membership on governmental actions and recommends procedure—e.g. Fuel, OSHA, Wage and Hour, EEOC, et al.
9. Periodic bulletins and publications advising the membership of information vital to them.
10. Association headquarters and professional staff coordinate activities of the association nationally.

These accomplishments, achieved through the conscientious and dedicated efforts of the ASPA Board of Trustees and officers as well as the cooperative interest and effort of the membership, have contribut-

ed immeasurably to the betterment of the sod industry.

### Membership consists of the following categories . . .

- Class A—Individuals and/or firms actively engaged in planting, growing and marketing of sod (voting privileges).
- Class B—Manufacturers and suppliers, of equipment and/or products for the sod industry, or any allied profession or business interested in the sod industry (non-voting).
- Class C—Educators and other individuals engaged in research, teaching, extension work.

For further information contact:

American Sod Producers Association  
Association Building 9th & Minnesota  
Hastings, Nebraska 68901  
Phones (402) 462-5515  
(402) 462-2885



Reception prior to banquet with honky tonk piano.

## NO FLOODS IN KANSAS CITY!

Kansas City was dry during the convention, but that was only a part of the story. **The Kansas City Times** reports that July was the driest July since the National Weather Service began keeping records in 1888! Only .25 of an inch of rainfall was recorded, breaking the previous dry record of .36 of an inch in July of 1936. Several million dollars in crop damage was reported as a result of the drought. Bill Latta of Kansas City reports that they had and occasional three-inch rain (three inches between drops) and finally on August 14th got .2 inches of rain bringing the grand total since June 16th to .45 inches. He comments that if the guys attending the Field Days thought the

grass was brown on July 17th and 18th, they should see it now!

Sixty-seven cases of beer and thirty-nine cases of pop were provided on the Field Days by the Midwest Turf Grass Growers Association. Out thanks to them for their sincere and whole-hearted cooperation.

The reports also indicate that the honorable mayor of Parkville is available to give welcome speeches wherever desired!!!

Mel Briggs says it doesn't cost as much to go to Las Vegas as it does to raise sod in Kansas City, and he finds the former to be a lot more fun.



Mel Briggs was a great tour coordinator.



Unique place settings at the "Down on the Levee" party.



Bernard McMurphy of Atlantic, Iowa, takes a welcome "melon break" at the field days.

## ASPA MID-WINTER CONFERENCE SLATED FOR CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

Plans have been announced by the American Sod Producers Association to hold their annual mid-winter conference on the gulf side of the Florida Peninsula in February of 1976. The Sheraton Sand Key Hotel, a delightful facility located right on the shore, will be the meeting facility.

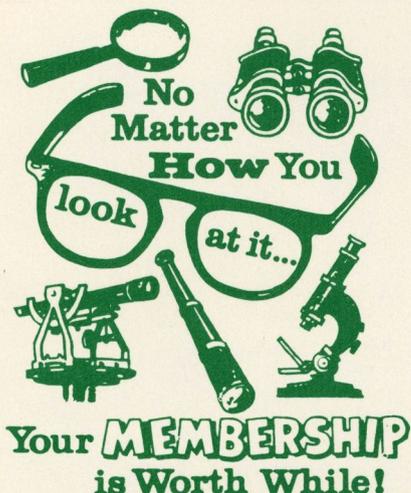
The dates of February 5th and 6th, Thursday and Friday, have been set for the two-day conference.

Mid-winter conferences have been increasingly popular each year because of their very practical program. The membership, because of the continuously increased attendance, has indicated a desire

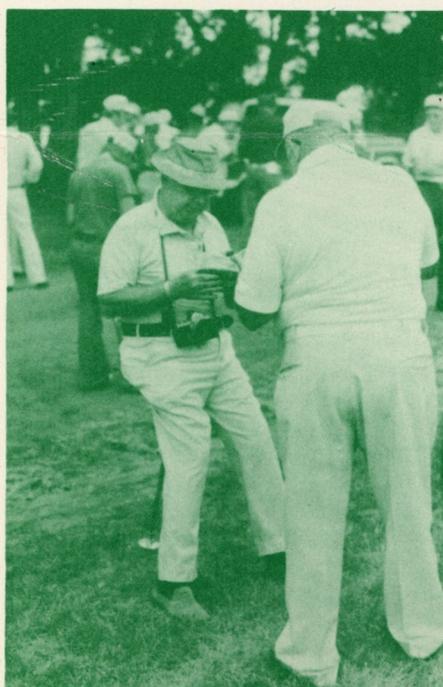
to have programs which are meaningful and can be applied at home to their various individual operations. Program chairman Tom Thornton of Thornton's Turf Nursery in Elgin, Illinois, seeks suggestions and recommendations from the ASPA membership and others in his goal to make this the finest mid-winter conference. The Sheraton Sand Key has reserved a block of ocean front rooms for the ASPA meeting and has established a \$35 per day rate for either single or double. Because of the season, those planning to attend the meeting should

send in reservation cards and one day deposit as soon as they are sent in the first announcement mailing from the ASPA office.

A post-meeting cruise is being made available for those who wish to take advantage of the group rates available. The names of 30 individuals are required on a seven-day cruise which departs from Miami. The cruise would leave Miami and dock at Freeport, Montego Bay, Grand Cayman, Mexico and return to Miami. Brochures of the tour have been sent to the ASPA membership.



Demo's at field days.



Parker Shirling, our "Official Photographer," rests for a while.

## Newport, Rhode Island Will Be '76 Summer Convention Site

July 15th and 16th marks the dates of the '76 summer convention and field days. The site will be the Treadway Inn, a complete resort facility located at water's edge. In addition to 135 handsomely decorated rooms, the Inn has a main ballroom for 325, a colonial restaurant, a 60-slip marina and an indoor year-round pool.

Your hosts include Chairman Chris Beasley of Tuckahoe Turf Farms, Canton, Massachusetts, and the New England Sod Producers Association.

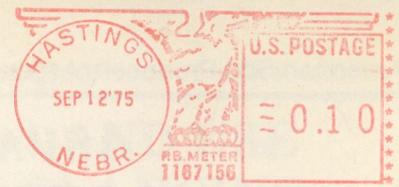
Plan your vacation. Rhode Island is an ideal area for the young and young at heart; a fascinating itinerary of things to see and do is close at hand. Within a fraction of an hour's drive are museums,

zoos and amusement parks, Indian powwows, fairs and carnivals, beaches and ferry rides, plus a variety of exhibits. See you there!



Write your own caption to this picture!!! Send it to ASPA office, & in our next issue, we'll reprint those submitted. Who'll win the prize?

American Sod Producers Association  
Association Building  
9th and Minnesota  
Hastings, Nebraska 68901



DR. JAMES BEARD  
DEPT. OF SOILS & CROP SCIENCE  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

## New members to ASPA since March, 1975

### Welcome!!!

**ALABAMA**—Central Ala. Turf Grass, Box 265, Harpersville, Alabama 35078

**ILLINOIS**  
Foxcroft Meadows (Class B), 5402 Edgwood Road, Crystal Lake, Illinois

**IOWA**  
Bluegrass Enterprises, Rt. #1, Marion, Iowa 52302

Robert A. Bobenhouse, 5716 Ashworth Rd., West Des Moines, Iowa

Mid-America Nurseries, Inc.  
RR. #1, Marion, Iowa 52302

Nishna Valley Sod Co., 1321 Locust, Atlantic, Iowa 50022

Resthaven Cemetery, 1720 Ashworth Rd., West Des Moines, Iowa 50265

Willits Greening Inc., 1400 E. Iowa, Indianola, Iowa 50125

**INDIANA**  
Evergreen Turf Farm Inc., Rt. 2, Roanoke, Indiana

Zionsville Sod Co., 140 N. 8th St., Zionsville, Indiana

**KANSAS**  
Ponderosa Turf Farm, Box 92, Holcomb, Kansas 67851

Thompson Turf Farms, 12702 Circle Dr., Shawnee, Kansas 66216

**MICHIGAN**  
Creek-Side Sod Farm, 21050-26 Mile Rd., Washington, Michigan 48096

**MISSOURI**  
J.E. Berry Sodding, RR #1, Box 165, Lathrop, MO 64465

Hollingsworth Turf Farm, 6319 Richmond, Kansas City, Missouri 64133

Virgil J. Ohmes Sod & Landscape, 106 N. Hillcrest, Belton, Missouri 64012

G.E. Riley & Son Sodding, 821 Houston Lane, Liberty, Missouri 64068

Sac Valley Sod Farm, Inc., Rt. 1, Box 56, Morrisville, Missouri 65710

Williamsdale Nursery, 3400 W. Bd., Columbia, Missouri 65279

**NEBRASKA**  
Todd Valley Farms, RFD, Mead, Nebraska 68041

**NEVADA**  
Unruh's Turf Farm, Box 70, Minden, Nevada 89423

**NEW JERSEY**  
Jonathan Green & Sons, Inc. (Class B), 590 Belleville Turnpike, Kearney, N.J.

**OHIO**  
Diamond Shamrock Chemical Co. (Class B)  
1100 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio

**OKLAHOMA**  
Arkansas Valley Farms  
5553 S. Peoria, Suite #103, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74105

**OREGON**  
Pickseed West, Inc., PO Box 888, Tangent, Oregon 97389

**TEXAS**  
Dr. James Beard (Class C), Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas 77843

Monsanto Co. (Class B), 1702 Lexington, Ennis, Texas 75119

Leonard Witting Grass Farms, Rt. 1, Box 199, Baling, Texas 77420

**WISCONSIN**  
Barney's Turf & Landscape, 315 Sumner St., LaCrosse, Wisconsin 54601

Turf Paradise Sod Farm, Rt. 1, Box 198, Hales Corners, Wisconsin 53126

**CANADA**  
Prairie Seed & Sod Farm, LTD, Box 7 Group iA S.S.I., Winnipeg, Canada

**SWEDEN**  
Goksholm Turf, Goksholm F1020 St., Melloso, Sweden

