

landscape

VETORINO'S LANDSCAPING & IRRIGATION, LLC

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OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, Vektorino's Landscaping and Irrigation has grown by leaps and bounds, now encompassing a wide array of one-stop services for more than 1,000 customers on Cape Cod and in surrounding communities. Stephen Vektorino, owner of the Barnstable company, is justifiably proud of the company's expansion from quite humble Cape Cod beginnings.

"My love and respect for machinery—and also for the 'landscape' of Cape Cod—started at a very young age," says Vektorino. "I was brought up around my father's and uncle's Cape excavation company. Like many landscapers, I started out with one lawn mower, a pickup truck, and a trailer."

Vektorino says that his business grew slowly at first, but he took advantage of every opportunity that came his way, trying whenever possible to meet new challenges with a positive can-do attitude. "Over the years, the business grew slowly, but surely. Pretty soon, I started adding more mowers—and then my business outgrew my garage and I rented out some space in my father's building," he recalls.

When his customers began to ask for help with their irrigation needs for properties of all sizes, Vektorino discovered a local irrigation company for sale. "I knew of someone who was looking to retire and sell their business," he says. "I bought the company and the owner came to work for me in the months before retiring."



With the company's irrigation services in place, this entrepreneurial Cape native decided to branch out into full landscape design and installation services. "I needed to answer the call for fertilization and shrub care, fine gardening, and hardscapes," he explains. "I was able to put the right people in place to launch these divisions and we haven't looked back since."

Vetorino says that one of the biggest challenges running a Cape business is recruiting—and keeping in place through all four seasons—the right people to staff the company's diverse services. "When you find people with talent and a passion for what they do—those are the ones to hang on to. I've been pretty fortunate to have found some people who love what they do and are very talented in their fields," he says, noting that he encourages all his employees to keep up with industry developments and new products. "I also promote education on every level," he says.

The success of his company is a daily pleasure to Vetorino, yet he stresses the fact that his greatest fulfillment is seeing each customer's vision come to fruition. "One of the things I love the most about this business is watching our people do what the customer wants, or guiding them in the right direction when their vision isn't necessarily going to work," he says. "I love it when our employees are excited about what they do, taking on new challenges and growing with the company."



Customer services—personalized, responsive, and top quality—are what Vetorino believes have made the company a big name on the Cape and beyond. "Our customers aren't just a name in the computer, or on a call sheet. They are people we have come to know, and care about," he says. "Our goal is not just to do the job, but to exceed our customers' expectations, and it doesn't matter whether it's a multi-million dollar property on Oyster Harbors where we provide all the services, or a small, mow-only account. The fact is that each individual customer is important to us."

Describing an expansive Barnstable property of 26 acres that the company has designed and nurtured into a Cape Cod showcase over the years, Vetorino says that he loves it when his company meets each customer's specific needs and dreams for second-home, or year-round services.

"With this beautiful property, one thing led to another, and 12 years later we have done so many things for this particular customer," he says. "There are over 250,000 square feet of turf, numerous varieties of trees and shrubs, stone walls, cobblestone driveways, perennial gardens and more Hydrangeas than you can

count. Ee mow, fertilize, irrigate, tend to the gardens, build stone walls and stairways—we've even moved trees and created hedgerows for this customer," he says. "There isn't much that we don't do on this property."

Still Vetorino says he has never forgotten the days when his company consisted of one young man, his solitary lawn mower, and a pick-up truck. He knows he has to have the vision—and the resourcefulness to continually refine his services and respond to the Cape's ever-changing environment. "Being a part of the Cape for as long as we have, we feel it is important to have that philosophy," he says. "The truth is that there are plenty of other landscaping companies and men/women with a pickup and lawnmower, just waiting to pick up your customers."

Still, not a day goes by when this former "mow and blow" guy doesn't realize how lucky he is to do something he loves that makes other people happy. "I always enjoy hearing from our customers about how happy they are with the services we have provided for them," he says. "There are so many things that I love about this industry. I could go on and on." ~ *By Susan Dewey*