

Landscapes Trades

Canada's Premier
Horticultural
Trade Publication

March 2013
VOL. 35, NO. 2
landscapetrades.com

Management:
Get efficient
about efficiency

'Campfire' rose,
Canadian charmer

The discipline
of landscape
design matures

Spring success
is all about
being prepared

New Products 2013

Special issue highlights
new opportunities for prosperity





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Landscape Trades

Canada's Premier Horticultural Trade Publication

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MARCH 2013 VOL. 35, NO. 2

PUBLISHER
Lee Ann Knudsen CLP | lak@landscapeontario.com

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Sarah Willis | sarahw@landscapeontario.com

EDITOR
Allan Dennis | adennis@landscapeontario.com

WEB EDITOR
Robert Ellidge | rob@landscapeontario.com

ART DIRECTOR
Kim Burton | kburton@landscapeontario.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Mike Wasilewski | mikew@landscapeontario.com

ACCOUNTANT
Joe Sabatino | joesabatino@landscapeontario.com

SALES MANAGER, PUBLICATIONS
Steve Moyer | stevemoyer@landscapeontario.com

COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT
Angela Lindsay | alindsay@landscapeontario.com

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Gerald Boot CLP, Laura Catalano, Hank Gelderman CHT, Marty Lamers, Jan Laurin, Warren Patterson, Bob Tubby CLP

Landscape Trades is published by
Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association
7856 Fifth Line South, Milton, ON L9T 2X8
Phone: (905)875-1805
Email: comments@landscapetrades.com
Fax: (905)875-0183
Web site: www.landscapetrades.com

LANDSCAPE ONTARIO STAFF
Shawna Barrett, Darryl Bond, Laura Brinton, Rachel Cerelli, Tony DiGiovanni CHT, Denis Flanagan CLD, Sally Harvey CLT CLP, Helen Hassard, Jane Leworthy, Heather MacRae, Kristen McIntyre CHT, Kathy McLean, Linda Nodello, Kathleen Pugliese, Paul Ronan, Ian Service, Tom Somerville, Martha Walsh

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Special issue:

NEW PRODUCTS FOR 2013

New-style paving solutions, low-emissions equipment alternatives and vertical landscaping options are just a few of the new products available to the landscape industry this year.



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Breeders expect strong market approval of this newest offering from the Canadian rose breeding program

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On the cover:
Recycled plastic patio furniture
by Bosman Home Front

Take steps to achieve your next level

Resolve to grow

I'm lucky enough to attend a wide variety of industry events and functions; the ANLA/OFA Your Next Level clinic in Nashville most recently. One of the best parts of my job is scouting new writers, speakers, trends and ideas.



By Sarah Willis

In a diverse industry such as ours, it is a challenge to offer educational programming in a one-size-fits-all format, as there are companies in all states of fiscal maturity. Fortunately, for those who want to grow their company, there are many generous industry veterans stepping up to the plate and sharing their experience with the up-and-comers. Whether you are looking for formal or informal learning opportunities, this industry is

full of folks who believe in mentoring, helping and coaching for the greater good.

How do you decide where to start? After attending a few seminars this winter, I appreciated the care taken to create titles that provide a clear set of expectations. For example, a seminar at the Green Industry Expo by Steve Rak was titled, How to take your company to the next level: Managing to \$1 million. With those few words, he filtered his audience. Those in the room knew what to expect, and were engaged, curious and eager to learn.

Rak is an Ohio-based landscape maintenance contractor who, after 20 years in business, has begun helping smaller companies leap to the next level. He believes in benchmarks that define when an owner/operator can no longer effectively manage every aspect of his company. When his own company hit \$500,000 in annual revenue, Rak found he could no longer keep up.

For those eager to reach new business levels, fiscally and organizationally, here are Rak's five strategies:

Set goals. Write them down. Look at them every day. Set deadlines and share them with your staff. Celebrate when you reach them.

Clear your plate. Make a list of everything you do. Highlight what you do best. Look at where you spend most of your time. How much time are you spending working as an employee, instead of an owner?

Ask yourself, "What can I delegate or outsource, to remove stuff from my plate?"

Hire a key player. This is a tough one, but the truth of

it has been played out again and again in landscape companies across the country. Once you free up some of your time to work on your strengths within the business, it will grow.

This is a big leap for company owners who are not sure if they can afford it, and worried if they can keep the new key hire busy. The key player will differ from company to company — it may be an office manager, operations manager or sales professional. A tip I have learned from several successful owners is to always be looking for the right people. You might find a server with a great attitude when you are out for dinner, or experience outstanding service at a furniture store. It never hurts to leave your card with someone who has treated you memorably. The adage, hire for attitude, train for skill, is true.

Get help. There is no lack of opportunity here. The quality of off-season professional development offered this year by Canadian green industry associations, and training resources through privately owned companies, is unparalleled. Many veterans, such as Landscape Trades' own Rod McDonald, mentor younger generations, and are happy to meet informally several times a year, to share their expertise.

Embrace a systems approach. Granted, creating and adopting the systems needed to run your business take a time investment, but if you've been paying attention to the advice offered by *Landscape Trades* columnist Mark Bradley, you'll know it's time well spent. Create job descriptions, an employee manual, routing and tracking forms. Systems are a powerful management tool.

Speaking of systems, the HR Toolkit is free tool to help with your human resources systems, found at www.hort-trades.com/HRtoolkit. This extensive resource offers hundreds of pages of great HR information, all free to be downloaded and customized to suit your own needs. It was developed for Ontario businesses, but has wide value for green industry companies across Canada.

Generosity characterizes our industry; one player in particular consistently strives to bring his fellow business owners up to the next level. He will always have my deep respect; your best strategy is resolving to actually implement some business-building ideas this spring.

And don't forget to let us know how it works for you. **LT**

Discover Navascape

A renewed line of products by Permacon, the leader in landscaping.



StoneTile Abruzzo in Caramel Ferrous

NEW PRODUCTS for 2013



Spill-less gas can

The G Can is a unique 20-litre portable refueling system that prevents spills, overfills and heavy lifting, providing a clean, easy, safer and environmentally responsible refueling experience. Includes: SmartSensing auto shut-off features, foot pedal eliminates lifting and provides full refueling control, pumps up to nine litres/minute, recovers harmful gasoline vapours, compact, durable and requires no assembly, helps protect equipment by reducing fuel contamination, Canadian Innovation, CSA Certified to B376-M1980.

Fuel Transfer Technologies
www.gcan.com



Auger

General Equipment Company is now using Honda GX35 all-position, four-stroke engines on its 240 hole diggers. The GX35 is an air-cooled, 35.8-cubic centimetre displacement engine that provides 1.3 net hp, and produces a maximum drilling torque of 50 ft-lb (68 N-m). The 240 is a one-man, hand-held unit intended for digging holes up to 8 inches (203 mm) in diameter in a wide variety of unconsolidated soil classifications.

General Equipment Company
www.generalequip.com



Retaining wall light

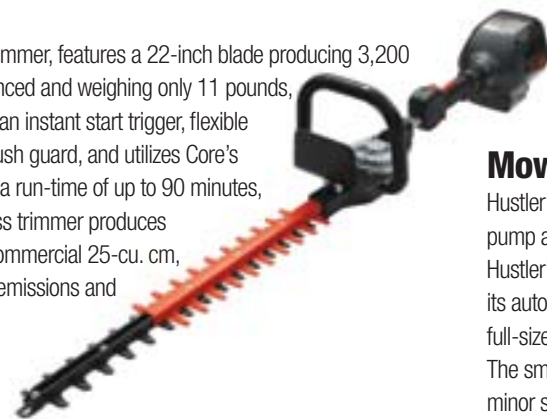
The Big Max retaining wall light offers 30 high output SMD LEDs per light fixture, providing 20,000 hours of long-life LEDs. Fixture is available in five colours, and has a five-year Dekor warranty and 30-year powder coat warranty. Only 1.9 watt power consumption. LED lights do not attract insects.

Brickstop Corporation
www.brickstopedge.com

Hedge trimmer

Core's GasLess CHT410 hedge trimmer, features a 22-inch blade producing 3,200 strokes per minute. Perfectly balanced and weighing only 11 pounds, this light-weight trimmer features an instant start trigger, flexible soft-grip handle and protective brush guard, and utilizes Core's innovative motor technology. With a run-time of up to 90 minutes, the manufacturer claims its gasless trimmer produces 25 per cent more torque than a commercial 25-cu. cm, two-cycle, gas trimmer, with zero emissions and low noise performance.

Core Outdoor Power
www.coreoutdoorpower.com



Mower

Hustler's X-ONEi features an integrated Parker pump and wheel motor; Kawasaki engines; Hustler's patented SmoothTrak Steering; its automated park brake system; and full-size, deep, commercial-duty decks. The smaller horsepower engine and minor size differences provide the commercial operator with a lower-priced alternative to the popular X-ONE.

Hustler Turf Equipment
www.hustlerturf.com



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STIHL'S TOP BACKPACK BLOWERS. The BR 430 and BR 600 MAGNUM™ put the power on your back to GET THE JOB DONE.



BR 430 Backpack Blower

Displacement 63.3 cc
Power Output 2.9 kW
Weight 10.1 kg / 22.3 lb
Sound Level 76 dB(A)
Air Velocity† 183 mph / 295 km/h
Air Volume† 500 cfm / 850 m³/h

† At nozzle end



BR 600 MAGNUM™ Backpack Blower

Displacement 64.8 cc
Power Output 3.0 kW
Weight 9.8 kg / 21.6 lb
Sound Level 75 dB(A)
Air Velocity† 201 mph / 323 km/h
Air Volume† 712 cfm / 1210 m³/h

† At nozzle end



BR 430 - Why?

- Innovative 2-stroke stratified scavenging engine - powerful and efficient
- Outstanding performance and plenty of power
- 20% reduction in fuel consumption and up to 70% fewer exhaust emissions
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- Low-vibrations make for comfortable operation
- Reliable and user-friendly

BR 600 MAGNUM™ - Why?

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- Easy-grip throttle with cruise control
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NEW PRODUCTS for 2013

Freestanding wall system

The Freestanding Outcropping system from Browns Concrete Products has the same weathered limestone look as its traditional Outcropping, with the added benefit of being double-sided. This wall system is ideal for privacy walls, large garden walls and other applications that demand the look and feel of nature, but the accuracy of a manufactured product.

Browns Concrete Products
www.brownsconcrete.com



Brick step lights

Nora Brick Lights are the size of a standard brick (8 5/8 in. x 3 15/16 in. x 3 in. deep) and can easily be installed in brick walls, patios, walkways and steps. Each Brick Light has 24 LEDs for even illumination and consumes just 4W of power for energy savings. The 120V units have an integral driver for wet-labeled applications and can be installed inside or outdoors. Architectural die-cast aluminum faceplates can be specified with louvered, lensed or shroud styling and are available in brushed nickel, bronze or white.

Nora Lighting
www.noralighting.com



Electric dumper

The Messers TCH-R16 FED is an environmentally-friendly, self-loading dumper. It is ideal for limited access work requiring a zero emission environment. It offers class-leading 1,000 kilogram payload capacity; rolling rocker patented track design; fast recharge, environmentally friendly lithium iron phosphate batteries; and a 32-inch wide, 2.3-cubic foot loading shovel. The manufacturer claims LiFePO (lithium iron phosphate or LFP) batteries have a faster recharge time and are non-toxic, compared with the more commonly used lithium cobalt oxide batteries.

Eastern Farm Machinery
www.easternfarmmachinery.com

Waterplay pad

Waterplay Solutions' Discovery Stream is a multi-faceted play feature comprised of a modular stream bed full of interactive weirs designed to mimic nature. Designed by Markus Ehring, world-renowned public designer and owner of numerous innovative patents, the Discovery Stream can be custom configured for each space using four segments; a spring, ocean bed and two interlinking bend sections. The spring, placed at the beginning, is designed to feed water into the stream, and the ocean, placed at the end, is designed to collect and drain the water away from the structure.

Waterplay Solutions
www.waterplay.com



Self-propelled sprayer

TurfEx introduces its first self-propelled spreader/sprayer combination unit. The new RS7200 Spread-N-Spray offers a large-capacity hopper that accommodates 150 pounds or 3 cubic feet of material, which can be spread up to 11 feet wide. Additionally, the balanced tank system holds 17 gallons of liquid and contains just one fill-port for quick, convenient refilling. A spot sprayer is also provided for weed-spraying applications. The unit comes with a hand-operated transmission disc brake, as well as a foot-controlled sulky band brake.

TrynEx International
www.trynexfactory.com



Raising the Bar



New KX040-4
• 4.0 ton
• 11'3" dig depth

New U35-4
• 3.5 ton
• Tight tail swing



Kubota's newest excavators have everything you'd expect, and some things you didn't. Like the standard auxiliary hydraulic diverter valve, Eco Plus mode for additional fuel efficiency, factory cab on the new KX018-4, larger cabs, and angle blades. Renowned reliability, resale value and industry leading Tier 4 engines are also standard. Take value and performance to new heights with Kubota.

For every excavator sold Kubota Canada Ltd. will make a donation to KIDS HELP PHONE.

Kubota.ca | Like us on Facebook.com/KubotaCanada



NEW PRODUCTS for 2013



Walk-behind mower

With its new TurfMaster 30-inch mower, Toro has designed its new, wide-area mower to be easy to operate and deliver outstanding performance under the toughest day-to-day operating conditions. The deck on the TurfMaster features a precisely timed, twin-blade cutting system and a 3-in-1 design for mulching, bagging or side-discharge. It's constructed of 13-gauge steel and is outfitted with a strong, bullnose front bumper, skid plates on the bottom of the deck, and a metal rear door.

Toro

www.Toro.com/Turfmaster



Planter

The Urbanscape Planter is an attractive, accessible solution for small spaces or reduced mobility allowing a high yield to be grown in a small space; ingeniously designed to allow tomatoes, peppers or cucumbers to grow down through the bottom while the full planter above provides room for growing other vegetables, flowers or herbs. The Urbanscape tomato planter even has a handy shelf for storing watering cans or other garden tools.

New England Arbors

www.newenglandarbors.com

Mobile software technology

Actsoft's Comet Suite of software solutions utilize the latest advances in mobile GPS technologies to improve workforce productivity, better manage assets and workers, control operating costs and mitigate risks, using smart phones and tablets. Some features include: wireless time-keeping, GPS tracking, wireless forms, reports, etc.

Relinks

www.relinks.ca



Sport utility vehicle

With room for five passengers and generous cargo space, Chevrolet's new Trax comes equipped with a 1.4-litre, Ecotec turbocharged, four-cylinder engine, producing 138 hp and 148 lb-ft of torque. FWD models are available with a six-speed automatic or manual transmission, delivering fuel consumption ratings of 7.8 L/100 km city and 5.7 L/100 km highway (manual) and 8.0 L/100 km city and 5.9 L/100 km highway (automatic).

Chevrolet

www.gm.ca/gm/english/vehicles/chevrolet/trax/overview

Leaf blower

The LB9HPBIT leaf blower by Monster Power Equipment is available with Briggs & Stratton Intek or Vanguard engines. Dual directional discharge nozzle with controls on the handle allow for better and easier control of debris dispersal. Taper Lok hubs for easy maintenance are standard. 14-gauge, single-wall tubular steel mounted fold-up handles with comfort foam grips for easy storage and transport. Heavy-duty welded steel construction with power coat paint for increased durability. 17-in. steel impeller.

G.C. Duke Equipment

www.gcduke.com



DO MORE THAN DIG.

The E50 has built-in versatility that comes in handy when the digging is done. It's clamp-ready, and X-Change-equipped to use more than a dozen different attachments. The superior M-Series design gives you stronger, faster performance in a lighter machine. With less than an inch of tail overhang, the E50 brings all that versatility to tight-fitting work zones.

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canamtractor.com

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www.matthewsequipment.com

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www.bmcdowell.com

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www.mcgavinequip.com

Stratford Farm Equipment
Stratford
519-393-6162
www.sfe-sales.com

NEW PRODUCTS for 2013



Large-scale pavers

The Georgian Tile from Atlas Block boasts long clean lines, with subtle texture for a more contemporary look. With a 60mm thickness, these large-scaled pavers are solidly weighted but can be laid more quickly smaller pavers. Although not suitable for areas that will be subject to vehicular traffic, Georgian Tiles allow you to bring a piece of the cottage to your clients backyard patios and walkways without the weekend traffic.

Atlas Block
www.atlasblock.com

Excavator

Kubota's new KX018-4 excavator introduces its first factory cab on a 1.8-ton machine. The cab features a wide door, flat floor, adjustable cloth seat, easy open front window, and a new comprehensive instrument panel located in the front for easy visibility. A separate lever now adjusts the track width; auto-downshift adjusts for traction load, and the straight travel circuit ensures straight movement when driving onto a trailer or driving in tight spaces.

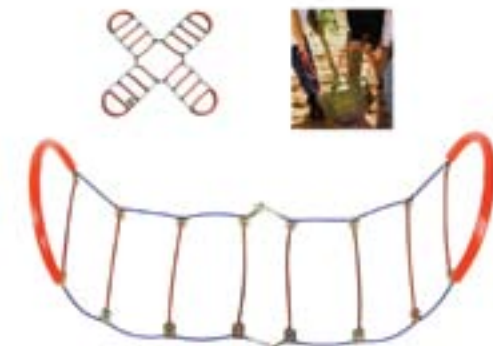
Kubota Canada
www.kubota.ca



Vertical planting system

The Flower Tower is a three-foot-high, self contained vertical planting system. Perfect for patios and balconies, it is available in free standing or wall mounted versions. Manufactured from recycled material. Internal watering system allows for quick irrigation with no wasted water. Suitable for annuals, herbs and vegetables.

Tradewinds International
www.tradewindsinternational.ca



Rootball carrier

The rootball carrier is the perfect option for moving root-balls or large pots to and from areas where equipment cannot fit. The lifter can also be converted from a two-person to a three or four-person lifter for extra heavy objects. It is constructed of aircraft aluminum cable, making it very strong and durable. The carrier can also be used to move other heavy objects, for example: rocks or construction materials.

Rittenhouse
www.rittenhouse.ca

Zero turn mower

Cub Cadet says its new TANK SZ Commercial and TANK LZ Commercial zero-turn riders are unlike any other brand. The manufacturer claims its TANK SZ (Steering wheel Zero-turn) delivers incredible manoeuvrability, turf protection and remarkable traction—even on steep inclines—as a result of Cub Cadet's exclusive 4-wheel steering technology (patented as Synchro Steer Technology). As well, the TANK LZ (Lap-bar Zero-turn) is the only lap-bar system that allows for a full range of adjustability and rider egress, regardless of position.

Cub Cadet
www.CubCadet.com



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NEW PRODUCTS for 2013



Plug aerator

The Zrator is a 26-inch wide, steerable, front-mount, true core plug aerator, suitable for most zero turn mowers. It features an easy on/off, four-bolt mounting system; heavy duty, 5/8-inch thick, front castor forks; and a 36-tine system that penetrates up to 3 inches in depth. The Zrator was voted the People's Choice Award Winner in the New Products Showcase at Congress 2013.

Pro-Power Canada
www.propowercanada.ca

Grass seed

RTF Water Saver is a patented grass seed variety that the distributor claims will not only make lawns and sport fields beautiful, but cost less to maintain. RTF stands for rhizomatous tall fescue, with a self-repairing and deep rooting root system. It's tough, performs well in drought, thrives with 30 per cent less water, is shade tolerant, salt tolerant and offers increased resistance to insects and disease.

RTF Water Saver Canada / Division of Granview Farms
www.RTFwatersavercanada.com



Precast slabs

Permacon has launched its new Esplanade line. This line with a slate-finish look and vivid colours offers contractors a wide variety of items from slabs to walls and coping.

Permacon
www.permacon.ca



Remote-controlled grapple

Diversified Products has introduced the RigEm&Roll, a remote-controlled grapple for the tree services industry. The patented product attaches to the load line of a crane for safely grabbing and picking large limbs, eliminating the need to go out on the limbs to set chokers. Constructed of 100,000-psi steel, the RigEm&Roll is independently powered by a self-contained, 24-volt battery and hydraulic system. It weighs approximately 500 pounds and has a lifting capacity of 5,500 pounds. The grapple jaws close using 1,000 psi of force for grabbing limbs up to 20 inches in diameter.

Diversified Products
www.diversifiedproduct.com

Mini-excavator

Wacker Neuson's new mini-excavator is the smallest in the company's growing line of compact equipment. The 803 is a one-ton, mini-excavator designed for digging and demolition applications in tight spaces. At just 27.5 inches wide, this compact machine fits through standard doorways, making it ideal for interior applications. The mini-excavator is powered by a three-cylinder, 13-hp diesel engine and includes an advanced hydraulic system. Best in class horsepower makes the 803 an excellent solution for difficult excavating and demolition applications.

Wacker Neuson
www.wackerneuson.com



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Series 3000® with EnduraColor™ Plus

EnduraColor™

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The EnduraColor™ Difference

Beyond the concentration of traditional wear resistant materials on the surface, this process utilizes a proprietary blend of nature's highest performing minerals to deliver an unparalleled colorfast and wear-proof finish.

EnduraColor™ PLUS

EnduraColor™ Plus products give you unique textures exclusive to Unilock®. Visit unilock.com to learn more about Belpasso®, Copthorne®, Courtstone®, Il Campo®, Richcliff®, Series 3000®, Town Hall™ and Umbrano®.

NEW PRODUCTS for 2013



Ultralight rain boots

Not your ordinary pair of rubber boots, these ultralight, warm, comfortable, 100 per cent waterproof rain boots will not crack or separate like their rubber predecessors. Made from EVA material, in a one piece mold. Received the People's Choice Award in the New Product Showcase at Expo 2012.

R2B Extreme Wholesale and Distributing
www.r2bxtreme.com

Chain saw

The CS-355T is Echo's premier, top-handle, arborist-grade chain saw. The compact design is lightweight (only 8 pounds), and features a 35.8-cu. cm, commercial-grade, two-stroke engine. The CS-355T features an Echo-exclusive adjustable palm rest, which the company claims provides greater control and support. The contoured handle is angled for a natural wrist position, meaning less wrist movement while cutting and better balance.

Echo Power Equipment Canada
www.echo.ca



Zero-turn mower

Exmark has introduced RED technology to its Lazer Z X-Series with Kohler EFI power. RED technology uses an electronic governor and operator-defined performance modes to improve engine response and performance. The technology also reduces fuel consumption up to 41 per cent, compared with carbureted models. The Lazer Z X-Series is available with a 60- or 72-inch, full-floating, UltraCut Series-6 cutting deck.

Exmark Manufacturing
www.exmark.com



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EDGE

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NEW PRODUCTS for 2013



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Kage Innovation
www.KageInnovation.com

Zero-turn mower

Dixie Chopper introduces a new zero-turn mower, model 2960EFI, designed for fuel efficiency and high performance, for use in a variety of commercial applications. Model 2960EFI comes with a 60-inch (152.4 cm) cutting deck for mowing up to 5.3 acres per hour. The cutting system has a 1.75-inch (4.4-cm) blade overlap and uses Dixie Chopper's patented X-Blade Technology. To achieve a mulching effect, optional Twist Blades can be used in conjunction with the standard blades.

Dixie Chopper
www.dixiechopper.com



Paving stone

Linea is a versatile new paving stone from Techo-Bloc, available in three lengths and two widths. Install a single width to achieve a sleek, linear look, or combine both for a more traditional random pattern. Linea's crisp lines and clean look can direct the eye to a focal point, be it a grand entrance, a patio or an outdoor kitchen.

Techo-Bloc
www.techo-bloc.com

Propane-powered tractor

Ventrac introduces the 4500Z tractor, powered by a 32.5 hp Kubota engine. Bi-fuel ready, with the ability to run on gas or propane, the optional propane kit offers a green engine alternative for fuel savings and cleaner burning emissions. The 4500Z utilizes All Wheel Drive traction to tackle tough terrain and power steering on an articulating and oscillating frame. Choose from more than 30 professional-grade Ventrac Mount attachments to transform it into a productivity powerhouse.

Ventrac Products
www.ventrac.com/green



Handheld blower

Core's GasLess CB420 handheld blower, utilizes Core's innovative motor technology and features an instant-start trigger, dual power control and an adjustable nozzle. Weighing only 11 pounds, it produces wind speeds of up to 110 mph with an airflow of 400 cfm. This gasless blower is both reliable and lightweight, and runs just as long as a tank of gas, while eliminating the common maintenance and hassles associated with gas-powered equipment.

Core Outdoor Power
www.coreoutdoorpower.com



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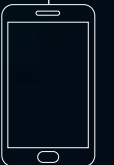
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Contains graphic scenes of underground violence, grub annihilation, nematode victory and homeowner delight. Many, many grubs were harmed in the making of this video.

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The Zahn R300 power unit by Ditch Witch, includes a Kohler gas engine, operator's console, and an articulation joint that enables the front end to perform like a dedicated unit. The two-wheel-drive R300 powers two types of front-end trenchers, while its four-wheel-drive InterChange counterpart accepts up to seven types of front ends: trencher, plow, dumper, tiller, backhoe, stump grinder, and a tool carrier that can drive more than 40 quick-change attachments.

Ditch Witch
www.ditchwitch.com

Mosquito spray

Health Canada has approved food grade garlic oil, Mosquito-Less, for commercial use. Mosquitoes are up to 10,000 times more sensitive to garlic than humans. Home and cottage properties as well as outdoor event facilities can be treated routinely with a proven garlic-oil based commercial concentrate. The garlic odour dissipates within several hours. Available for commercial users in 900 ml, 20 L cube, 205 L drum and 1050 litre reconditioned totes.

Alex Milne Associates
www.mosquitoless.ca



Swivel rocker dining chair

The rounded chair back of the comfo-back chair will cradle your clients in luxurious comfort and ease their cares away. Added to the swivel feature in 2013 is the rocker motion. Rocker chairs are made from recycled milk jugs – keeping them out of landfills and saving trees. The high-density polyethylene is UV stabilized, it won't rot, warp, crack, splinter, fade or support bacterial growth.

Bosman Home Front
www.bosman.ca



Lithium-ion extended reach hedge trimmer

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Stihl
www.stihl.ca



Equipment lubricant

New DayLube high-performance grease uses nanoceramic particles which act as sub-microscopic ball bearings to provide continuous lubrication to steel surfaces found on heavy equipment like loaders, dozers, haul trucks, excavators, skidders, crushers, and more. The manufacturer says, that with a lower coefficient of friction at all temperatures than traditional PTFE greases, chemically inert DayLube is also environmentally friendly. It maintains its viscosity across the full temperature range and does not soften or run out — after 100,000 production strokes it shows no evidence of breaking down.

Dayton Progress
www.daytonprogress.com



LT

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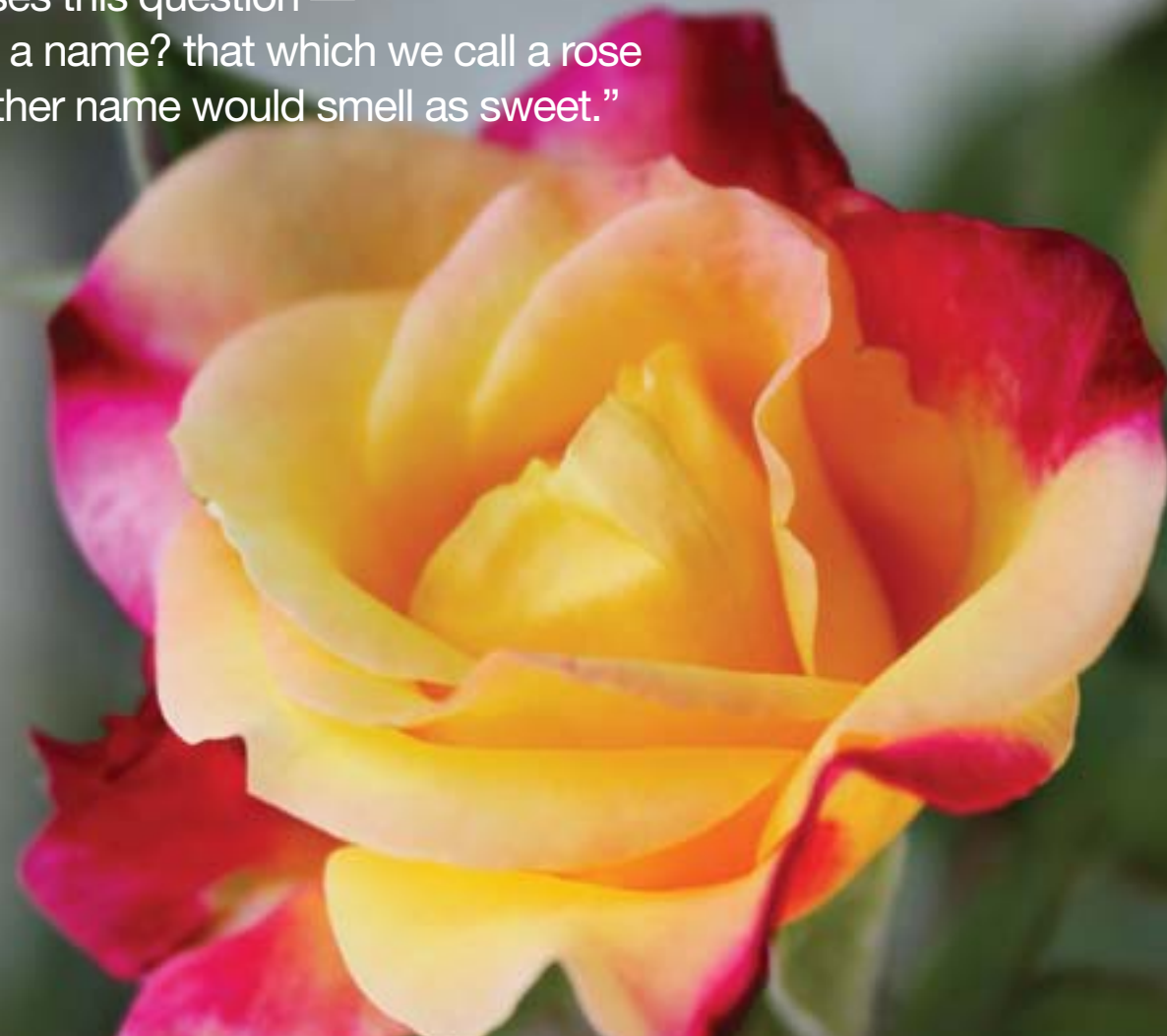
¹ Large Pickup class per R.L. Polk Canada, Inc. Towing capacity as shown is 15,800 lbs. (7,167 kg). ² Based on latest competitor data available.

'Campfire' rose: A Canadian star

BY ROD McDONALD

In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*,
Juliet poses this question —

"What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet."



TR

If a name did not matter, then we would be selling plants under their trial numbers. "Would you like a #233 ash to go with your #717 spirea, or perhaps a #534 potentilla?" The *Canadian Artist Series* of roses is not only an outstanding series, but the names attract notable press coverage and stronger sales. 'Emily Carr', 'Bill Reid' and 'Felix Leclerc' are the roses released so far; these cover the colours of red, yellow and pink. This year's release encompasses all of these in a tri-coloured

rose, aptly named 'Campfire'.

'Campfire' is the name of a Tom Thomson painting from 1916. Thomson was an honorary member of The Group of Seven, Canada's best known group of painters. He died in 1917, the year prior to the formation of The Group of Seven, but his influence was often credited with its formation. The Group brought the beauty of Canada's landscape to the world's attention. 'Campfire', oil on wood, was one of Thomson's last



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As the rose blossom opens, its colour progresses through yellows, pinks and reds.



Although light in fragrance, 'Campfire' rose is beautiful to admire.

paintings. He died in 1917, under suspicious circumstances.

The colours chosen by Thomson for his painting flourish in this rose. The yellows, reds and pinks are presented in differing combinations as the bloom progresses from the bud stage to fully opened. During the growing season, all three colours are represented, as the shrub retains spent blooms as new buds emerge. It is referred to as a continuous bloomer. Bud onset begins in early summer and continues strongly until frost.

In comparing this rose with its namesake painting, one might expect to smell burning birch wood or the crispness of a forest. Not so. 'Campfire' has very little fragrance, even though it is one of the sweetest roses to admire.

Michel Touchette of Jeffries Nurseries in Portage la Prairie, Man., has been promoting *The Canadian Artist Series* every chance he gets. He is a well-known grower in Canada who started out in the nursery trade in the 1970s, first at Aubin in Carman, Man., and then at Sheridan's in southern Ontario. He told me this anecdotal story of 'Campfire'.

At Rick Durand's trialing nursery in Manitoba, thousands of roses were planted. Several growers and garden centre operators were invited to grade the trial plants. 'Campfire' was included in random spots, labelled with different numbers as though they were different plants. The nursery people grading the roses chose all the 'Campfire' under its different numbers as their top choices. "It's

that good," says Touchette.

This series of roses came about as a result of the Canadian government slowdown of its rose breeding program in 1996. The government program had produced the legendary Explorer and Parkland (Morden) series of roses. Canadian growers were asked to contribute money and effort to the program. The growers took several thousand crosses and began the selection process. 'Campfire' came out of the Morden Research Station. It is a hybrid of 'My Hero' and 'Frontenac'. Morden has been the originator of many classic Canadian roses including 'Winnipeg Parks', 'Adelaide Hoodless', 'Cuthbert Grant', 'Morden Belle' and many others. Sold across North America and in Europe, Morden roses are known for their hardiness.

'Campfire' is labelled as being Zone Three, although with care, it can be grown in Zone Two. Some winter kill can be expected, especially above the snow line, in tougher climates. In the prairies, this introduction has been finishing out at .8 metres tall by 1.0 metres wide. This is a good size for most gardens, as many gardeners prefer compact to sprawling. While it has some comparable traits to 'Morden Sunrise', it is hardier and of greater disease resistance.

'Campfire' is propagated on its own roots, not grafted. Suckers or graft incompatibility are not a problem. The plant can be a hungry feeder and regular fertilizer is recommended. Roses that appear to be weak are often seen in Canadian gardens. Many gardeners attribute this to winter injury.

Touchette maintains that, more often than not, the weakness is attributable to the lack of proper feeding.

As this is its first venture into the marketplace, how well 'Campfire' will sell is yet to be proven. The suspicion among nursery people is it will be well received, and this writer agrees. To date, there has been strong interest from the European countries, including Scandinavia. Nurseries are gearing up for the European market penetration in the years ahead.

One- and two-gallon sizes, as well as liners, will be available this spring from production nurseries that supported the original research. After a period of time, other nurseries will be allowed to produce 'Campfire'. A royalty will be attached to support the ongoing breeding program.

Canadian roses have a strong presence in the world marketplace because of their quality and hardiness. They are appreciated around the world, grown in gardens by both the novice and the professional. 'Campfire' continues that tradition, along with its stable mates from *The Canadian Artist Series*. It is a rose with the label, "Grown and developed in Canada," of which we can all be proud. **LT**

Rod McDonald owned and operated Lakeview Gardens, a successful garden centre/landscape firm in Regina, Sask., for 28 years. He now works full-time in the world of fine arts, writing, acting and producing in film, television and stage.



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Spring arrives in style at Canada Blooms

Canada Blooms celebrates the Magic of Spring, from March 15-24 at the Direct Energy Centre in Toronto. Co-located with the National Home Show, the country's largest flower and garden festival is expected to host over 200,000 people. Landscape Ontario and The Garden Club of Toronto are the show's founders; Canada Blooms has promoted the horticulture industry with glamour and style since 1996.

Visitors will be invited to walk through acres of stunning gardens, take in over 200 hours of garden talks and demonstrations, see the winning entries in the Toronto Flower Show and gather resources in Gardener's Fare.

Members of Landscape Ontario have volunteered to create a Green for Life garden showcasing the industry's talent and creativity. In celebration of LO'S 40th anniversary, this year's garden is called Timeless, and shows the transition of horticultural styles over four decades.



Canada Blooms gives winter-weary folks a sneak peek at spring.

Tickets are available at www.canadablooms.com. For the price of one ticket, visitors get access to both Canada Blooms and the National Home Show.

AAS Summer Summit in Ontario

Join All-America Selections on trial garden tours in the Niagara Peninsula from Aug. 12-14, 2013. Learn about the AAS trialing and judging process first-hand, and why it matters. AAS participants, supporters, trade media and garden writers are



Visitors to the trial gardens compare garden performance of different plant varieties.

invited to view the AAS flower and vegetable trials courtesy of local host trials and display gardens. Tour sites include Stokes Seeds, JVK's Trials, the Royal Botanical Gardens and new tour participants, the University of Guelph Trial Gardens and William Dam Seeds.

Learn about the trialing process from on-site judges, who will walk-through what they have seen thus far in the 2013 trials. It's an eye-opening experience to see each AAS entry and hear what the expert judges have to say about their garden performance compared to other varieties planted side-by-side.

More information can be found at www.all-americaelections.org/meetings/index.cfm

McGrath joins Vineland research team

Darby McGrath has been appointed research scientist, nursery and landscape horticulture (trees) at the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, Vineland Station, Ont.

Dr. McGrath will work on developing an industry-responsive research program to identify ornamental and landscape tree (and other woody) species, and associated plantings, that thrive and have diverse functionality in the urban environment. This includes continued development and adaptation of innovative tree production and out-planting methods, and fertility/soiless media trials in nursery, field and container production. She will also examine the potential extension of these production technologies to other species of horticultural importance.

Dr. McGrath earned her Ph. D. in Social and Ecological Sustainability from the University of Waterloo. A major outcome of her Ph.D. research was the development of a suite of criteria aimed at supporting the sustained viability of horticultural operators in the Niagara Region, Ontario and Canadian horticultural landscapes.

Sport turf management course

The Sports Turf Association (STA) in conjunction with the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA) presents the Sports Turf Management and Maintenance Course April 29 - May 2, at the University of Guelph, in Ontario.

The four-day course will be instructed by Dr. Eric Lyons, associate professor of turfgrass science at the University of Guelph, home of the world-class



Darby McGrath

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Greenhouse guide now available

Flowers Canada Growers announces its *2013 Canadian Greenhouse Growers' Directory and Buyer's Guide* is now available. A form of this directory has been produced and distributed to those involved in the greenhouse industry for the past 19 years. With assistance provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the AgriMarketing Program and Flowers Canada Growers, continued efforts are being made to enhance and expand this well-known industry publication.

The directory is a guide for purchasers, growers and wholesalers, who use it daily to source the supplies, services and products essential to their companies. Growers who export into the U.S. are highlighted with a special flag logo.

For a free copy of the directory, or to list your company in the next edition, please email directory@fco.on.ca or call the FCG office at 1-800-698-0113.

Canadian penny phased out of circulation

Last year, the Government of Canada announced it would phase out the penny from Canada's coinage system, and stopped distributing pennies to financial institutions in February. The move is estimated to save taxpayers \$11 million per year.

The cent will remain Canada's smallest unit for pricing goods and services. This will have no impact on payments made by cheque or electronic transactions — only cash transactions will be affected. Pennies can still be used in cash transactions indefinitely, with businesses that choose to accept them. However, businesses are encouraged to stop using pennies and begin rounding cash transactions in a fair and transparent manner.

More information is available at www.fin.gc.ca/1cent/faq2-eng.asp

New marketing manager for Dynascope

Dynascope Software of Burlington, Ont., has hired Joe Salemi as marketing manager. Salemi will develop strategic relationships with key industry influencers, product partners and trade associations. Prior to this, he spent 10 years with the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association (CNLA) as member services and communications manager.

Variegated Solomon's seal is perennial plant of the year

The Perennial Plant Association (PPA) has named *Polygonatum odoratum* 'Variegatum' as its 2013 perennial plant of the year. Commonly known as variegated Solomon's seal, the plant was chosen as a hardy, easy to propagate and grow, versatile selection.

Variegated Solomon's seal grows in partial to full shade and prefers moist, well-drained soil. Solomon's seal has arching stems that carry pairs of small, bell-shaped, white flowers in mid- to late spring. The variegated ovate leaves are soft green with white tips and margins. Fall leaf color is yellow. This perennial offers vivid highlights in shaded areas of borders, woodland gardens or naturalized areas. The variegated foliage is attractive in flower arrangements.

There are no serious insect or disease problems associated with variegated Solomon's seal. Plants may be divided in the spring or fall. The white rhizomes should be planted just below the soil surface. The PPA notes that *Polygonatum odoratum* 'Variegatum' is a very easy perennial to grow and will enhance any shade garden.



Steven Still, Perennial Plant Association

Waterplay dealer awards

Waterplay Solutions wrapped up its annual Dealer Conference by announcing the winners of the 2012 Dealer of the Year and President's Choice Awards. For the second consecutive year, Quebec-based Tessier Récréo-Parc earned the prestigious Dealer of the Year Award as a reflection of its sales achievements. The President's Choice Award, recognizing outstanding dealer accomplishment in creative and strategic marketing efforts, was presented to RecTec Industries, Delta, B.C. Waterplay, based in Kelowna, B.C., specializes in aquatic play areas. **LT**



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Selling efficiency in landscape water usage: To the last drop

BY SEAN JAMES

One of the biggest ways we impact the environment locally is through water use. Believe it or not, the Environmental Protection Agency in the U.S. estimates 30 per cent (the National Wildlife Federation estimates 50 to 70 per cent) of our water use is for irrigation. According to *Canadian Geographic*, “In North America, 60 per cent of household water use happens outdoors.” This means we’re spending money treating the water to make it drinkable — then pouring it on the lawn and garden. We’re all looking for ways to pay fewer taxes and get better services. Saving water would be a good way to do both. Also, many municipalities would like to intensify development in their downtown cores but are restricted by water availability. Minimizing water use would allow them to create more eco-friendly, densely populated communities.

John Lamberink of Aquality Irrigation and Illumination in Acton, Ont., sits on Landscape Ontario’s Environmental Stewardship Committee. He thinks the biggest change in the irrigation industry is attitude. “People are open-minded (to environmentally friendly irrigation options) now. They are getting their water bills and saying they want to do something about it.” He sees the next great advance being controllers, and the technology that goes along with that. “Either they’re linked to a satellite or a central location or weather stations, making them sensitive to the weather. The thing to watch out for is that some products are brand-specific.” By this, John means that one brand will not work with another, which makes them not universally applicable. John thinks rotary nozzles are great. These are the ones that spray a little stream of water and layer water down. “The advantage is that the droplets are larger and less is lost to evaporation.”

An observational aside: Having enthu-



Water was being wasted with overspray (left), but with improvements, both water and energy are conserved.

siasts in our industry and circle of friends means they and, by extension, you, are constantly updating knowledge and sharing the newest information. Collect enthusiasts!

Matt Sandink of Smart Watering Systems, Milton, Ont., is also a committee member. When asked for the most exciting eco-initiatives in irrigation, he replied, “The new advances in drip irrigation and low volume, i.e., subsurface, is being aggressively tested for watering turf from below, with potentially 90 per cent uniformity.” He also believes clients of all sizes are buying into water savings and accepting that traditional irrigation practices (the opposite of best management practices) are wrong and wasteful. “End-users are embracing water-efficient irrigation.” Finally, he added, “I would have to say that many players, from municipalities to commercial property management to contractors to manufacturers, are seeing the issue and problems associated with the energy water nexus. The more wasteful irrigation we install, the more energy we use and the more costly the upgrades to municipal infrastructure for future growth of cities. This means that if we improve irrigation efficiency we can save energy as well as reduce municipal infrastructure costs.”

Drip irrigation has been around for years, but the willingness to look at it is new. Installers and landscape designers are looking

more realistically at it and homeowners are becoming more curious about eco-friendly options and open to new ideas when presented to them at the right time. It may be best not to ask if a customer is interested in ‘green’ solutions at the beginning of the process. During the final design presentation, if there’s a weather station in the design, the customer will ask, “Oh, what’s this?” When you explain it, their reaction is almost always, “Very interesting — I love it!”

It’s odd, but ‘eco’ doesn’t yet have the social acceptance we might wish. Shows on garden television networks don’t sell if they’re billed as ‘green,’ so they have to bury the options under the guise of ‘fashion.’ Still, we are on a tipping point of acceptance. People want to do the right thing but they are concerned about how they are seen by others. Present the options. Discuss the financial and ecological benefits. Customers will approve and send more business your way. Give it a try.

LT



Sean James is owner of an Ontario-based environmentally-conscious landscape design/build/maintenance company. In addition, he is an eco-consultant and a popular speaker. Visit his company,

Fern Ridge Landscaping, on Facebook.

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Be prepared: A litigation primer

BY ROBERT KENNALEY

This month features steps you can take, from contract negotiation through counsel retention, to be better prepared and protected in the event a dispute arises that cannot be solved without litigation.

Who is your customer?

Know with whom you are contracting. “John Doe Construction” has no meaning; it is either John Doe, or a partnership, or corporation. If you are dealing with a corporation, make sure you have the full corporate name. If you are concerned the person you are contracting with doesn’t own the land, or might not have any equity in the land, consider a title search. This can be important if you believe you might eventually have to pursue a claim for lien.

Contract tips

Make sure your contractual scope of work describes your work accurately and is as detailed as possible. Most disputes in construction arise over what is, and is not, a “change in the work.” In the residential context, make sure your contracts comply with any applicable consumer protection legislation.

Where you are a subcontractor, know whether or not you are required to perform your work in accordance with the “Prime Contract” between the Contractor and the Owner. If so, obtain a copy of, and read, that Contract — preferably *before* you agree to a price for your work. Make sure, so far as is possible, that your subcontractors agree to be bound by the terms of the contract you have with your client. You want them to play by the same rules you do with respect to notices, changes in the work, obstructions, delays, etc. You want to avoid a “gap” in the allocation of risk.

Avoid the “battle of the contract documents” where both parties believe it is *their* form of contract or subcontract that gov-

erns the relationship between them. (This happens all the time: the subcontractor submits a bid with his qualifications, terms and conditions, and the contractor awards on the basis of the contractor’s form of subcontract. Often, no document is actually signed between the parties).

Have a copy of your contract or subcontract at hand through the performance of the work, so that you can meet notice and other contractual requirements in the event of a dispute. In this way, you can (with any luck) eliminate a number of arguments before they are raised.

Mind the extras

If it appears you may want additional compensation for any particular item or event, check your contract and meet any notice requirements in that regard. Some contracts require notice to be provided much earlier than you might otherwise believe. With additional compensation requests for any particular item or event, change, or record-keeping, be sure to keep detailed timesheets and field records in relation to the issue. Backup to the quantum of your claim, be they invoices, timesheets, lead letters for labour rates, etc., should be attached to whatever other documents might support your claim (such as approvals, notices, correspondence, etc.).

If it appears someone might seek additional compensation from you, keep the same detailed records. Pulling together these documents when the matters at issue are fresh in your mind will save you time, aggravation and (probably) money at the end of the day.

The paper trail

Whatever you write in relation to a project — letters, emails, internal correspondence, field notes, etc. — should be written as if a

judge will read them. Avoid self-incrimination and inflammatory language. Make sure all your employees diligently put all emails relating to a project into a single folder. This way, if litigation arises, the emails can be produced to counsel with a few clicks of a mouse. Otherwise, you, your employees, or your lawyers will have to spend hours and hours going through hundreds or thousands of emails to try to pull out the ones that relate to the project. Even then, you might not catch them all and a negative inference might be drawn against you at trial.

Safety policy is a must

Have an occupational health and safety policy. Update that policy regularly and ensure your employees are properly trained in relation to same. In addition, have a process in place to ensure your occupational health and safety policies are actually being followed. Where transgressions are noted, document them and strictly impose graduated discipline to make sure they don’t occur again. Also, where transgressions are noted, revise your policy to speak directly to the issue in future training.

Timing is everything

Understand the time frames that govern the preservation of a claim for lien in your jurisdiction, and don’t leave the preservation until the last moment. Seek legal advice early. If you are working on a condominium or subdivision project, keep in mind that your lien rights will probably be lost as the condominiums or subdivision lots are turned over to new home buyers. Again, seek early legal advice in that regard.

Take care in negotiating additional compensation to keep those negotiations “without prejudice.” If your claim is for \$100,000, but you are willing to take \$75,000 to settle the issue, making your communication

“without prejudice” will retain your ability to pursue \$100,000 in the event a settlement cannot be reached.

Consult qualified legal counsel early

If someone gives you notice that a claim of negligence against you or your company may be forthcoming, get legal advice early. First, any steps you take to negotiate or address the issue might prejudice your insurer such that insurance coverage can be denied. Second, you may want any communications or assessments that you undertake in relation to the issue to remain privileged. In Canada, this privilege can most easily be protected if counsel is involved. Litigation privilege might be also established where the dominant purpose of the communication is preparation for litigation — a privilege which your advisors can assist you to establish.

Because litigation can be expensive, explore settlement possibilities early. Because construction litigation can be complex and specialized, consider retaining counsel with expertise in the area.

And finally, keep doing what you are doing! Take advantage of resources like *Landscape Trades*, CNLA and others that can assist in risk management. **LT**



Robert Kennaley has a background in construction and now practises construction law in Toronto and Simcoe, Ont. He speaks and writes regularly on construction law issues,

including in his blog: *kennaley-on-construction.com*. Rob can be reached for comment at 416-368-2522, at *kennaley@mclaughlin.ca*, or on LinkedIn. This material is for information purposes and is not intended to provide legal advice in relation to any particular fact situation. Readers who have concerns about any particular circumstance are encouraged to seek independent legal advice in that regard.

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Solving inefficiencies, efficiently

BY MARK BRADLEY



A thought to kick-off 2013:

Solving 80 per cent of your problems isn't nearly as hard as you might think.

Years ago, an economist noted that 80 per cent of Italy's wealth was owned by 20 per cent of its population. The idea caught on in business and consultants and owners began to recognize this same ratio played out in many areas of the business world:

- 80 per cent of your complaints come from 20 per cent of customers
- 80 per cent of sales come from 20 per cent of lead sources
- 80 per cent of warranty/rework comes from 20 per cent of employees
- 80 per cent of accidents and near misses are caused by 20 per cent of employees

And 80 per cent of your profit is due to 20 per cent of your employees who are your best staff. If any of these sound familiar to you, then you'll agree with the Pareto principle: 80 per cent of effects come from 20 per cent of causes.

So what does this rule mean for our landscape businesses? Simply put, getting 80 per cent "better" doesn't mean we have to fix 80 per cent of our problems; we merely have to identify and work on the 20 per cent of causes that result in 80 per cent of the effects (both good and bad).

Sales

If 80 per cent of your sales leads (or landed jobs) come from 20 per cent of your sources, how much more could you sell by doubling the time and energy spent on that 20 per cent, while eliminating 50 per cent of your time and energy on work that's not delivering results?

Does 80 per cent of your work come from referrals of existing customers? How much more work could you land by investing more time and energy on getting referrals?

How much more profitable would your jobs be if you spent your time in the evenings estimating and planning work generated by these referrals, instead of chasing down "tire-kickers" and handing out estimates in response to blind phone calls?

Repairs

In my company, it's easy to see the Pareto principle in effect in our equipment repairs. Eighty per cent of our avoidable repair costs can be traced back to 20 per cent of our staff. Their bad habits and poor daily maintenance are helping my parts suppliers retire early! What could you save on repairs by cracking down on your worst offenders? Don't forget, every avoidable repair dollar saved is pure, net profit.

Wasted time

Mistakes, wasted time, rework, warranty, problems and stress can all be related to poor planning. When you don't have a planning culture, there are only two types of crews in a landscape company:

1. Those who get out of the yard quickly and efficiently in the morning, only to find out they're at site without the necessary labour, equipment, materials or information; and
2. Those who take their time getting out of the yard, sipping coffee and dragging their feet, only to get to site without the necessary labour, equipment, materials or information.

In our company meetings, many, many of our problems are blamed on "not enough time." The crews get to site quickly, eager to get to work and get a head start. And the foreman is no exception. He's helping this guy set up his area correctly, correcting another one's work, helping another lift some materials. Before he knows it, lunchtime's

arrived. He's forgotten to order the materials that need to be there in the afternoon. He calls the vendor, who can get them there, but not until 4 p.m., so they kill some "make-work time" waiting for the materials. They work late to try to catch up.

Then they're eager to get home. They rush home to eat dinner and relax. On the way to work the next day, the foreman realizes he needs a skid steer, but he forgot to ask for it ahead of time. The skid steer wasn't returned to the yard. Now someone's off to pick it up and bring it over.

And that foreman, knowing he's falling behind by two mistakes, puts his head down even harder to really put in a good effort. In his haste, he misses a layout mistake by his lead hand, and now they have to re-do a section.

What if the foreman spent 80 per cent of his day working, and 20 per cent of the day planning what's needed in the hours and days ahead. He needs time to focus on the labour, equipment, materials and information to keep things moving along. Insisting your foremen spend 20 per cent of their day planning might be one of the smartest moves you'll ever make.

Making the changes stick

Tell me if this cycle sounds familiar:

Staff are inefficient, overworked and grumpy; company problems are causing everyone stress and financial pain. You pull together for a big company meeting, voice a bunch of complaints, then agree on some new systems that will help eliminate these pains.

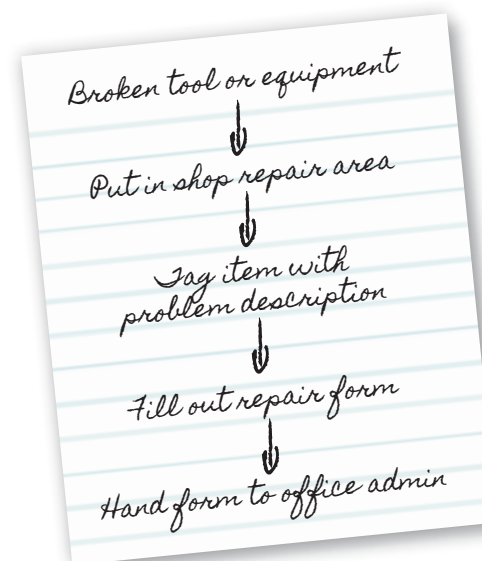
Everyone goes away happier. The new systems start to work; the problems are noticeably better. The problems are much better, so a few staff decide to stop using the new systems. A few new staff are hired and are never taught the new systems.

Before long, nobody's using the new system because the problem "went away." Without the new system, the problem comes back — with a vengeance. Staff are inefficient, overworked and grumpy, again. The owner is one step closer to losing his mind.

Visual systems for 20 per cent of your problems

Why not make 2013 better by trying some visual systems for the mistakes/problems that cause 80 per cent of your hardships? Anyone can put together a simple flowchart with a pencil, some paper and a photocopier (for distribution later). Draw out, in simple blocks, what your people need to do.

For example, how long would it take you to sketch out what happens when small tools or equipment need repair?



You could put together that plan in five minutes. Then you could spend another few hours putting together similar plans for the remaining 20 per cent of problems that are causing 80 per cent of the waste and inefficiency. Print or photocopy these and assemble a binder/book for each foreman. Call a meeting, hand out the books and explain each system until it is clearly understood.

Then hold your staff accountable for these clear and concise instructions. You can easily train new foreman or lead hands on the same systems. There are no more good excuses. There are only three reasons mistakes are made:

1. You didn't have a system;
2. Your staff made a mistake, or

3. Your staff made a deliberate decision not to follow your system.

It's that simple

Twenty systems will solve far more than 80 problems. The three or four hours it takes you to draw up your systems will save you not just 12 or 16 hours over the season — I'll bet it saves you hundreds of hours previously lost to waste, inefficiency and unnecessary costs. With solid systems in place, you'll be well on your way to putting the 80/20

rule to work in your business.

Make 2013 the year you really get better. The easier way. **LT**



Mark Bradley is the president of TBG Landscape and Landscape Management Network — an online system of tools and systems that help turn great contractors into great businesses.

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Adding meaningful value to design with LEED

BY CHRISTENE LeVATTE

Consider for a moment the depth and breadth of opportunities currently available to the landscape design profession in Canada that were not available, say, 35 years ago. When my parents started our family business, landscape design was not very well defined within the hierarchy of the landscape trade. We had a small landscape company that included the perfunctory small garden centre. Landscape design went one of two ways. Usually the wife arrived with a Polaroid of the front of her home. A few questions, a quick sketch and a walk around the garden centre later, plants were picked out, loaded up and off she went. Or the husband called. He was looking for a free estimate for the front lawn, walkway and two foundation gardens — the classic cedar-cedar-juniper-juniper-potentilla-potentilla symmetry. These were simple bread and butter transactions, where landscape design was really about selling the plants and the sod. This is how and what we sold as landscape design. *Beautification!* Who amongst us has not used the word *beautify* in our ads at one time or another?

Fast forward 35 years. Our company is now primarily a turf producer, commercial landscape contractor and design/build firm.

My work as landscape designer is largely for commercial and industrial sites. My world involves the capturing of groundwater into a rain garden to reduce volume of run-off into a municipal storm sewer, or re-vegetating a former brownfield site.

The evolution of the landscape designer is truly epic and the career path opportunity is as diverse as it is abundant. For our industry, the former adjective *green* has now become *to green*, a very lucrative verb. With this shift has come not only opportunity but a responsibility, a due diligence requirement incumbent upon the designer and the industry to understand and be informed about our place within the big environmental picture. There has been a global paradigm shift from beautification to constructing green buildings, living in green cities, finding green energy alternatives, protecting water quantity and quality, reducing our carbon footprint, mitigating and reclaiming our environment, developing sustainable and contributing landscapes, and placing an emphasis on public health and wellness. To truly do our job well we need to understand how these changes affect our scope of work.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is becoming a familiar face and has made its way into the landscape industry's advertising, events and project tender packages. LEED certification and accreditation is an impressive, albeit complex process and while the LEED program may have its share of adoption and operational challenges, one has got to respect its intent, its effect and what appears to be its staying power. LEED has gone where project specifications have not always been able to go in

Membertou Heritage Park, Sydney, N.S.: contouring, swale and rain garden designed and built to collect groundwater and intercept to reduce volume of run-off into municipal storm drain.

terms of requirement and enforcement.

Initially developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), and subsequently adopted by the Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC), LEED "is intended to provide building owners and operators a concise framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions." The Canada Green Building Council's mission is to "*Lead and accelerate the transformation to high-performing, healthy green buildings, homes and communities throughout Canada.*"

The LEED philosophy parallels that of our industry's in terms of general benchmarks and attainable goals. To design, build and maintain the landscape in a contributing and sustainable way should be the core guiding principle of all landscape design. While this is not exclusive to LEED, LEED does provide an organized and measurable program delivered in a practical and practiced system. Regardless of what or where you design, there are practical applications and opportunities for LEED principles in most projects that can make us better designers of better projects.

So, how can we boil LEED down to a basic relevance and, more importantly, what can we as landscape designers, take-away for our own business?

LEED is a building certification system and, in its simplest terms, the certification process consists of a credit system that allows a building to earn credits in categories that qualify it for levels from basic LEED Certified to the ultimate, Platinum. For the landscape designer, it can be strategic to understand the LEED process, its intent and structure, to better contribute (sell) to a project, our goods and services.

The cornerstone of the LEED process is

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the *charette*, defined as "a forum where those who can influence the project decisions meet and begin to plan the project." This integrated design approach is a common-sense brainstorming session with everyone involved in the project, to communicate and coordinate from the beginning — to determine budgets, list needs, set goals and identify constraints for group information, input and discussion. Designing in isolation is inherently restrictive and this disconnect can be a lost opportunity to the project and lost revenue for a landscape business. The *charette* model is a synergistic approach that allows the designer to be pro-active. A simple example of a proactive design element would be repurposing a concrete pad from an old shed that has been demolished, into a landscape feature, instead of expending resources to break up the concrete and take the debris to landfill. A win-win-win for the project, the environment and the landscape budget.

The *Triple Bottom Line* is a measure-

ment tool, a performance benchmark or checklist from which a project's success is determined as it relates to contribution and sustainability. If you watch *Dragon's Den*, you will know Arlene Dickinson often cites the phrase People, Planet, Profit when determining investment potential. These three words summarize perfectly, the intent of the Triple Bottom Line.

The USGBC describes the Triple Bottom Line as:

Economic Prosperity: impact on a corporation's bottom line

Social responsibility: impact on a person's happiness, health and productivity

Environmental Stewardship: impact on air, water, land and global climate.

From the perspective of a designer, these three guiding principles are self explanatory and form the basic framework of the designs I create for my clients. These goals are neither lofty nor altruistic; interpretation notwithstanding, they are completely

doable and are relevant across all economies of scale.

What is important to take away from this overview is the trend, or a better description might be the new reality, of conducting business in the green economy. To succeed and excel, we need to understand our product and services and where they fit, to a degree that we have not had to before.

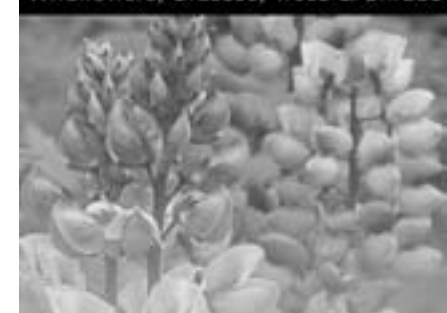
For more on the USGBC Life Cycle Assessment, Life Cycle Cost and the landscape elements that can contribute to LEED credits, visit www.landscapetrades.com **LT**



Christene LeVatte, CLP is a landscape designer and LEED Green Associate from Sydney, N.S. Her family business, Highland Landscapes for Lifestyle, which she operates with her

brother, David Stenhouse, CLL, has won several Landscape Nova Scotia Awards of Excellence.

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Spring and The Road to Success

BY ROD McDONALD

This spring will, as every other spring before it, belong to those who are prepared for the season. I really wish I could write about one or two magic things you could do to put yourself out front of the pack, but the bottom line is this: *Success is contingent upon your doing a thousand little things right, not one or two big things.* Those who dream of success as a result of finding one or two things that ensure profitability are, in a word, delusional.

Success this spring will belong to those merchants who have their shelves stocked and their greenhouses overflowing with lovely hanging baskets, and to those contractors who have their equipment running and their trailers in an organized condition. Success will not find its way into the arms of those who wake up on the first nice day of spring and ask "Uh, what should we be doing now?"

Preparing for the spring means preparing for success. Success is not a matter of luck or happenstance. I was once asked by a journalist what role *luck* played in my success. I deadpanned that, "Luck is everything. In fact, I am so lucky, I arrive for work every day, nice and early, just to wait for my

luck to roll in. On the other hand, my neighbour is not nearly as lucky, so he doesn't come in as early. His luck doesn't show up until noon."

I used to tire of the smartasses (no doubt you do as well) who would crack, "So what do you do in the winter? Spend most of it in Hawaii?" Unfortunately, the waves of Maui were not a major part of my offseason. Getting ready for the year ahead was always a necessity and priority for me. None of us can afford to start the season unprepared. Sadly, or perhaps fortunately for those of us who do, there are many people within this trade who fly by the seat of their pants. They often refer to themselves as crisis managers or 'just-in-time' devotees.

In Saskatchewan, in the 1990s, the provincial government employed a greenhouse advisor. His job was to assist those of us within the trade to be successful. Those of us who wanted to succeed took advantage of his skill set and resources. Those who believed they knew everything did not. In 1997 and '98, we had early springs. The earliest I have ever experienced. The greenhouse advisor commented that consumers were flooding the marketplace in unprecedented

numbers and recommended that we be "ready to take their money." When I asked what he meant, he told me that some garden centres didn't even have their float for the cash registers in place. I replied with my operational philosophy: *Take the twenty dollar bills when they are offered. You don't always get a second chance.*

Here are three things you need to accomplish by March 31 of each year (I know I'm preaching to the choir):

The bulk of your staff should not only be hired but training should be well under way. Orientation for new staff is not something you have time to carry out when there is a line-up at your till. Yesterday I was at London Drugs. The cashier at the till was not your sharpest knife in the drawer and the line was growing. One customer towards the back of the line put his purchases into a display bin and walked out muttering, "I will get this stuff somewhere else." If one of your new hires is slow on cash, you need to find that out now.

The bulk of your hard goods should be in your possession by the end of March. With dated billing available from most



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wholesalers, provided you have the room, there is no reason not to do so. There is no excuse for running out of fast sellers and not being able to restock immediately. How often have we been out of stock and called our supplier only to learn it would be 10 days before we could be restocked? The answer is, often enough that we should have a healthy supply of back-up stock.

New signage systems need to be implemented by the end of March. One of the problems is that we seldom read our own signage. We add new signs without discarding the old ones. We include signage with inconsistent fonts and sizes, leaving a rag-tag impression upon our customers. Our customers not only read our signage, they rely on it for information. There is a reason good signage

is often referred to as our silent sales force. Our signage tells a story; it assists our customers in deciding to purchase. A four-year-old, weather-worn sign is not an encouragement to buy. With the availability of computers, there is no reason for even the smallest of operators not to have first rate signage. In the old days, we had to hand write our signage with magic markers on poster paper, hardly a professional image. Good signage is one way you can outshine the big box stores, whose signage is so generic it trends toward the obtuse.

I found an excellent way of improving sales was to personalize some of the signs. In front of a group of plants or product, I might put a sign that read, "Rod's favourite," "Susan recommends" or, "Tracy's choice." Along with this personalized recommendation would be a few highlights to back up the selection. My rule of thumb is that when preparing a sign you should highlight a minimum of two selling features or benefits and a maximum of three. While you are at it, knock off the jargon that confuses the average gardener. If you are trying to impress gardeners with how smart you are, keep in mind that your audience of expert gardeners is only three per cent of the people walking in the front gate.

I often compare a garden centre to a battleship engaged in a naval firefight. When the enemy is shooting eight-inch shells at your hull is not the time to be ordering ammunition for your own guns. To be combat ready, everything needs to be running perfectly and at full speed.

Sure, we all have loyal customers who will gladly wait for us to get in a plant or product they want. But our loyal customer, while the backbone of every company, is not always the largest percentage of our business. We also have our transient or fair weather customers, and they are the ones who often make the difference between a good and an outstanding season. They will not wait. They will go elsewhere if we do not have what they want.

Spring and the return of the customer is not the time to be implementing or trialing new equipment or procedures. I made that mistake, once. I ordered a new system for

handling credit cards and none of us was familiar with the process. There we were, late into the evening, on the phone with the credit card company's help desk, trying to learn how to reconcile the day's balance. Ouch!

I used to run my place with the ditty, "May is for selling, not for buying." That was repeated, mantra like, to salespeople who wanted to pitch me during my prime selling season. Until this day, I cannot fathom the salespeople who would show up, unannounced, on a busy weekend in May, expecting I should stop everything to peruse their catalogue.

Another thing that I never understood is the retail operator who leaves a major repair or expansion until the spring. In my world, those two things were to be started the fall before. No customer wants to be walking through a war zone that many construction sites resemble. No customer wants to be climbing over bales of peat moss or piles of fertilizer that block their path. Having a misplaced pile is the equivalent of a sign that reads 'Go Away!'

Spring brings enough stress that makes trying to finish a project, train new hires, or order stock neither welcome nor necessary.

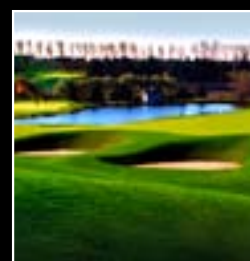
Spring is for selling, plain and simple. Keep your focus on selling and your focus will keep you on the road to success. **LT**



Rod McDonald owned and operated Lakeview Gardens, a successful garden centre/landscape firm in Regina, Sask., for 28 years. He now works full-time in the world of fine arts, writing, acting and producing in film, television and stage.



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National Awards of Landscape Excellence

At the end of January, CNLA hosted its 10th annual National Awards of Landscape Excellence gala in Niagara Falls, Ont. Co-hosted by Landscape Ontario's Denis Flanagan and new CNLA president Christene LeVatte, CLP, of Highland Landscapes for Lifestyle in Sydney, N.S., it was an evening to remember. Nine awards were presented to companies and individuals across the country, showcasing Canada's best.

Please join us in congratulating the winners:

Sheridan Nurseries, Ont.,

RBC Grower of the Year

Sheridan Nurseries' store in Unionville, Ont.,

Chrysler Garden Centre of the Year

The Landmark Group, Ont.,

Dynascape Award of Excellence for Landscape Design

Snider Turf & Landscape Care Ltd., Ont.,

John Deere Award of Excellence for Residential Landscape Maintenance

The Cultivated Garden, Ont.,

John Deere Award of Excellence for Commercial Landscape Maintenance

Fossil Projects Services Ltd., B.C.,

Caterpillar Award of Excellence for Residential Landscape Construction/Installation

Flynn Canada Ltd., Ont., Caterpillar Award

of Excellence for Commercial Landscape Construction/Installation

Friends of St. James Park and the

St. Lawrence Market BIA, Ont.,

Green for Life Community Award for St. James Park

Gloria Beck of Parkland Nurseries &

Garden Centre Ltd., Alta., CNLA President's Award

Energy was high as industry professionals gathered together to showcase their work and celebrate those who make up this fantastic industry.

The new Green for Life Community Award was presented to the Friends of St. James Park and the St. Lawrence Market BIA. These groups worked together with close to 40 landscape companies and hundreds of volunteers, donating their time for two days in December 2011 to rejuvenate St. James Park in Toronto after the Occupy protesters



President's Award given to Gloria Beck.



Green for Life Community Award presented to Friends of St. James Park and St. Lawrence Market BIA.



Grower of the Year was awarded to Sheridan Nurseries.

had trampled the grass and gardens to mud.

The awards recognize those companies that have actively participated in raising the level of professionalism in the industry. Each province nominates members who are then entered into the national awards program. It is never an easy decision for the judges and this year was no different, as all entrants displayed a high level of skill and expertise. Thank you to all entrants, as well as the award sponsors: RBC, Chrysler, Dynascape, Caterpillar and John Deere.

New exam for lawn care technicians

Individuals can now become Landscape Industry Certified Lawn Care Technicians after taking the newest exam available across Canada and the U.S. This credential is directly linked to the practice of the profession and reflects what you should already know as a lawn care practitioner.

Exams will be available across the country as part of scheduled written test dates. Please visit www.landscapeindustrycertified.org to find a test date near you and to download an application form.

Rita Weerdenburg receives LO Past President's Award

At Landscape Ontario's Awards of Excellence this past January, CNLA's Rita Weerdenburg was honoured with the Past President's Award for her many years of trustworthy service to the industry. Rita was the publisher of *Horticulture Review* magazine (now known as *Landscape Ontario*) and *Landscape Trades* before she joined CNLA as growers manager, the position she holds today. This is what Landscape Ontario had to say, "In this role, she has continued her unassuming, humble, but hugely effective ways and has had enormous success promoting and benefiting Canada's growers on a world stage... The issues she deals with are always very complex and sometimes political, but there is never a doubt that Rita has the growers' backs. Her work has generated millions of

dollars of support and promotion."

CNLA wishes to extend congratulations to Rita and a big thank you for all her years of hard work and dedication to the industry and association.

New CNLA member savings programs

RELinks has partnered with CNLA to offer members a discount program on **Actsoft's Comet Suite** of software. Actsoft solutions utilize the latest advances in mobile GPS technologies to improve workforce productivity, better manage assets and workers, and control operating costs and mitigate risks, using smart phones and tablets. Members receive a 10 per cent discount off the Canadian list price.

Coface Canada, a global provider of credit insurance and credit management solutions, is offering CNLA members significant discounts on the C.A.R.E program. C.A.R.E is a low-cost, internet-based program that helps you quickly recover accounts less than 120 days old, thereby increasing cash flow and minimizing your need for collections. Age is the single most critical factor in the collectability of a delinquent account.

CLC Lodging is offering CNLA members 20 to 40 per cent discounts off of the lowest published rates from more than 10,000 leading economy and mid-scale hotels nationwide. To save on your next hotel visit, go to www.CheckINNcard.com/CNLA and sign up for your hotel savings card. Mention the CNLA key code and they will waive the \$9.95 sign-up fee.

Visit www.cnla-acpp.ca/benefits for more information on how to take advantage of these exciting new programs. Or, contact the CNLA Member Services Team at 1-888-446-3499 or info@cnla-acpp.ca. **LT**

The Canadian Nursery Landscape Association is the federation of Canada's provincial horticultural trade associations.

Visit www.cnla-acpp.ca for more information.

March 5-6, Michigan Green Industry Association Trade Show and Convention, Suburban Collection Showplace, Novi, Mich. www.landscape.org/trade_show.cfm

March 15-24, Canada Blooms, Direct Energy Centre, Toronto, Ont. www.canadablooms.com

April 6-11, California Spring Trials, www.springtrials.com

April 26-May 12, Arbor Week, www.arborweek.com

April 27-28, The Landscape & Garden Show, Jack Byrne Arena, Paradise, Nfld. www.landscapenl.com

May 21-22, Grey to Green Conference, Evergreen Brick Works, Toronto, Ont. www.greytogreenconference.org

June 19-22, 15th Annual Snow and Ice Symposium, Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minn. www.sima.org

July 13-16, OFA Short Course, Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, Ohio. www.ofa.org

July 21-27, 31st Annual Perennial Plant Symposium, Vancouver, B.C. www.perennialplant.org

July 22-25, Turfgrass Producers International Summer Convention and Field Days, Chicago, Ill. www.turfgrasssod.org

July 31-August 1, Penn Atlantic Nursery Trades Show (PANTS), Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, Penn. www.pantshow.com

August 3-7, ISA Annual Conference and Trade Show, Toronto, Ont. www.isa-arbor.com

August 11-14, CGTA Fall Gift Show, International Centre and Congress Centre, Toronto, Ont. www.cgta.org

August 18-21, Fall Alberta Gift Show, Northlands, Edmonton EXPO Centre, Edmonton, Alta. www.cgta.org

August 20-22, Independent Garden Center Show, Navy Pier, Chicago, Ill. www.igcshow.com

August 20-23, Canadian Fertilizer Institute 68th Annual Conference, Banff, Alta. www.cfi.ca

August 21-24, Plantarium, International Trade Centre, Boskoop, Holland. www.plantarium.nl **LT**

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5. Maintain a clean and safe work environment including site and equipment.

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