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Offshoot

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www.clcasandiego.org

Offshoot
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Ian Campbell

President's Message

Happy New Year San Diego CLCA - it's officially 2022! I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve as your 2022 San Diego Chapter president; I am honored to have the opportunity. As we welcome in the new year, we are still dealing with the global pandemic, which appears now likely to become endemic.

With the new Omicron variant and its rapid rate of spread throughout the country – especially with all the recent travel and holidays – it is apparent that we are still fighting an uphill battle. We continue to see mask mandates, travel restrictions, and recurring messages about vaccinations and boosters. All this and seemingly no letup in the rate of spread. Luckily, at least for now, it doesn't appear to be as deadly a variant as its predecessors. It still leaves us in a place of uncertainty though.

How has this disease affected your business? What are you doing now that you didn't do just a few years ago? A lot has changed in a short period of time and is continuing to evolve at a rapid rate. As members of the CLCA, we have been very fortunate to have guidance from our state council along the way helping to improve our understanding and limit our confusion. This has enabled many of us to enjoy some of the most profitable years in recent memory! One of many benefits we members have been privileged to have.

I want to take a moment to thank all the members of the 2021 San Diego leadership team. Their commitment and giving of time were instrumental in making every moment count. While we never knew if an event we planned would occur, the team planned for the best and prepared for the worst. That was the key to our chapter's success in 2021 and it made for a great year! And Chapter President Willie Valdez was the glue that held the hard-

working team together. It was through his leadership that a lot of good changes happened for our chapter. Willie gave countless hours of his time (and surely shed a few tears) doing an amazing job getting us through incredibly trying times. He has set a bar so high that I'm not sure I *nor anyone else* will be able to exceed it. It sure gives everyone something to aspire to though. I look forward to working with our 2022 leadership team and continuing the momentum that has already been created!

So, what does a successful 2022 look like for you? What does it mean for your business? Your family? Your employees? What challenges will you face and how will you overcome them? These are all questions we ask ourselves as we enter the new year. We need to ask these same questions of this organization. What is CLCA's biggest challenge of 2022? I believe that one of the biggest challenges we will face this year, and for years to come, is membership. We need to come up with ideas to overcome this surmountable problem. The duty and responsibility of attracting and sustaining new members is huge.

We must begin to bring in the next generation of green industry leaders and breathe lifeblood into our group and our industry. We have a wealth of knowledge, and we need to look for those who are worthy to pass it on to. But where are they? Do you have the next generation working for you? Are you connecting them to CLCA? As we begin this journey together, I ask... are we doing a good job of showing the value of our industry and association to the next generation? Individually, we won't be able to solve this issue. Together, we can start the process. I hope to see you at our future events. Be a part of the solution and grow your business and friendships in the process.



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San Diego Chapter Member Milestones

Congratulations to the following companies for reaching membership milestones this month.

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Heritage Ldscp Services

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SPJ Lighting

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Eco Minded Solutions

2 Year Member

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EGO

Join the Fun at the San Diego Chapter Kickoff Event!

Thursday, Feb. 17
5 - 8 p.m.



9045 Carroll Way, San Diego, CA 92121

Come out and kick off the new year with CLCA San Diego! Join friends and colleagues to network over brews and apps at Ballast Point Miramar. You won't want to miss this fun event! It is a great opportunity to meet new members and reconnect with industry partners.

Register at our chapter website www.clcasandiego.org. Contact Bronwyn Miller with questions at (949) 466-1222 or eyescares@yahoo.com.

Connect, Learn, & Grow with CLCA!
Not a Member? Join at clca.org/join

CLCA's mission is to serve and protect the interests of its members, promote professionalism, and advance public awareness of the landscape industry. Learn more at www.clca.org

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Coming Events

Mark your calendar!

February 8

San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email eyescales@yahoo.com for the link to attend.

February 17

San Diego Chapter Kickoff. All welcome.

Ballast Point Miramar: 9045 Carroll Way, San Diego.
Register online at www.clcasandiego.org.

March 8

San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email eyescales@yahoo.com for the link to attend.

April 12

San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email eyescales@yahoo.com for the link to attend.

May 10

San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email eyescales@yahoo.com for the link to attend.

May 13

San Diego Chapter Golf Tournament.

Twin Oaks: 1425 N. Twin Oaks Valley Blvd., San Marcos.

June TBD

San Diego Chapter Beautification Awards Judging.

June 14

San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email eyescales@yahoo.com for the link to attend.

July 12

San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email eyescales@yahoo.com for the link to attend.

August 9

San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

All welcome. This will be a virtual meeting.
Email eyescales@yahoo.com for the link to attend.

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Benefits of Mulching

By Wendy Proud, California Sales Representative at Mountain States Wholesale Nursery



*Photo: 2021 award-winning project
Beautifully Blue Backyard by Sarita Landscapes.*

Mulching is perhaps the single most important thing you can do for the longevity and overall health of a landscape. As water restrictions become tighter, the need to educate our clients becomes more important as we strive to help them understand the impact they can have on the changing future landscape. In other parts of the country, they mulch like it's second nature and here we've been slow to adopt. It appears that this might be

slowly changing as our winters continue to be drier. To me, it seems as though we should be mulching every square inch! If you're not hooked on mulch already, here are some important points to consider and remind your clients of when talking about that next project.

Basics & Benefits of Mulching:

- Mulch keeps roots moist and cooler longer. More even temperatures mean the roots can grow year-round; that means stronger plants! Yay, thanks from the roots!
- Mulch keeps those pesky weeds from popping up by blocking out the light that can germinate seeds. No weeds = less maintenance!
- As organic mulch material decomposes, it feeds the soil naturally. This allows plants to extract what they need, when they need it; that means happy plants.
- Mulch improves soil structure and texture. When you get to this point it's nirvana!!
- Keep mulch 3-4" thick at all times for maximum effectiveness.
- With any type of mulch, lightly top dress with a fresh layer each year to maintain a beautiful and happy landscape.
- Succulents and desert plants do well with wood mulching. Just be sure not to bury the plants! Mulch doesn't know the difference between weeds and the plants we want to keep. It's also important to note that watering will be significantly reduced with low water-use plants.
- Mulch just looks GREAT!
- When's the best time to mulch? There's never a bad time. Get started today!

Other important things to note:

- Only use wood-based or green waste mulches that support the soil food web. Rubber and rock mulches provide little benefits and perhaps create negative effects on plants and the landscape overall.
- Colored mulches last longer due to UV protective coatings that increase longevity and lower costs. Independent tests have shown color retention for two years!

This article was excerpted from a post by Wendy Proud on LinkedIn.

~KURAPIA~

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**2022 Beautification Awards
planning is underway!**

**Start thinking now about
which projects you will enter.**

Judging will be in June. Winners will be announced in Sept.



Earn two certifications at the same time!

The California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA) and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) have again partnered to bring the landscape professionals of Southern California a one-of-a-kind certification and educational opportunity.

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Attendance at all six classes and one in-person irrigation audit/written test is mandatory to receive certifications and registration refund. See clca.org/weldcp



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Every Tuesday, 1 - 4 p.m.

Training/Audit

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clca.org/weldcp



LEAF Awards \$43,850 in Scholarships to Eight Green Industry Students

By Marianne Estournes, Chair, LEAF Scholarship Selection Committee

Seeking to promote and support the future of the green industry, the Landscape Educational Advancement Foundation (LEAF) has awarded eight scholarships totaling \$43,850. The scholarships ranged from \$750 to \$12,000.

In 2021, LEAF's scholarship selection committee reviewed 16 scholarship applications. Their selection criteria included career goals, outside activities, work experience, financial need, letters of recommendation, and GPA in their major.

The scholarships — the donations of CLCA members and other the green industry professionals who fund them — have a huge, positive impact.

As we welcome 2022, the LEAF scholarship committee would like to introduce the scholarship recipients for 2021. The pandemic has affected the amount of applicants, but the *cream* always rises to the top no matter how many applicants we receive. We are proud that we were able to help these students achieve their educational goals for this academic year.

2021 LEAF Scholarship Recipients

Christopher Burroughs is a third-year recipient. He is currently enrolled at San Diego State University — after having graduated from Mira Costa Community College — majoring in Environmental Sustainability. Christopher was able to attend CLCA's 2021 convention in Hawaii in November; many of you might have met him and heard him speak. He is a very motivated young man who began his life in horticulture as a tree trimmer. He has since created a non-profit organization named Garden 31 Community Initiative, which provides training in the basics of the landscape industry. Christopher hopes to create green spaces in parts of cities that lack trees and flowers to provide them with beauty and hope. He is dedicated to giving back to his community by helping young men and women to have a goal to reach. Christopher is a San Diego Chapter member and is appreciative of the support LEAF has given him over the years.



LEAF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT and San Diego chapter member Christopher Burroughs shares his story with CLCA members at the 2021 annual convention in Hawaii.

Daniel Hurt is a scholarship recipient for the third year. He attended Mt. San Antonio College and is now at Cal Poly, Pomona, majoring in Plant Science. He is grateful for our support of him and his education. He is a veteran and suffered a traumatic brain injury in combat. Our scholarships have assisted with tuition and the extra help he has needed to study and succeed in his classes. Daniel wants to work with the UC Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources to manage invasive insects. He plans to earn a Qualified Applicators License and work to advance the science of Integrated Pest Management, which he views as vital for contractors. He is very grateful to LEAF. Daniel lives in Fullerton.

Archie Kendall is a first-time recipient. He is a student at UC Berkeley majoring in Conservation and Resource Studies and wants to work with city planners to create healthier urban ecosystems. Archie is also interested in working as a landscape professional to promote water efficiency in the landscape. He has owned a landscape maintenance business and is committed to landscape horticulture and how that interfaces with urban settings. As an ex-Marine, he shows discipline and determination and will bring this to his desire to become a landscape contractor.

Cameron McDonald is also a first-time LEAF scholarship recipient. He is enrolled at Cabrillo College in Aptos, majoring in Agriculture Plant Science. His goals include landscape water conservation and management. We look forward to supporting him as his goals become more focused and he progresses in his education.

Rose Mohan is a new applicant. She attends Santa Rosa Junior College, majoring in horticulture. Her emphasis is

Continued on next page...

2021 Scholarship Recipients

...Continued from previous page

on design and creating water-efficient landscapes using native plants. She would also like to train and manage a maintenance crew to properly maintain a landscape. Rose's long-term goal is to become a Landscape Architect. She is QWEL certified and excited about her prospects in the landscape industry.

Ignacio Moreno is a fourth-year recipient. LEAF has supported his studies at Junior College of the Desert, where he majored in Environmental Horticulture, and through his years at Cal Poly, Pomona, where he is majoring in Landscape Architecture and Plant Science. He will graduate in June, 2022. He is already a landscape contractor and has worked for his uncle's landscape company for many years. Ignacio is a dedicated student and sees himself owning a design and install company. He is very grateful to LEAF and knows he would not have his education if we had not supported him. He hopes to attend CLCA's 2022 convention in Indian Wells to thank everyone personally.

Manuel Peralta is a first-time recipient. He is enrolled at Mt. San Antonio College, where he majors in Ornamental Horticulture. His intention is to get his AA and then transfer to Cal Poly to continue with his degree in Landscape Architecture. He's at the beginning of his academic journey. We are pleased to award him a scholarship and look forward to supporting him as he moves forward toward his goals.

Greg Thayer is a fifth-year recipient. He began his studies at Cuyamaca College, majoring on Ornamental Horticulture, and now is attending Cal Poly, Pomona, studying to become a Landscape Architect. He also wants to become an ISA Certified Arborist. His hope is to craft landscapes which inspire people to connect with their regional environment and support the well-being of their shared ecosystems. Greg is very grateful to LEAF for the ongoing assistance we have given to him to make his education possible over the years. He lives in the San Diego region.



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Irrigation and Landscape Trends for 2022 and Beyond

Savvy contractors understand that trends, locally or globally, can significantly impact their business. Moreover, they recognize that these shifts can have an immediate or long-term impact on the bottom line.

Noticing those changes and responding strategically rather than with knee-jerk reactions in part determines how long their business will be around. These are the landscape and irrigation trends you need to watch for leading a sustainable, profitable business into the new year and beyond.

Supply Chain Issues Linger

Whether it's domestic freight or overseas shipping containers, we're not going to see an end to supply chain backups anytime soon. As a result, supplies that were once readily available may not be on the shelf the moment you need them.

Until recently, contractors have enjoyed the convenience of buying on-demand by the job. Purchasing as you go is not likely to be a viable option in 2022. Try these strategies to deal with supply challenges you might encounter.

- Call ahead. Find out if what you need is in stock before making the drive.
- Plan ahead. Order supplies 30 to 60 days in advance of installation dates.
- Consider substitutes. For example, pressure-regulating irrigation products are more readily available than standard heads.
- Avoid binge buying.
- Ask for extended terms.

Labor Shortages

Finding quality labor is the second-highest business concern among contractors, according to the 2021 State of the Industry Report. Securing materials doesn't matter much if you don't have the workforce to install them.

Now more than ever, you must protect your labor force from getting poached by competitors. It's time to get creative and look to other industries for retention ideas. Companies in all sectors are offering returning bonuses and flex schedules to recruit and retain employees. Paying a livable wage — one someone can afford a mortgage on — is key to attracting and keeping employees.

Financial incentives like higher wages only go so far. Investing in employees includes technical and leadership management training. Offering training shows employees you are committed to their personal and career growth rather than seeing them as temporary or transitional workers.

Labor shortages are nothing new for irrigation and

landscape contractors, though the pandemic has worsened the situation. Recruiting locally, focusing on company culture, and emphasizing benefits can help you hire even when workers are in short supply.

Rising Product Prices

In the past, volatile crude oil prices were responsible for pricing spikes that eventually leveled out over time. However, what's happening today is unprecedented — both in the size of the increases and that they are not limited to one core product. It's happening in every single aspect of the industry.

Polyethylene prices rose ~60% in 2021. Lumber prices have dropped since record highs, but western fires are once again putting pressure on the overall supply and keeping upward pressure on prices. In addition, grills and outdoor kitchen appliances are in short supply and pricier.

Check in with your supplier and ask what they are hearing from manufacturers. Sign up for industry newsletters and follow your supply chain updates to stay on top of changes that sometimes happen overnight.

Despite inflation, customers are still buying. According to the "Wall Street Journal," consumers are willing to pay \$11 for a burrito. It's time to get over the fear of raising your prices, too. If you don't, there is a good chance your business may not survive to see the end of this cycle.

Also, take the time to measure out a job rather than relying solely on experience. Walk the site to confirm the job size, the materials, and the time needed for installation.

Know Your Company's Worth

Procuring materials is essential, but looking at the bigger picture is critical. For example, nearly 25% of irrigation and landscape contractors are thinking of selling their business in the next decade, according to the 2021 State of the Industry Report.

Contractors tend to have higher perceived values of their company than the actual worth in a buyer's eyes. Don't wait to find out that your asking price doesn't match what someone is willing to pay.

The Bottom Line

The biggest trends used to be the newest, "coolest" product, often supporting water efficiency and sustainability. Trends have moved beyond products to operational efficiencies that look at the bigger picture of running a business.

This article, authored by Larry Giroux, Market Development Manager for Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply, originally ran on Ewing's blog at www.ewingirrigation.com/news. Find other green industry tips and solutions there too!

CLCA SD Members & Friends Celebrate the Holidays at Stone Brewing on Dec. 9



CLCA San Diego Chapter Life Members

Thank you to the following Life Members for their continued support of the association.

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