

## Vision

Official Publication of the Orange County Chapter of California Landscape Contractors Association • www.clca-orangecounty.org

#### CLCA-OC Calendar & Other Upcoming CLCA Events Mark Your Calendars & Save the Dates Now! April 7 Back to Basics Webinar, 5 p.m. Pre-registration req'd. Link to register at www.clca-orangecounty.org May 20 Chapter Golf Tournament, Fullerton. Coyote Hills Golf Club: 1440 E. Bastanchury Rd. More information inside on page 4. July 15 Chapter Fishing Excursion. Registration opening soon! Aug. TBD Chapter Angels' Baseball Game & Tailgate. Sept. 18 Beautification Awards, Mission Viejo. Mission Viejo Country Club: 26200 Country Club Dr. Nov. 3-6 CLCA State Convention, Maui, Hawaii.

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#### The Next Event

#### We're Going BACK to BASICS Wednesday, April 7, at 5 p.m.

#### All are Welcome!

oin us for this FREE webinar where you'll get introduced (or reminded) of all that CLCA has to offer! We're excited to have CLCA State Communications Manager, John Sassaman, as our virtual tour guide for the evening. John will take us on a journey through CLCA's website, showcasing the tools and resources that the association offers its members. John will also talk about the LEAF Scholarship Program and answer any questions about the application and selection process that attendees might have.

Spread the word! Invite any green industry students and landscape professionals that you know who could benefit from this short, but informative, webinar! All are welcome.

We're going BACK to BASICS because we want to help you succeed! The first step is knowing what's in your toolbox. Pre-registration is required. Find a link to register on our website at www.clca-orangecounty.org

After you register, BE SURE TO ATTEND! There will be cool door prizes awarded to a couple lucky attendees. Don't miss it!



Wednesday, April 7, at 5 p.m.

**LEAF Scholarship Applications** Due April 15! More info inside on page 5.

Newport Beach, CA 92658 P.O. Box 12044 C/O CLCA - Orange County Chapter

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For information about what we're doing in 2021, contact Sal.



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For questions relating to our OC Champions program or Golf Tournament, contact Bill.

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For anything chapter finance related, contact Steve.



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For information about becoming a CLCA-OC Chapter member, contact Nate.



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#### **Let's Grow Together**

hank you to everyone who participated in our virtual kick off event last month where we had special guest Senator Bates from the 36th District in attendance. The information she shared was very insightful for us business owners. Senator Bates updated us on the latest news regarding emissions, Assembly Bill 5, Senate Bill 87, and several other things. Huge shout out to our VP of Legislation, Dave Norred, for inviting her.

I am honored to be part of an organization that can reach out to our legislative representatives and get information first-hand. If you couldn't join us this time, don't worry! We will have other events throughout the year for you to participate in. We are hoping to be able to have in-person events by mid-year or sooner. Just waiting for this whole COVID thing to clear out a bit more.

The board is looking to put a chapter community service event together this year. We hope that you can join us in the effort to give back to the community. Personally, I find that servitude helps develop good character. On the topic of serving, one of the main benefits of being a member of CLCA is the opportunity to serve on your chapter board. How is serving on the board a benefit to you? Well, for one thing,



**SENATOR PAT BATES** from the 36<sup>th</sup> District joined us at our kickoff event on February 24. She attended virtually from Sacramento to provide updates on Assembly Bill 5, Senate Bill 87, and various other things.



Yes! That's exactly what I want to say.

Judy Rose
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3631-C Aspen Village Way, Santa Ana, CA 92704 714-654-0963 E-mail: rose@jlrco.com www.jlrco.com you develop your leadership skills. As a board member, you learn how a professional meeting is conducted and also get experience in working collaboratively with other leaders – practices that you can implement in your business's daily operations.



Sal Hernandez
Pacific Breeze Landscape
Chapter President

If you are ready to push your business to the next level, I would like to invite you to get more involved on the board. Attend our meetings. They're open to all members. Be a part of the discussions and get a closer look at how things are done. This chapter is all of ours, and I would love for everyone to take pride in it. There are several different opportunities for you to be involved. You could serve as VP of Events (a position that recently opened up) or on a committee. We currently have a golf committee, beautification awards committee, and education committee. It starts by taking that first step... attending a meeting. Board meeting dates are posted on our website. Check it out at www.clca-orangecounty.org.

Finally, I would like to encourage you to keep working hard! Stay positive and keep connected. Reach out to one another and be supportive. Let's GROW TOGETHER!

For this month's book, I recommend *The E-Myth Revisited* by Michael Gerber.





#### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

#### MASTERS PACKAGE | \$925

Includes foursome of golf, hole sponsorship, and four lunch & drink tickets.

#### US OPEN PACKAGE \$440

Includes golf for one, hole sponsorship, and one lunch & drink ticket.

#### EAGLE SPONSORSHIP \$275

Includes a hole sponsorship. Does not include golf or lunch.

#### TABLE ON TEE BOX | \$400

Includes a tabletop at a hole tee box. The golf course will supply a table. Sponsors can bring chairs and items to hand out to golfers during play. Spots are limited and available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Does not include golf or lunch.

#### **THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2021**

#### COYOTE HILLS GOLF COURSE

1440 E. BASTANCHURY ROAD | FULLERTON, CA | 92835

Coyote Hills Golf Course is an award-winning 18-hole, par 70 golf course that features five distinct tees and panoramic views of Los Angeles and Orange County.

#### REGISTRATION OPENS AT 8:45 A.M.

#### 9 A.M. STAGGERED TEE TIME START

Golfers will be emailed their assigned tee times on Monday, May 17, 2021.

**REGISTER:** Registration and payment must be completed by April 30, 2021. *Register on our website at www.clca-orangecounty.org* 

**PRICE:** \$165/golfer. Contractors: \$150/golfer. Includes participation in the tournament and a boxed lunch with drink ticket for all registered golfers.

QUESTIONS: Call 2021 OC AM Rep Bill Deeble at (562) 243-5330.

**NEW THIS YEAR...** Tournament winners will be announced at a virtual awards ceremony on Thursday, May 20, at 6 p.m. We will also have a raffle, conducted in a chinese auction format. Tickets will be sold during registration and participants will be able to choose the prize they want to win! Winners will be drawn at the virtual awards ceremony.





#### THANK YOU TO THIS YEAR'S OC CHAMPIONS









## LEAF Scholarship Applications are Available Online! Deadline to apply is April 15, 2021

LCA is pleased to announce that the application for LEAF scholarships is now available online.

Every year, the number of students needing financial assistance grows. LEAF is here to help!

Since 1972, CLCA's Auxiliary has offered scholarships to college and university students majoring in landscaperelated programs. In 1988, the Landscape Educational Advancement Foundation (LEAF) was formed to carry on the tradition of awarding financial aid to deserving students.

In 2020, nine deserving California college students received scholarships totaling

more than \$38,000 from the LEAF scholarship program. We'd like to award even more this year!

Any student attending an accredited California community college or state university majoring in a landscape-related program and taking a minimum of six units is eligible.

Please help us spread the word by letting students know of this scholarship opportunity! The deadline to apply is April 15, 2021.

Together we can help make education attainable and boost our industry's next wave of leaders.



#### Students can apply online by visiting www.clca.org/leaf

#### CLCA Offers Webinars To Help You Master New Opportunities In Water Efficiency

**Earn CEUs for Your Current Certifications!** 





ttend this newest MWELO workshop where we'll take a closer look at different Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance compliance and enforcement roles.

Keep informed and add to your MWELO expertise — gain new information and explore a new approach to understanding the ordinance! Workshop attendees will learn about recent updates and changes to MWELO and have the opportunity to participate in question and answer sessions with subject experts.

Presented virtually in five 90-minute classes, these workshops will offer **CEUs for your current certifications** and provide you with a participation certificate.

Next workshop: April 15, 20, 22, 27 and 29; 3 - 4:30 p.m.

These workshops are *free* to all those in Southern California thanks to a generous sponsorship by the Metropolitan Water District.

Find more information and register at clca.org/mwel

Advertise in the OC Vision! Call (949) 466-1222.

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Quality



#### Firing a Bad Client: How to Identify Them and Let Them Go



You've probably had to fire at least one bad employee over the years, but have you ever had to say goodbye to a particularly bad client?

Just like how a bad employee is a drain on your business, bad clients can be just as detrimental, so it is important to know how to identify them and break ties on good terms. By sifting out the problem customers you can increase your profits, reduce staff stress, and reclaim lost time.

#### What Makes a Bad Client

When renewal season rolls around, it's helpful to be able to identify which clients aren't a good fit for your business anymore so you can inform them you will not be renewing your contract with them.

Some of the major indicators to consider when deciding if a customer is still worth your time and effort include the location of the property, whether they provide extra sales, the gross profit margin, and the ease of doing business with them.

The farther away a client is the more time is spent driving and risk is increased. It's better to have closer clients and more route density. This alone shouldn't be the only reason to drop a client but can factor into the decision. Likewise, if the client never purchases extra services above the base contract this alone isn't a disqualifier for their business. It's just those who do buy extra services are more profitable.

The gross profit margin can help you know who doesn't bring in much money, but you shouldn't consider cutting all these clients until you have brought in more profitable leads.

The ease of doing business with the client is typically the easiest identifier of who you want to work with and who you'd rather not. While you always want to try to satisfy your customer there are always some dealbreakers where you'll have to draw the line.

Some of the red flags are when customers haggle constantly and are only focused on the price of your services, if they always pay late and/or are constantly dissatisfied with the work and are the source of frequent callbacks.

#### **How to Let Them Go**

If you do decide it's time to part ways with a particular client, always be professional and polite. For renewal contracts, let them know when the contract is up that you will not be renewing with them. You can mention how they don't align with your core customer base, making it clear it was a business decision, not a personal one.

If you don't have a contract with a renewal date, you can send the customer a cancellation notice with ample time for them to find a new landscape provider. This could be anywhere from 60 to 90 days. You can also refer the client to a company they may be better suited for. Be sure to thank them for their business and keep things amicable.

Another option is to raise your prices as some clients might not be profitable simply because the job was bid wrong in the beginning. This method can weed out some of the customers who only care about the price, but keep in mind it won't fix the issue if they are a difficult client or located somewhere far out of your preferred service area.

Qualifying your leads early on can help you avoid having to fire clients often, but sometimes you won't know they're a bad fit until you start working with them.

This article, authored by Jill Odom, was originally published on the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) blog at https://blog.landscapeprofessionals.org/





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#### Hours

Monday—Friday 7:00am—4:00pm

Saturday 7:00am-2:00pm

(Hours may vary by location and can be adjusted based on weather)

#### **How the CLCA Makes Us A Better Contractor**

By Alex Salazar, Business Development Manager, Groundcare Landscape Company

"During times of uncertainty,

we tend to lean into things

that we know and people

we trust. In the past year,

our relationship with CLCA

has proven to be imperative

to our success."

ave you heard the expression, "What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?" It's a loaded question that usually leads nowhere. Eight times out of ten you begin daydreaming of building a spaceship or a time machine. Best-selling author on marketing and leadership,

Seth Godin, says a better question to consider is: "What would you do even if you knew you would fail?" In other words, what is something that means so much to you that you would sacrifice part of yourself for it?

If I were to attribute Groundcare Landscape's success over the last few years to something, it would be to the heart my brothers and I have put into it. The success of the business is very meaningful to all of us. There are other reasons we have been successful too. Among the top five I would say is our

active involvement in the California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA). The CLCA is a not-for-profit trade association that was formed in the early 1950s to protect and champion the scope of work allowed under the C-27 (landscape contractor) license.

**Being Active** 

The decision to be active in this trade association is what makes a difference for us. There is an old saying that comes to mind... "You only get out of something what you put into it." Well, simply put, we're putting into the association by being active volunteers. CLCA has hundreds of members throughout the state. Only a fraction of those are active volunteer members. These are the people that help keep the organization alive. We joined CLCA in November 2013 and made the decision to be active members four years later. We've seen the fruits of this commitment in the success of our company ever since.

My brothers and I each serve in different chapters within CLCA. Francisco serves as President for the San Fernando Valley Chapter. Omar serves as President for the Kern County Chapter. Ivan serves as Secretary for the Channel Islands Chapter. I'm serving as Chairman of the Board for the Los Angeles/San Gabriel Valley Chapter. This year I am also serving on the CLCA state board as Secretary/Treasurer. Needless to say, we are committed and as active as can be!

#### Volunteerism

As a family we learned the importance of volunteering early on. My father, Javier Salazar, helped create and lead a volunteer group that accomplished great things for his hometown in Mexico. Over a span of three years, they

remodeled the junior high school in their community and installed a new potable water deposit that has provided 24-hour clean water for the last 20 years. Most of the organizing and fundraising was done here in Los Angeles and our dad made sure we participated. We would print and sell tickets and organize all sorts of fundraising events. Because of this, we witnessed their accomplishments as teenagers from beginning to end. We learned how good it felt to give back and volunteer.

Being a part of CLCA makes us feel good. We feel like we are giving back into the industry that provides for our livelihoods. The CLCA also allows us to work collaboratively on local volunteer projects to better our community. We have received local and state recognition on several humanitarian projects that we've had the honor of being a part of.

#### **How CLCA Makes Us Better**

Imagine attending a class in school as a freshman where your classmates are as smart or smarter than you are. It is a mixed class of freshmen and seniors. The seniors know the material better because they've been exposed to it longer than you have. They have solved problems you haven't even learned of yet. You are all there because you enjoy the class. The freshmen are learning something new, and the seniors learn more while also helping others. All want to be successful. That's how the CLCA is.

We don't compete in the local CLCA chapters. In fact, most of us cover different areas in the region. Also, for the most part, we each have a different specialty inside the trade. This makes it easy to share work scenarios with each other and help one another solve problems. Many of the conversations have to do with small issues like "what's your favorite irrigation controller?" or "how does your team start their mornings?"

Sometimes small things turn out to be big. For example,

Continued on Next Page...

Connect, Learn, and Grow with CLCA!

Not a Member?
Join at clca.org/join

With advocacy, action on upcoming events, and a Company/HR information portal, CLCA is taking action to help you survive the coronavirus pandemic.

Visit www.clca.org/covid for more info.

#### **How the CLCA Makes Us Better**

#### ... Continued from Previous Page

when we were curious about using a business software to help manage our company, we learned about LMN from a peer. At the time, it was a total game changer for us. It taught us to build company budgets and to price jobs accordingly. This was leaps and bounds ahead of simple pricing where you priced your labor at X per hour because your competitor did. It also provided a definitive answer to the question: "How low can I price my work?"

Being a multi-owner company and learning how to interact with each other in a more professional manner has been transformational. Our local chapters have taught us how to properly run board meetings. In turn, we've implemented board meetings into our company and find that having them at least once a month keeps us more organized and on track. Knowing our officer roles helps each of us to prepare for meeting discussions. Taking minutes of the meeting keeps everyone accountable. There is a comfort in knowing that everything is recorded and can be referenced at any point in the future.

During times of uncertainty, we tend to lean into things that we know and people we trust. In the past year, our relationship with CLCA has proven to be imperative to our success. We have been able to lean into the organization when we needed guidance. I am grateful for all the work our peers have referred to us as well as the support they have offered when we needed it. We look forward to much more learning and growing as individuals and professionals!

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nstalling FX Luminaire light fixtures should be simple. That's why .FX recently introduced six new accessories to help contractors solve common installation challenges and maximize labor savings.

These versatile solutions prevent leaning, keep fixtures precisely aimed, and more. Check out the lineup:

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What's thin, sleek, and shiny? FX Luminaire's stylish new Bracket Mount!

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#### **Conduit Stabilizer**

For added strength in modern path light installations, the stabilizer has wings to prevent the conduit from tilting or spinning. Its slim profile lets you pound in the stake while minimizing the amount of disturbed soil.



#### Critter Plug

Prevent unwanted critters from entering a fixture! The plug protects the base of the fixture and can be easily removed for routine servicing.

#### **LED Programming Adapter**

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#### **Lock Ring**

Aim your up lights and wall lights by tightening FX's new Lock Ring onto the stake. The two convenient finger tabs make securing the job easy. Now included with every up light and wall wash fixture!

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The newly expanded box provides more space to hold wire and connectors. With optional snap-on backing, servicing is Learn more at www.fxl.com simple and tool-free.

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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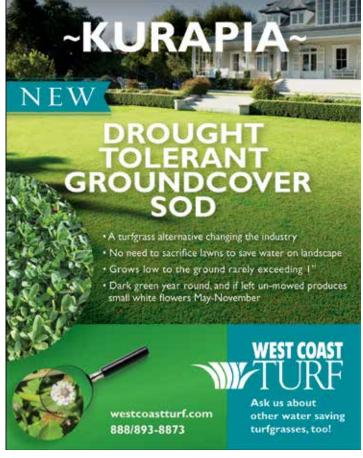
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