

# NORTHWEST LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL



**In this Issue:**  
**2020 Northwest Landscape Industry Conference**



120 State Ave NE #303  
Olympia, WA 98502

# EVOLUTION

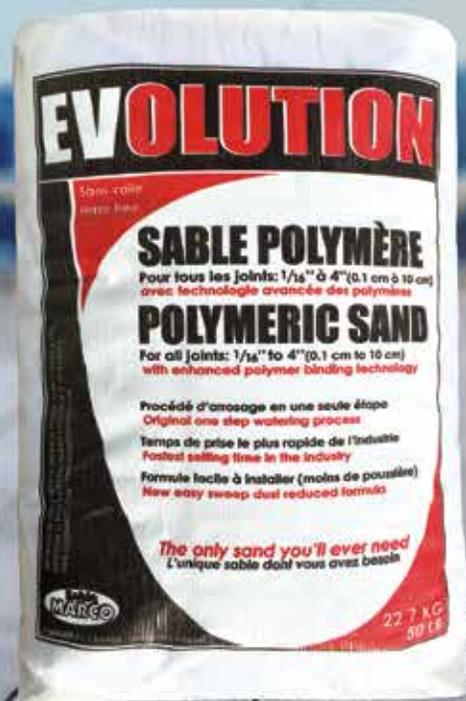
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## Northwest Landscape Professional

The NWLP – Northwest Landscape Professional – is the official publication of the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals and is published and distributed quarterly to WALP members and extended gratis to select courtesy subscribers.

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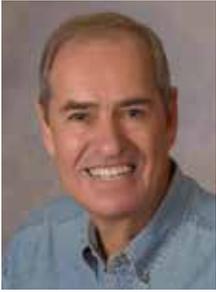
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Cover photo: *Kirkland Land Care – Downtown Park*

### Grand Award Public Works

The Downtown Park in Redmond is the city's signature park. It serves as a place for community members to gather and celebrate. Main park features include a raised lawn, deck and trees, fountains of water jets, a digital water wall, a plaza for performances, and a decomposed granite dining grove for residents to use as a picnic area.

Challenges included installing all irrigation inside sleeves due to the extent of the paved surfaces throughout the park. This required a lot of coordination and attention to detail between landscape crews and the primary contractor on this project. Design changes and a short supply of large trees really brought out the creativity of the design team. The end result was a vibrant community space that encourages special events, arts, music and fun.



## Maximize your WALP Membership

*Terry Posner, Plantscapes, Inc.  
2019 WALP State President*

It's been a good and productive year for WALP, and as I hand over the gavel to our new president, John Murphy, I know there are more good times to come.

We've seen that by working together as partners and promoting and celebrating professionalism within our industry, we can accomplish much for our own businesses and for our organization.

We had three basic goals when I began the year as your president:

### **Bringing in a professional to be the "face" of WALP to move our organization forward.**

And the beginning of 2019 Peter Dervin agreed to be WALP's "part-time" executive director. Many of you already knew Peter, who has been in the industry for more than 30 years. His return to WALP as "part-time" executive director after several years underscores our commitment to increasing the value of membership by providing a strong framework, leadership, informative programs and up-to-date industry news.

You can read more about Peter on his LinkedIn profile at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

Questions or suggestions for Peter: Call him at (425) 879-1033 or email him at [peter@walp.org](mailto:peter@walp.org)

### **Increasing our membership and ensuring a robust association.**

The number of members is up over the last few years but we still have opportunities for growth and retention. There are tremendous benefits derived from being part of WALP as our members leverage the strong networking options to complement their companies.

Among our membership, we have expert companies that specialize in commercial or residential landscape, maintenance, enhancements, design build, construction, irrigation, drainage, low-voltage lighting, block walls, sandset pavers, patios... The list of specialty niches and sub-niches within our industry is long. No one company is doing it all; we need each other as we take advantage of the opportunities ahead.

Check out our website [www.WALP.org](http://www.WALP.org) for information about certifications, upcoming seminars, how you can help shape public policy affecting the Landscape industry, industry trends and opportunities.

Sometimes the simplest of things can have the biggest impact. This past year, we've made it easier for billing, changing from strictly electronic to electronic with a US Mail follow-up. Members now can pay their dues on a monthly basis.

### **Improving our database system.**

We spent some time reviewing our clunky, third-party database program which had several deficiencies, including that it didn't interface with our accounting system. It's not been an easy fix but we now have in place an interim program as

### **Mission Statement For The Washington Association Of Landscape Professionals**

To promote professionalism, integrity, and education to a thriving membership within the Green Industry and the communities served.

### **Vision Statement For The Washington Association Of Landscape Professionals**

- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals is a publicly recognized and unified industry of landscape professionals who embody business and technical excellence.
- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals provides and promotes the opportunity to mentor and support its members.
- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals' members receive value and benefit by sharing knowledge, resources, and experience.
- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals is the networking place and referral resource for "Green Industry" professionals.

### *"Defining Professionalism In The Green Industry"*

#### **WALP Office**

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## 2019 Committees

### Awards Committee

Linda Zimmer, CPH  
*Landscapes By Linda*

### Government Relations Committee

Terry Posner  
*Plantscapes, Inc.*

### Membership Committee

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*SiteOne - Everett*

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*Northwest Flower & Garden Show*

Brendon Nepon  
*(WALP Wednesday) PLC Insurance*

Ron McCabe  
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### Golf Tournament & WEF

Kenny Yorozu  
*T Yorozu Gardening Co*

### Database Cleanup

Larry Zimmer  
*Rock Solid Landscapes*

### Chapter Advisor

Tim Buiten  
*Tim's Complete Landscape Management*

## Irrigation Association 2020 scholarship program now open

Students are encouraged to apply for the 2020 Irrigation Association scholarship program. Open to students at two- and four-year institutions of higher education, the scholarship program provides individuals pursuing irrigation-related degrees with financial support.

The scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500, are awarded based on the candidate's letter of intent, financial need, resume, list of irrigation courses and letters of reference.

**Scholarship applications are due by Feb. 15, 2020**, with notification to applicants by April 1.

To view all program requirements, the application process and see a list of previous winners, visit [www.irrigation.org/scholarships](http://www.irrigation.org/scholarships). Contact Workforce and Administration Manager Nicole Preisner ([nicolepreisner@irrigation.org](mailto:nicolepreisner@irrigation.org), 703.536.7080) with any questions.

## 2020 SWAT awards accepting applications

The Irrigation Association is pleased to announce that applications for the 2020 Smart Water Application Technologies Awards are now open. These awards recognize water providers that are moving the needle on outdoor water conservation through stakeholder engagement, education and programs that promote efficiencies in outdoor water use.

The SWAT awards annually recognize water providers in two categories:

**Outstanding Industry Partnership Award** – This award recognizes efforts to increase partnerships with landscape

and/or irrigation professionals to promote outdoor water conservation.

**Outstanding Public Engagement Award** – This award recognizes efforts to engage and educate residential and/or commercial end users on smart and efficient technologies, best practices, and programs related to outdoor water conservation.

Award applications are open through March 31, 2020. Winners will be announced at the 2020 WaterSmart Innovations Conference and Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada.

More information about the awards, past winners and how to submit an application can be found by visiting [www.swatirrigation.org](http://www.swatirrigation.org).

## 2019 New Product Contest winners revealed at Irrigation Show

The Irrigation Association is pleased to announce the winners of the 2019 New Product Contest at the Irrigation Show and Education Week in Las Vegas Dec. 2-6, 2019.

Fifty-six new products and technologies were entered in five categories. Products were evaluated based on innovation, design quality, increased water/resource-use efficiency, ease of use and product life expectancy. Contest judges were experienced professionals with technical knowledge and industry expertise. The winners were announced Thursday, Dec. 5, during the IA general session.

The winner of the **agriculture irrigation category** is the CPH Sand and Silt Separator by Epiphene. The CPH Separator offers unparalleled removal of sand, silt and other solids in irrigation water. While operating on very low pressures, it allows for low

*continued on page 4*

energy use and flexibility in design for wells or other water sources.

The winner of the **agriculture specialty category** is Valley Scheduling by Valley Irrigation. This advanced farm management software provides irrigation recommendations to growers based on real data from the field and scientific calculations. Valley Scheduling works for any type and brand of irrigation system and can be adapted for use with nearly all agricultural crops.

The winner of the **landscape irrigation category** is Klift-It by KJ Ketterling Enterprises LLC. Klift-It extends the height of a rotor sprinkler to operate correctly above the vegetation with little or no digging. Components are added to extend the body and stem to raise sunken sprinklers for improved performance.

The winner of the **landscape specialty category** is the Drill Pump by Action Machining Inc. The Drill Pump connects to a cordless drill and can quickly evacuate up to 35 gallons of water per minute. There is no other similar pump on the market that can handle the dirty water encountered by installation and maintenance crews.

The winner of the **landscape lighting category** is the Lighting Design Module of Irrigation F/X 16.0 by Land F/X. Lighting design is a demanding engineering task that is both time-consuming and error prone. The new Lighting Design Module from Land F/X allows the user to focus on design and selection of products, while reducing errors.

Visit the Irrigation Show website at [www.irrigationshow.org](http://www.irrigationshow.org) for more details about the new product contest or contact Tiffany Wilson ([tiffanywilson@irrigation.org](mailto:tiffanywilson@irrigation.org)) for information about entering a product at the 2020 Irrigation Show and Education Week in San Antonio.

## Irrigation Association announces 2019 E3 program winners

The Irrigation Association has selected 35 exceptional winners for the 2019 E3 program. This year's class, 33 students and two educators, will receive education and travel awards to attend the 2019 Irrigation Show and Education Week, Dec. 2-6, in Las Vegas.

The E3 program provides students and educators with exposure, experience and education in the irrigation industry by giving the winners the opportunity to take education classes, participate in networking events and learn about the latest irrigation technologies on the show floor. Since its inception in 2012, the program has grown by over 500%.

Of the 33 E3 learners, two are from Washington:

- **Jonnathan Bender** – Walla Walla Community College
- **Abid Sarwar** – Washington State University

For more information on the Irrigation E3 program and other workforce development programs, visit [www.irrigation.org/workforcedev](http://www.irrigation.org/workforcedev) or contact Nicole Preisner ([nicolepreisner@irrigation.org](mailto:nicolepreisner@irrigation.org), 703.536.7080).

*Announcements provided courtesy of the Irrigation Association and may be abbreviated or paraphrased for inclusion in this magazine. The Irrigation Association is the leading membership organization for irrigation companies and professionals. The IA is committed to promoting efficient irrigation and to long-term sustainability of water resources for future generations. The IA works to improve industry proficiency, advocate sound water management and grow demand for water-efficient products and services. For more information, visit [www.irrigation.org](http://www.irrigation.org).*

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## President's Message

*continued from page 2*

we explore other database management options. The good news: Our new executive director has a running start on identifying and getting a new database system up and running,

As my term as president ends, I want you to know how much I've enjoyed meeting members from our chapters in King County, Snohomish County, South Sound and Southwest. You've all contributed to the strong network of WALP, and working together we can continue to promote professionalism within our industry.

If you haven't already, please welcome incoming President Murphy, who's been active in the Southwest chapter for years. You can reach John at (360) 624-3209.

And consider volunteering to keep our organization strong. There's a committee for every ability and interest: membership, annual conference, awards, marketing/communications, certification and training, database, EcoPro and, for just plain fun, the annual golf tournament. I know John would appreciate your involvement.

Thank you all for your work in making WALP a strong, respected organization. It's been an honor and a pleasure to have served as president.

Here's to a happy, healthy and successful new year for WALP and for all of us.

Terry L Posner  
WALP's 2019 Outgoing President



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# WALP Chapter Updates

## King County Chapter



President  
Tim Buiten

In September, the King County Chapter meeting was hosted by Rob Hobart at Britescape. We toured their new facility and lighting showroom prior to an informative presentation from Danny Vandecoevering with Willbur-Ellis. Vandecoevering shared the history and current controversy surrounding the chemical glyphosate (used in the common weed killer, Round-Up). He discussed cost projections and field data related to several alternatives, including glufosinate and various organic and acidic post-emergent products. We also discussed effective alternative methods of weed control, including pre-emergent products, usage of ground covers, regular mulching, and hand weeding.

Due to popular demand, King County Chapter revisited the topic

of Retro Programs at our meeting on October 24; Holly Markee with Approach Management Services presented at our Chapter meeting. As busy business owners it can be difficult to keep up with our legal obligations to our employees. During this meeting we learned what we could do to improve the safety culture in our businesses and avoid costly downtime and fines. Approach Management is one of several Retro Group options available to businesses in the Northwest; Master Builders GRIP and the Farm Bureau also offer assistance with preparing accident prevention plans and offer L&I premium refunds through the Retro program.

King County Chapter held an Industry Roundtable on November 21. The purpose of the roundtable was to collaborate and share solutions to common industry issues as well as identify concerns about the future of our industry and how WALP can assist in resolving those concerns. Key topics of discussion were: the continued push for new technologies and online software use; lack of staffing and how to recruit qualified employees; company culture and benefits; helpful tools and tricks for running a landscaping business. In addition to valuable conversation around those concerns, there was great networking with peers and friends

By the time this issue goes to press, we will have had a combined holiday party with our colleagues from the Snohomish Chapter. This event takes place on December 4, at the Harbor Point Golf Club in Mukilteo. We look forward to spending time together and celebrating our successes over the past year.

Correction: *in the September/October 2019 issue of NWLP we cited Holly Markee from Approach Management*

*Services as the presenter at our July 20 meeting. Master Builders Association gave the program on Retro Programs at that meeting.*

## Snohomish County Chapter



President  
Peter Dervin

The WALP Snohomish County Chapter had a very busy Summer season and we're getting ready to celebrate the holiday season and plan for next year. First off, we'd like to thank our hosting members that shared their venues and had excellent presentations this past summer.

Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply presented an introduction into holiday lighting. Tim Scherschel and Dan McDonald shared that there are great seasonal lighting opportunities to upsell to your existing customer base. Zack Zobrist and Joe Moorad of Puget Sound Plants gave us a tour of their nursery production in Maltby and provided an excellent barbecue on top of that!

Kathy Jeppsen of Wetlands & Woodlands and her staff gave us an introduction to some really great plants that can be used in the landscape. Dale Gellner of Mutual Materials invited us to attend their Outdoor Expo in Marysville that featured a wide variety of new products. Tim Gray and his staff at Pacific Stone Company shared some new stone and paving products



and also had an excellent barbecue that was delicious.

SiteOne Landscape Supply had a presentation on Low-Voltage Lighting that was illuminating! We'd like to thank all of our sponsoring partners in making these dinner meetings a great success, we appreciate all that you do to support WALP and our Snohomish County Chapter.

Heading into 2020, our Chapter President will be Brandon Cook of Cook Brothers Landscaping. Zack Zobrist of Puget Sound Plants will be the Vice President and Brent Sanders of SiteOne Landscape Supply will be serving as Treasurer. Our first meeting in 2020 will be taking place in February which will focus on planning for the year, date and time to be determined.

I'd like to thank all of our members that participated in our events and

chapter meetings this past year and we are looking forward to a successful and busy 2020.

.....

## SouthWest Chapter



President  
Raina McSherry

Scott Huotari of Creative Computer Solutions joined the SouthWest Chapter on September 26. Scott presented on the ever-changing landscape of computer and network security, including common workplace issues, such as internet security and

phishing. He gave us useful tips and tricks to take back to our offices to help secure our business against the emerging threats we face every day. The presentation was recorded so we were able to share it with a much wider audience. Scott covers a variety of topics with his technology roundtables. A synopsis of Scott's presentation is included later in this magazine.

The SouthWest Chapter invited all WALP members, their employees, suppliers and related industry associates to celebrate the holidays and the end of the year at the Ilani Casino in Ridgefield on December 6. We had a chance to learn some tips from a professional casino dealer before heading out on the casino floor to try our luck.

The SouthWest Chapter continues to work with LaPorte Insurance to try to create a health exchange for its Clark County members. Stay tuned!



*WALP members around the state celebrated the successes of 2019 and the holiday season at local chapter events. Delicious dinners, a casino night and lots of laughs were shared as participants looked forward to 2020.*

# New Rose Rosette Detection Underway

By Dr. Jill Calabro

Research & Science Director, AmericanHort & Horticultural Research Institute

One of the most important tenets of plant pathology is that the first step to effectively controlling a plant disease is identifying its cause. Otherwise, control measures could be ineffective, leading to further plant loss and wasted time and resources. This is especially true of rose rosette disease (RRD).



Photo credit: Dr. Dmitry Kurouski, PhD, Texas A & M

Typical symptoms of RRD are known and widely accepted; they include rapid elongation of new shoots, witches' brooms, small or distorted leaves, red pigmentation of stems or foliage, and excessive thorn development. However, none of these symptoms is guaranteed to be expressed when the disease is present, especially early in the disease cycle. An infected rose may have something as subtle as a thickened cane or flowers with fewer than normal petals – either of which could be easily overlooked or dismissed as a nutrient deficiency or even herbicide injury. Early RRD symptoms can be diverse in expression and may vary based on age of plant, cultivar, and environmental conditions, but later in the disease cycle, symptoms usually become overt and obvious. But by this stage, RRD has likely spread to neighboring plants.

The simple fact that RRD is caused by a virus alone, makes confirmation of

the disease more challenging. There are no obvious signs of the disease's presence like with powdery mildew where white, powdery spores are prominent on leaf undersides. Complicating matters further, infected plants can be symptom-free for months, and viruses cannot be seen with a microscope, let alone a naked eye. Eriophyid mites transmit the virus, but even the mites are difficult to find. They are too small to be seen with the naked eye and are often difficult to find. Diagnosticians and scouts have no choice but to rely on visible, observed symptoms, until serological and/or molecular techniques can be conducted in the lab.

Nebulous expression of symptoms early in the disease cycle is exactly why researchers direct their energies towards diagnostic tools development. In the case of RRD, it is critical to find a means of quick and easy diagnosis, preferably without having to destroy the plant. Researchers have been working since 2014 on various aspects of RRD through a multi-year, multi-million dollar grant titled 'Combatting Rose Rosette Disease' funded by USDA NIFA, and development of diagnostics has been a key component. Knowing sooner that a plant is infected will, in the very least, help limit spread and movement of the disease.

A small team of researchers, part of the larger group mentioned above, from Texas A&M, led by Dr. Dmitry Kurouski, developed a new diagnostic tool for RRD detection. Using a hand-held, portable spectrometer, Dr. Kurouski's team has correctly identified the virus in leaves both non-invasively and non-destructively, with an almost instant read. Raman spectroscopy works by relying on light to interact with molecular vibrations in a leaf. A 'fingerprint' is made based on these vibrations,



meaning that the virus that causes RRD is identified by its unique fingerprint. Previously the team proved that this technology could identify fungal diseases on corn, wheat, and sorghum and eventually adapted it to successfully compare healthy and asymptomatic rose leaves, as well as symptomatic and asymptomatic leaves. They could even differentiate rose leaves with different degrees of infection.

While not yet ready for widespread adoption and use in the industry, this tool can help diagnostic labs by acting as an initial screen for RRD that can help save on more costly, molecular techniques. Plus it may be available for use in the field one day!

The American Rose Society provided small research grants for a portion of this work.

AmericanHort and our Horticultural Research Institute affiliate, in conjunction with likeminded organizations such as the Society of American Florists, previously supported funding of rose rosette research at the University of Arkansas through the Farm Bill Section 10007. AmericanHort participates on the advisory board of the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI)-funded Combatting Rose Rosette Disease project.

For more information, visit [americanhort.org](http://americanhort.org) or [hriresearch.org](http://hriresearch.org).

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## Wednesday, January 22, 2020

1:00pm-2:30pm **Common Legal Issues for Contractors – Sage Linn, Fifth Avenue Law Group**

3:00pm-5:00pm **Industry Update Panel**

Updates from the hardscape, irrigation, plant material, and lighting industry experts

## Thursday, January 23, 2020

8:00am-12:00pm **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (English) CPR/First Aid Training**

8:00am-10:00am **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (Spanish)**

**How to Prune and Renovate the Over Grown Garden – George Ortiz**

George will present one of PlantAmnesty's cornerstone presentations: How To Prune and Renovate the Overgrown Garden. This lecture will cover safety, mistakes people make in the landscape, the 3 different types of pruning kinds of cuts, and how to read a plant's natural habit and prune accordingly. It will also cover other creative solutions to the overgrown landscape and suggestions for planting the right plant in the right place.

9:00am-10:30am **Welcome/Opening Remarks – WALP Leadership**

**Keynote Presentation Beyond Time Management – Ron Rosenberg**

There's simply more to do each day than you can possibly accomplish. But what if you could double your productivity? In this highly interactive and entertaining program, you'll discover seven proven strategies to help you focus on what you do best and how to eliminate, automate, and outsource everything else. You'll identify your greatest time challenges and how you can overcome them. Plus you'll discover the dirty little secret about schedules and "to-do" lists and proven strategies for managing phone calls, e-mail, and other distractions!

10:30am-12:00pm **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (Spanish) Green Gardening – Gonzalo Yepes**

10:30am-12:00pm **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (Spanish)**

**Employee Pesticide Applicator Training – Jeff Robison, WA Department of Agriculture**

11:00am- 12:30pm **How to Save on Taxes, Increase Benefits & Retire on Your Terms: Simple Strategies for Business Owners & their Employees**

**– Michael Dyal, Dyal Financial, and Gary Schill, Karr Tuttle Campbell**

Many companies face growing costs and risk in this every changing economy and many business owners insure about everything in the business but themselves. Too often business owners are busy making their company work and fail to plan for the risks and end up spending too much in taxes, only having the business name to retire on and never getting a plan together that will protect their most important asset-themselves. This session will introduce tax saving concepts-taxes will be increasing and when they do will you be on the winning side? Other takeaways: retirement strategies and risk protection that will save you money, make you money and can help the business stay a business as long as you want it to.

11:00am- 12:30pm **The Science and Benefits of Landscape Plant Growth Regulators**

**– Chris Haugen, Rainbow Treecare**

Plant growth regulators (PGRs) can be a versatile tool for managing trees and shrubs within the urban/suburban interface. PGRs have been around for decades, and were first popularized in turf management and floriculture before being adapted in to landscape operations for the reduction of tree and shrub pruning frequency. Reduced pruning cycles can benefit budgets and labor allocation, and result in less frequent wounding of trees and shrubs. Reduced pruning frequencies can also translate into increased safety on job sites as crew exposure to using powered pruning tools or ascending ladders can be reduced. Arborists and landscape managers continue to find innovative ways to implement PGRs. Modern growth regulators offer a host of secondary health benefits that improve a plant's chances of surviving in our urbanized ecosystems. By the end of this talk attendees should have a better understanding of how plant growth regulators work, and their application in the landscape.

1:00pm-5:00pm **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (Spanish) CPR/First Aid Training**

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**1:00pm-3:00pm**      **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (English) Shrubs I and II – Shawna Van Nimwegan**

This combined Shrubs I and II class will address a pruning budget, plant habits (cane, mounding, trees and tree like), and 3 pruning cuts (heading, reduction, removal). Possible planting material could include Evergreen azalea, nandina, yew, lilac, camellia, heath, heather, lavender, boxwood, witch hazel, red twig dogwood, etc.

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**1:30pm-3:00pm**      **Building Efficiency within your Business – Mark Bradley, LMN**

Mark will review how to build a budget, plan for profit, create estimates guaranteed to make money (understanding job costing to overhead to sub trades), proper business practices for crew tracking and scheduling, concluding with what key metrics you need to have in order to run an efficient landscape business. His key message: Understanding what Operational Efficiency really is. This is a can't miss topic - You will walk away from this session learning about insightful, and profitable business frameworks, that can be easily applied in your company - today! These practices will immediately help you become more efficient, make better business decisions, and do it on a more consistent basis.

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**1:30pm-3:00pm**      **Pesticide Applicator Training: Train the Trainer  
– Jeff Robison, WA Department of Agriculture**

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**3:30pm-5:00pm**      **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (English) Green Gardening – Gonzalo Yepes**

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**3:30 pm-5:00pm**      **EMPLOYEE TRACKS: (English)  
Employee Pesticide Applicator Training – Jeff Robison, WA Department of Agriculture**

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**3:30pm-5:00pm**      **Growing Revenue While Building Strong Team Culture – Mark Bradley, LMN**

In this session, LMN's CEO Mark Bradley will talk about how to close 75% of your leads (grow revenues), and how to build that 'winning' culture at the same time.

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**FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2020**

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**8:00am-10:00am**      **How to Deal With Difficult Customers and Get Paid For Your Work  
– Larry Linville, Linville Law Firm**

In this session, you will learn why and how to rewrite your contract with your customer so when your final invoice falls on deaf ears, you'll have some nice options open to you, including the recording of a lien. All collections are based on breach of contract. The terms in your contract dictate your collection prospects.

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**8:00am-10:00am**      **Supervising for Safety – Shamus Harmon, ERNwest**

Perfect for line supervisors, managers, and organization leadership at all levels, this class walks management staff through the levels of management and leadership. Focusing on how managers and supervisors can affect safe work practices, provide safer work for staff, and obtain better operational outcomes, participants will: gain a full understanding of why "eyes on" supervision is critical; how to perform sound safety observations; how to provide feedback that makes a difference, and; develop a safety observation program that will work for their organization.

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**8:00am-10:00am**      **WA State Paid Sick Leave Updates  
– Nick Burrow, WA State Department of Labor & Industries**

This presentation is intended to provide attendees with a general overview of the state's paid sick leave requirements that went into effect in 2018 as a result of the passing of Initiative 1433 (I-1433). The agenda will include: a brief history of the law, a review of the minimum requirements of the paid sick leave law and requirements for implementing optional practices allowed, information on how to access department resources and updates, and a question and answer session.

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**10:30am-12:00pm**      **What's Your Number? – John Marshall, Results Driven**

You know your landscape business is capable of more: more profit, more billing and more free time. But you're trapped on the treadmill of daily issues. In this interactive presentation, you're going to learn something very insightful. You're finally going to discover what's holding you and your firm back. It's your 'number' – a score out of 100, based on 6 key areas. Once you discover your 'number', you're going to share your insights with your colleagues in small groups and take all these new ideas and apply them to your business. In mentoring businesses in over 30 industries, most owners are overwhelmed because they don't know their one vital number. That's why we created our business scorecard: What's Your Number? This insightful scorecard helps business owners learn the health of their business, out of 100. The scorecard is the first part of our 5-part mentoring framework. Our goal is to help each owner evolve from vision to execution, so they finally achieve the results they deserve.

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**10:30am-12:00pm**      **Pesticide Compliance Update – Daleena Blair, WA State Department of Agriculture**

Daleena will share what to expect during a pesticide compliance inspection and investigation through case studies. She will include examples of violations seen frequently in the landscape industry, and highlight some label interpretations of commonly used pesticide products.

*\*Schedule subject to change.*

# Conference Schedule

## WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2020

All Day	<b>VENDOR LOAD-IN</b> <i>Atrium</i>
10:00 am - 12:00 pm	<b>BOARD MEETING</b> <i>Boardroom B</i>
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	<b>CHECK-IN &amp; REGISTRATION</b> <i>Atrium</i>
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	<b>Common Legal Issues for Contractors</b> - Sage Linn, Fifth Ave Law Group <i>Atrium</i>
2:15 pm - 2:30 pm	<b>BREAK</b>
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	<b>Industry Update Panel: Irrigation, Lighting, Softscapes, and Hardscapes</b> <i>Atrium</i>
5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>BREAK</b>
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	<b>VENDOR RECEPTION</b> <i>Atrium</i>
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm	<b>KARAOKE</b> <i>Mt. Adams Room</i>

## THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2020

7:00 am - 9:00 am	<b>CHECK-IN &amp; REGISTRATION</b> <i>Atrium</i>
9:00 am - 10:30 am	<b>Opening Remarks &amp; Keynote</b> - Ron Rosenburg <i>Rainier Room</i>
10:30 am - 11:00 am	<b>BREAK WITH VENDORS</b>

### RAINIER ROOM

11:00 am - 12:30 pm	<b>BUSINESS</b>   How to Save on Taxes, Increase Benefits & Retire on Your Terms: Simple Strategies for Business Owners & their Employees - Michael Dyal, Dyal Financial, and Gary Schill, Karr Tuttle Campbell
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### BAKER ROOM

11:00 am - 12:30 pm	<b>TECHNICAL</b>   The Science and Benefits of Landscape Plant Growth Regulators - Chris Haugen, Rainbow Treecare
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12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	<b>BUSINESS/TECHNICAL VENDOR RECOGNITION LUNCH</b> <i>Atrium</i>
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1:30 pm - 3:00 pm	<b>BUSINESS</b>   Building Efficiency Within Your Business - Mark Bradley, LMN
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1:30 pm - 3:00 pm	<b>TECHNICAL</b>   Supervising the Pesticide Applicator Training - Jeff Robison 
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3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	<b>BREAK WITH VENDORS</b>
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3:30 pm - 5:00 pm	<b>BUSINESS</b>   Growing revenue while building strong Team Culture - Mark Bradley, LMN
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5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>BREAK WITH VENDORS</b>
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5:30 pm - 8:00 pm	<b>AWARDS DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION</b> <i>Atrium</i>
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## FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2020

### RAINIER ROOM

8:00 am - 10:00 am	<b>BUSINESS</b>   How to Deal With Difficult Customers and Get Paid For Your Work - Larry Linville, Linville Law Firm
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### BAKER ROOM

8:00 am - 10:00 am	<b>TECHNICAL</b>   Supervising for Safety - Shamus Harmon, ERN West
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### ST. HELENS ROOM

8:00 am - 10:00 am	<b>BUSINESS</b>   WA State Paid Sick Leave update - Nick Burrow 
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10:00 am - 10:30 am	<b>BREAK WITH VENDORS</b>
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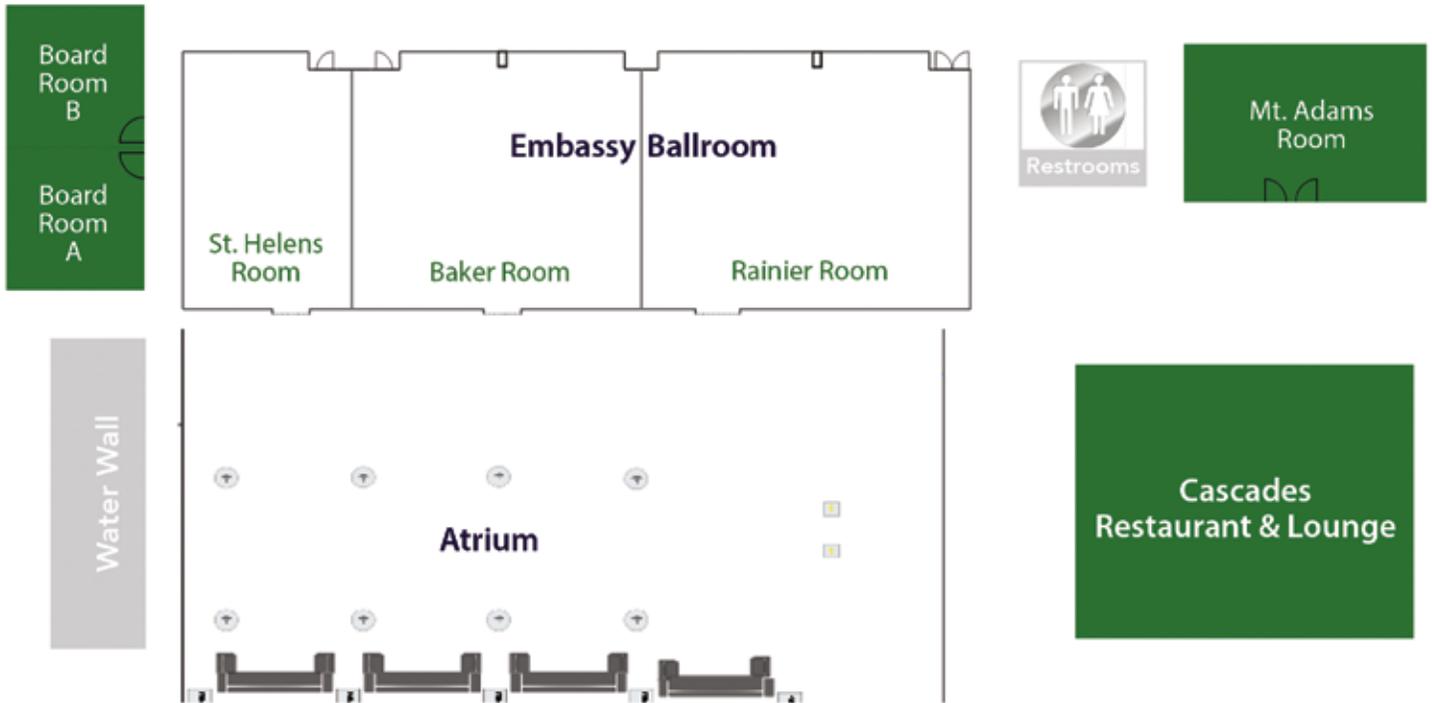
10:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>BUSINESS</b>   What's Your Number? - John Marshall, Results Driven
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10:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>TECHNICAL</b>   WSDA Pesticide Compliance Update - Daleena Blair 
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12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	<b>LUNCH AND ANNUAL MEETING</b> <i>Atrium</i>
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1:30 pm - 4:00 pm	<b>Vendor Load-Out</b> <i>Atrium</i>
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# Conference Map



# Employee Tracks

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2020

	ST. HELENS ROOM	MT. ADAMS ROOM
8:00 am - 9:00 am	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   (Spanish) How to Prune and Renovate the Overgrown Garden - George Ortiz	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   CPR - (English) 4 hrs
10:00 am - 10:30 am	<b>EMPLOYEE BREAK WITH VENDORS</b>	
10:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   (Spanish) Green Gardening - Gonzalo Yepes	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   (Spanish) Pesticide Applicator Training - Jeff Robison; Board Room
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	<b>EMPLOYEE VENDOR RECOGNITION LUNCH</b>	
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   (English) Shrubs I & II - Shawna Van Nimwegen	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   CPR - (Spanish) 4 hrs
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	<b>EMPLOYEE BREAK WITH VENDORS</b>	
3:30 pm - 5:00 pm	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   (English) Green Gardening - Gonzalo Yepes	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>   (English) Pesticide Applicator Training - Jeff Robison; Baker Room
5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	<b>EMPLOYEE BREAK WITH VENDORS</b>	

## CONFERENCE PRESENTER BIOS

### Daleena Blair

Daleena Blair has over 10 years of experience in public service, promoting chemical safety and compliance. As a former High School science teacher, she ran a chemistry lab and instructed others in proper chemical hygiene practices. She moved from the classroom to the field 3 years ago when she joined Washington State Department of Agriculture as a Pesticide Compliance Investigator. Although her job description has changed, her goals have remained the same: to ensure chemicals are handled safely, and to protect public health and the environment.

### Mark Bradley



Mark Bradley founded and was CEO of TBG Landscape Company for the past 18 years. TBG has won many Awards of Excellence for its innovative design-build work and grew to be one of the Top 100 landscape companies in North America. Mark is also CEO of TBG Environmental and TBG Logistics. These companies provide a fully integrated premier package for environmental, site development and transportation projects in Ontario, Canada. In addition to founding the TBG Group of Companies, Mark also founded and is CEO of the LMN software company (established in 2009), now the industry's most popular landscape estimating, budgeting and timekeeping software.

Mark is a highly sought after industry speaker covering topics such as corporate leadership, driving business efficiency, establishing consistent and profitable recurring revenue, and how to develop a strong company culture, just to name a few. Mark is a Member-Preferred Coach and Consultant with Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association, a preferred Speaker with the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), and an Advisor and Preferred Speaker for the Snow and Ice Management Association (SIMA).

### Nick Burrow



My name is Nick Burrow, and I am an Industrial Relations Agent and the Paid Sick Leave Specialist with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. I have been with the department for approximately two and a half years. As part of my job, I wear many hats, which include being the department's technical expert and representative on the paid sick leave law, providing our field agents with technical advice and tools for investigating complaints, and creating publications and other informative or educational material. My ultimate goal is to be a reliable resource for both labor and business with understanding the paid sick leave laws, and ensuring employers are complying with the law and employees are being provided with what they are entitled to.

### Mike Dyal



Mike grew up in Las Vegas, Nevada and earned his Eagle Scout Award, played football and spent summers on working on his Grandfather's farm. After High School he lived and serving the people of the Dominican Republic, He went to college at Utah Valley University where he graduated in Technology Management with an emphasis on Leadership, earning a National Certificate for Leadership from the Center for the Advancement of Leadership. He is currently an MBA candidate mid-2020.

After college Mike and his new bride Keli moved to California and later Washington while he worked on some of the largest projects in the Western United States: Bay Bridge, Long Beach Bridge and the Seattle Tunnel. He started his own practice with a Vision to solve the retirement shortfall by providing the best in secure lifetime benefits never compromising our integrity, compassion and philanthropic desires and change the world as the premier financial institution in North America.

### Shamus Harmon

Shamus Harmon has spent the last fifteen years dedicated to safety, primarily in the food production and long term care industries. After earning his Masters in Occupational Safety and Health he took on several roles: developing and managing employee safety and workers' compensation programs, benefits, and human resources projects. Shamus has also led quality assurance teams to engage facilities in overall operational improvement. For the past seven years Shamus has worked as a trainer, traveling to facilities to work with their staff on best practices in their environment.

### Chris Haugen



Chris is a passionate arborist and landscape professional who provides hands on solutions which are practical and science based for plant health care challenges. With a diverse background beginning on the ground pruning trees, to managing field research for Rainbow Scientific Advancements, and now to managing National Account Sales, Chris has had the opportunity to learn and apply technologies from green industry experts to improve the professionalism and results in the field. With an undergraduate degree from St. John's University and graduate work from the University of Minnesota he has strong background in plant health care solutions.

**Embassy Suites  
Lynnwood  
January 22-24, 2020**



## Sage Linn



Sage Linn has over 17 years of experience in commercial litigation and construction disputes. He represents clients on a range of complex matters, and has experience presenting matters at trial, arbitration and state appeal hearings. Sage is a seasoned construction lawyer having represented clients on all sides of project disputes, including contractors, developers, consultants, homeowner associations and private homeowners.

Sage is a frequent speaker on construction law, including presentations through the Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW), the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), and other organizations.

## Larry Linville



Larry Linville is a native Seattleite. He received his law degree from the University Of Washington School Of Law in 1975 and has since specialized in business and construction law. Larry is admitted to practice in all courts in the State of Washington, the federal courts and the United States Supreme Court. Larry presents a number of seminars each year to contractors and trade associations on matters dealing with contracts, collections, liens, and current legislation. A large part of his law practice involves preparing contracts and the filing and enforcement of construction liens.

## John Marshall



John Marshall, a thought leader on small business, discovered something powerful. In mentoring businesses in over 30 industries, most owners are overwhelmed because they don't know their one vital number. That's why we created our business scorecard: What's Your Number? This insightful scorecard helps business owners learn the health of their business, out of 100. The scorecard is the first part of our 5-part mentoring framework. Our goal is to help each owner evolve from vision to execution, so they finally achieve the results they deserve.

## George Ortiz

George Ortiz is the owner and operator of Caring Landscape Services and a Certified Landscape Technician. He has been actively involved in teaching and translating PlantAmnesty's lectures into Spanish alongside founder, Cass Turnbull. George has a series of pruning videos on Youtube and works to educate the community about proper pruning techniques and landscape care.



## Jeff Robison



Jeff Robison grew up on a farm 10 miles north of Pasco, Washington. He was involved in all aspects of family farming operation. On the farm they grew alfalfa, wheat, beans, potatoes, turnips and other crops to feed the cattle they raised. He left the farm for college and completed a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Heritage University. After completing his degree, he spent nearly 20 years providing a variety of trainings to the farmworker community.

Jeff has endeavored in several businesses. He and his wife ran a restaurant for a time and currently they operate a successful childcare center. He enjoys conducting trainings for the Washington State Department of Agriculture and is amazed at how engaged our agriculture community is.

## Ron Rosenberg



Ron Rosenberg is an award-winning speaker, author, and coach. He is a nationally recognized expert on marketing and customer service, has authored several books and learning systems, and leads high-level marketing and business development coaching programs.

Ron was awarded the "Certified Speaking Professional" designation by the National Speakers Association in 2000, and was a winner of the prestigious "Marketer of the Year" award at the International Marketing Summit. He holds an undergraduate degree in Computer Science from the Rochester Institute of Technology, and an MBA from Southern New Hampshire University.

## Gary Schill



Gary Schill is an attorney in Karr Tuttle Campbell's Business and Finance Department. He focuses his practice on serving emerging and established entities in a range of business and transactional matters including corporate and partnership taxation. Gary regularly assists businesses in forming S-corps., LLCs, and advises small business owners on a wide range of legal issues. His experience in tax law includes issues related to IRS controversy matters on behalf of businesses and individuals. Gary is also licensed as a Certified Public Accountant and has over seven years of public accounting experience, four of those at a big four accounting firm doing tax compliance, audits, and consulting. Gary has his J.D. and a LL.M. in Taxation from the University of Washington.

## Shawna Van Nimwegen



Shawna Van Nimwegen is a Certified Professional Horticulturist and Master Pruner. For the past 12 years, she and her husband have owned and operated Maple Hill Gardens LLC. They, along with their amazing crew, provide insightful garden design and installation, skilled hardscape construction, and expert horticultural services. Shawna enjoys teaching and has long been an instructor at PlantAmnesty workshops. When she's not running her business and volunteering, you'll find her spending time her two teenage boys and small menagerie of pets.

# The Beginner's Guide to Using Technology in the Landscape Industry

Landscapers are skilled technicians, not “techies.” In other words, they're gifted in working with their hands and creating beautiful landscapes, but they often avoid using the latest gadgets and apps that will grow their business (especially if they're still using a flip phone from 2009...you know who you are).



It can feel stressful to embrace new technology, especially when it's unfamiliar territory. However, there are a vast array of tools available to help business owners and their staff operate faster, easier and more strategically. Whether you're a landscaper, a tech wizard or somewhere in between, you deserve the opportunity to leverage these game-changing technologies to help your business run more efficiently and improve your bottom line.

This article introduces programs and apps in five different categories: health and safety, staff, operations, communication and continuing education. Using at least one suggestion in each area can help you take your business to the next level.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Greenius – [www.gogreenius.com](http://www.gogreenius.com)

– Greenius is an online suite of tools for training, onboarding and performance excellence, with over 50 videos for crews and supervisors. There's also an extensive “tailgate talk” library to get your crew equipment-trained and safety-ready.

### Vault – <https://www.vaultintel.com/>

– Vault is a way to manage your risk, health and safety responsibilities. The cloud-based software has a number of solutions to create a safer workplace.

## STAFF

### Evernote – [www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com)

– Evernote allows you to capture and prioritize ideas, projects and to-do lists so nothing falls through the cracks. It can be loaded on multiple devices and the program syncs seamlessly between the devices when connected to the internet.

### HR Downloads – <https://www.hrdownloads.com/>

– HR Downloads offers thousands of HR tools and document templates, legislative updates and management resources

## OPERATIONS

### App Sheet – [www.appsheets.com](http://www.appsheets.com)

– This app building software is easy to use and can transform your workplace by helping you turn paper documents into an app on your employee's phones (ie. circle check form, accident reporting, etc.)

**Fleetio – [www.fleetio.com](http://www.fleetio.com)** – This all-in-one fleet management app can help you track your fleet and maintenance, all in one place regardless of fleet size.

**Tom's Planner – [www.tomsplanner.com](http://www.tomsplanner.com)** – This free app allows you to plan your entire landscape business. It can

be used for design-build projects or planning your maintenance business for the entire season. It gives you the ability to then share it with your team.

### Landscape Management Network

– **[www.golmn.com](http://www.golmn.com)** – This landscape-specific software helps with budgeting, customer relationship management, estimates, mobile time tracking and much more.

### Go iLawn – [www.goilawn.com](http://www.goilawn.com)

– This online property measurement service is a great tool that creates efficiency in your estimating process.

**DOZR – [www.dozr.com](http://www.dozr.com)** – DOZR is an online marketplace for rentals of heavy equipment. It's like Airbnb for bulldozers and excavators. You can rent the equipment you need or offer your own equipment for rent. It's a perfect example of the new shared economy that we are living in.

## COMMUNICATION

**Voxer – [www.voxer.com](http://www.voxer.com)** – This walkie-talkie app can replace the old push-to-talk cell phones we used to have. This app offers secure real-time communication that can be used with groups or individuals. It's a great tool for your snow operations.

### What's App – [www.whatsapp.com](http://www.whatsapp.com)

– This international messenger app works on all platforms and allows you to text, send photos and voice memos, and make phone calls – all for free!

**Slack – [www.slack.com](http://www.slack.com)** – SLACK is an acronym for “Searchable Log of All Conversation and Knowledge.” This set of team collaboration tools and services allows you to communicate to groups or individuals. It results in fewer meetings, less internal e-mail and provides a space to share documents and information with your team.

**Skitch** – <http://www.evernote.com/products/skitch> – Skitch helps you communicate visually to your staff and customers by allowing you to take a picture, mark it up using arrows, text and colour and then send it out. This is a huge time-saver in your operations.

**Hoot Suite** – [www.hootsuite.com](http://www.hootsuite.com) – Hoot Suite manages your company and personal social media accounts. It makes scheduling, managing and reporting on social media as easy as laying sod!

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

**Blinkist** – [www.blinkist.com](http://www.blinkist.com) – This app allows you to listen to educational material in the areas of personal growth, history, management, leadership, communication skills and motivation.

**Grow the Bench** – [www.growthebench.com](http://www.growthebench.com) – GTB is an online professional education development platform built for landscape and snow contractors. It offers courses on many different topics from time management to conflict management. New content is added regularly.

**Downcast** – [www.downcastapp.com](http://www.downcastapp.com) – This one has been a game-changer. It allows you to subscribe and listen to podcasts anywhere you go during the day, so you can always be making the most of your time with a helpful podcast.

This list is only the beginning – there are more industry apps and programs out there and the list is growing constantly. It's important after reading this article to take even one step forward to integrating technology into your business strategy. Enjoy watching how even the smallest changes can improve efficiency, strategic planning, internal and external communication and ongoing learning for you and your teams.

## Implementing technology

New technology will only be useful if it's implemented in a way that works for everyone. Be sure to follow these three steps before jumping in:

1. Choose software as a leadership team, getting input from each division. Ask each division to create a list of what technologies would help them work more effectively and efficiently. Review these lists, going back for additional information until you have a clear picture of what you need from your technology.
2. Set up an implementation team that meets regularly to follow through on the use of the new technology and set clear goals and expectations around it. The leadership team must commit to using the new app or program routinely so the implementation process doesn't become stalled. Don't forget to track the downtime or shop time of your crew staff in order to get an accurate sense of the time being put into the implementation.
3. Implement accountability standards with your staff to follow the documented process and steps. For example, your sales teams may not want to put their leads into the CRM system because it takes too long. If this is the case, the sales team isn't understanding why the use of this new software is essential to improving their own work and how it affects the company as a whole.

Learning new technology takes time. Be patient with yourself and your staff, especially when mistakes and learning curves happen (and you can be certain they will).

Too many owners get frustrated and impatient and scrap change for the comfort of their usual routine.

However, doing things the way you've always done them is not the way to grow your business. Hang in there! As for your staff, they will need to be trained well to use it properly and recognize its value.



A word of caution: you will experience a range of responses from early adopters and enthusiasts, to the open but cautious individuals, to groups of outright opposition. Take each stage as it comes, knowing that it's an essential part of growing a sustainable business. It will be short-term pain for long-term gain.

*Article reprinted courtesy of Total Landscape Care and Grant Harrison, founder of Nextra Consulting.*





## The Case for Flower Shows

by Courtney Goetz, Operations Manager at Marketplace Events

Call it what you will, but the word “show” simply doesn’t do justice to the largest West Coast gathering of garden and horticulture enthusiasts. Every February, just as the gray skies of the Pacific Northwest become grueling, the Northwest Flower & Garden Festival transforms the fourth floor of the Washington State Convention Center in downtown Seattle with thousands of colorful blooms.

As the Festival enters its 33rd year, the new show producer, Marketplace Events, is seeking ways to adapt to change – much as a real garden does. Even with significant investments and exciting new features, one thing remains: the power of face-to-face selling is as strong as ever.

I know what you might be thinking: shows are old-fashioned in our digital age. But there are flaws in traditional and digital advertising, most prominently a new phenomenon called “ad fatigue.” 81 percent of consumers feel overwhelmed by the number of advertisements they see. Ad

fatigue is puzzling marketing managers everywhere – the cure could be consumer-based events.

Consumer events are a powerful example of experiential marketing. Speaking directly with excited attendees in a face-to-face setting will result in massive time and money savings for your business. Here’s how:

**Pre-qualify your prospects.** Shows

produce far fewer tire-kickers or unqualified buyers than any other form of advertising. If they are at a show, they want to engage with your business.

**Remarkably cost-effective.** There’s no more efficient way to reach tens of thousands of targeted consumers in your market. The Northwest Flower & Garden Festival garnered 493.9 million paid media impressions last year –



would your business benefit from that level of exposure?

**Accomplish a multitude of objectives.** Reach a brand-new audience, make immediate sales, gather quality leads, build brand awareness, sample products, set appointments, and more – all within a few days timeframe!

**Keep your schedule full.** You're busy now, but what happens when the well dries? Shows are about getting immediate work, but more importantly for those who are booking out, you can keep your full-time crews busy and fill your schedule for 2020 and beyond.

**Reach a younger audience.** Flower shows offer a non-intimidating way for younger people to encourage their interest in investing in horticulture. Couple that with the fact that new home sales hit a ten year high in

November, and you can see why they're looking for ideas. Be there when they're looking.

**Face-to-face selling builds trust.** 74 percent of people say they view a brand in a more positive light after attending a live event. You get to view consumer reactions then and there while generating instant credibility; no biased Google searches or fake online reviews here.

In the end, the goal is to form a memorable and emotional connection between your business and the consumer. This allows them to get to know your brand, what it stands for, and the people behind it.

Even if you aren't participating in the upcoming Northwest Flower & Garden Festival, you should still attend. Shows act as a trendsetter for the

upcoming busy season. What products were people most interested in? What themes seemed to be the most popular? Are edibles still a trend? By listening in on conversations, checking out display gardens, and asking these questions, you will be better prepared when those same customers come walking through your door in the spring.

Events like the Northwest Flower & Garden Festival offer an unparalleled platform for you to reach thousands of potential customers at a fraction of the traditional advertising cost. The upcoming Festival is expected to bring together over 60,000 passionate gardeners eager for inspiration and hundreds of industry experts and suppliers from across the globe, all in only five days. Will you be there to meet them?



*All photos are provided courtesy of the Northwest Flower and Garden Festival*

# “Winter is Coming”

## Seven Strategies to Sustain your Business throughout the winter Season

by Kate Scriven, feature contributor

Throughout the months of spring and summer, landscaping professionals have their hustle on. Springtime clean up and planting transitions to maintenance, mowing and weeding. Large scale projects begin as landscapes long admired on paper become a reality in dirt, stone and plants. Irrigation systems need immediate attention. Phones ring. Trucks roll. Crews labor.

This pace slackens as the days grow shorter and eventually, most landscape professionals experience a slowing and shifting of workload in the winter season. However, the season of chilly temperatures, rainy days and possibly snowy landscapes doesn't need to result in a dip in revenue or productivity for your company. There are plenty of strategies, both inside and out, to fill the slower months and offer steady revenue and optimum performance come spring.

Whether located on the damp, temperate western side of the Cascades or the dryer, more extreme eastern side, Washington's landscape professionals face a wide range of challenges and opportunities as seasons change. No matter your geography, these seven strategies to sustain your business

throughout the winter months are applicable and proven by WALP members across the state.

### 1 – Diversify your Services

The most important strategy to sustain your business year-round is to diversify your offerings. For companies that focus on yard maintenance, transition from mowing and edging to leaf blowing and mulching. Educating clients on the changing needs of their landscape offers an opportunity to increase services. Rick Longnecker, owner of Buds and Blades Landscape Co. based in Olympia says, “We transition our [mostly commercial] clients from weekly maintenance to leaf cleanup and then to pruning during the dormant months. In March, we pick back up with scheduled maintenance.” In addition, suggesting trees and shrubs to plant in the later months of winter to improve the structure of the landscape for the coming growing season can carry crews through to the spring.

For design and install focused companies, diversifying offerings to include wintertime installations is key. Carol Eland, owner of Perennial Planning, a Seattle-based design and install company, offers a variety of options that can be completed no matter the weather. “Landscape lighting, outdoor kitchens, moss removal, power washing or gate and railing installations are all services companies can offer year-round. We do a lot of hardscapes in the winter months and have clients ready for planting come spring.”

Of course, if the ground is frozen, as it often is during the winter in eastern



Washington, diversified services can look much different. Terry Micken has been with Greenleaf Landscaping in Spokane for 21 years and has seen a lot of winter seasons. “When it really gets into winter, when it's locked down, we do de-icing and plowing and sanding.” The winter weather changes the game for those on the east side, but being flexible and responsive to weather can result in increased, not reduced, opportunities.

### 2 – Invest in Training

The quieter months of late fall and winter offer an opportunity to train staff in new skills for the coming season as well as leadership or management strategies. “We like to do some one-on-one with select employees, hands on training, but also sharing some training options for career advancement opportunities,” shares Longnecker. “We have done some two-day leadership training with a few guys and typically look at industry sponsored events, but also have seen benefit in outside training for key people to get them into leadership positions.”

While you are training crew leaders to next step in their career, you can



Buds and Blades Landscape Co.



also train more novice employees on equipment and techniques that might be new to them, ensuring they can offer increased value come spring.

The quiet of the season is also an opportunity to train office staff. Investing in a new software system or implementing new bookkeeping and scheduling strategies takes time. Utilize the “down” season to dive deep into your system management and marketing and make sure everyone is up to speed come spring.

### 3 – Focus on Planning and Paperwork

Does your company offer design services? The winter months are a key time for meeting with clients to plan their dream landscape. This ensures your crews are ready to hit the ground running come spring with approved plans in place for larger scale projects.

It’s also a great time for planning marketing strategies, new websites or organizational structures. Reorganizing and catching up on paperwork are all excellent activities when the phone is ringing a little bit less.

### 4 – Take a Cue from the Weather

Sometimes the weather sidetracks job schedules, but it can also offer opportunities. When storms hit – and they will – be prepared to work WITH the weather instead of against it. “Our arbor department stays busy with tree damage and trimming from winter storms,” shares Micken. “It’s sporadic but if we are prepared, it can keep our crews really busy.”

Likewise, Eland says wet weather offers the unique opportunity to assess drainage issues when they are at their worst, offering solid solutions for clients. “It’s messy, but it really easier to address the problem when there is water on the ground,” she says.

### 5 – Establish 12-month Relationships

Is the bread and butter of your business maintenance contracts with neighborhoods, HOAs or individuals? If so, work to extend these sometimes-seasonal contracts by marketing the importance of winter services. While the frequency of visits may drop from weekly to bi-weekly, being able to keep the contract in place year-round has tremendous value. When storms hit or HOAs vote to install additional hardscapes or plantings, your name will be the one they call as you are the “go-to” contact for all their needs.

Emphasize winter planting, off-season lawn maintenance, tree pruning and planting, sidewalk cleaning, salting and sanding services and even hardy plantings to add winter color. Remember you are the expert and your



client may not know what’s available in the winter until you share with them.

### 6 – Crosstrain your Staff

It’s true – no one is calling about their sprinkler system in January. “It’s the happiest day of my life when

everyone finishes their irrigation needs,” laughs Eland. However, her point man for irrigation still needs work year-round. “We’ve trained our irrigation guy and he does all the outdoor lighting. It keeps him really busy throughout the winter.” Perennial Planning markets and sell a lot of outdoor lighting work in the early fall as it starts to get dark. “When it’s getting dark at 4:30, it’s a good time to market lighting,” she shares. “Landscapes are so pretty with lighting, even in the gloomy months.”



Likewise, training yard maintenance crews on proper pruning techniques or building raised garden beds, preparing them for spring planting, extends their skills into the winter maintenance months.

### 7 – Rest

Lastly, don’t forget to rest. “We want to prep the team and equipment for the ‘100 days of hell,’” says Longnecker with a wry laugh. “From March 1 to June 30, we are going all the time. We can use the winter to rest a bit so we are ready for spring.” Buds and Blades closes their doors between Christmas and New Years, too, offering a time of quiet and rejuvenation for their whole staff.

Approach the onset of winter as an opportunity for your landscape business. With application of these seven strategies, you’ll be busy throughout the colder months and ready for the onset of spring. Winter IS coming....embrace it.



## Cyber Security and Your Business

*by Raina McSherry, SouthWest Chapter President*

The September SW WALP Chapter meeting was extremely insightful and provided a wealth of information on cyber security and how to reduce risk for you and your employees work computers and mobile devices. If you missed the meeting, no worries, we're offering a brief synopsis here:

Do you have a network security system in place? Think you don't need one? Think again. Everyone that goes online to search for information or products is at risk of having their information or their client's information captured by someone who plans to do something nefarious with it. To understand more, think of the web as an iceberg. At the surface you see the typical search engines like Google, Bing or even Wikipedia. This is where you can look up products and services, "How To" information, etc. But that's not usually where the risk lies. Below the surface you will see the Deep Web. It contains 90% of the information on the web but

is not accessible by Surface Web crawlers. This is where you will find academic information, medical records, legal records, scientific information, multilingual databases, financial and government records and social media. Beneath that is the Dark Web. It's a part of the Deep Web but accessible only through certain browsers such as Tor which is designed to ensure anonymity. Deep Web technologies has zero involvement with the Dark Web. This is where one can find illegal information, connections to drug and human trafficking and the foundations of pornography sites. A study done by Gareth Owen of Portsmouth University found that content on the Dark Web is dominated by pornography, black markets, hacking groups and botnet operations most commonly associated with spam, fraud, and malicious attacks.

So, who is a hacker? Why do they do it? Hackers are those that use computers to gain unauthorized access

to data. They are often enthusiastic and skillful computer programmers who seek to gain your information to then sell it for money. Cybercrime is big business! Picture Mike, he is one of the top writers of data gathering code. In our example, Mike needs help deploying out to credit unions in northern America. He pays Susan who has a website that will guarantee to get his program past security systems such as AVAST, McAfee, AVG, ViPre and Webroot. In comes Derik who has deployed 90,000 BOTs specifically targeted at credit unions running the Windows operating system. Mike pays Susan and Derik for their work in deploying his program to over 70,000 credit unions. The code is now dumping credit union information at a rate of 10Tb per day to redundant servers throughout the world. Mike advertises his payload results on the black cloud network and sells the content for 2,000,000 Bitcoin, more than doubling what he's paid Susan

and Derik. Joan in Cambodia then sells the payload to Terrance in London for 2,500,000 Bitcoin and so on.

What do these deployed threats look like on our end. How are they deployed? They come to us via email attachments, instant messaging, spam, viruses, phishing or our own systems vulnerabilities in an improperly maintained computer.

What should you be looking for? If you receive an email that states a sense of urgency or threatens to shut down your account if you don't act immediately. Beware. Also, look for poor grammar and punctuation. It's often a sign you've received a phishing email. Careful following links in emails. CCSI suggests that you hover over the link first to see where this will take you. If you don't recognize it. Delete it. Does the email address from the sender have a matching address? A Bank of America employee trying to contact

you will not have an @Comcast.net address. Has the email been sent to you personally or is it sent to *Dear member*, or *Undisclosed recipient*? These are just a few ways we can train ourselves and our employees to be diligent and always aware when receiving emails, following links, etc.

So how can you protect yourself, your company and your client's information? Use companies like CCSI who deploy a multi-level approach to cyber security. Think of the many layers in bullet proof glass. The first layer being anti-virus protection. The second layer being anti-malware, then content filtering followed by firewall filtering and finally monitoring.

CCSI was founded by Scott Huotari in October of 1998. His vision was to take technologies and computer services that were engineered for large companies and apply them to make small businesses successful. He focused

on networks with five to 50 users, installing servers and workstations based on best practices. The company added network monitoring about 10 years ago to track real-time trends on its client's networks and offer proactive services.



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*For further information about how you can have Scott or a team member provide training to you and your employees, reach out to CCSI via phone or email and set a time for a complimentary consultation.*

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The advertisement features a large green banner at the top with the text 'We're expanding!' and 'MORE ACRES, DELIVERING FARTHER.' Below this are three images: a large green field with a rainbow, a white truck pulling a trailer, and a white tractor. The bottom section contains contact information and logos for A-G Sod Farms Inc. and Lefebber Turf Farm.



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