

California Landscape Contractors Association
LEADERSHIP MANUAL

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CORE VALUES

- Commitment to honesty, integrity and ethics at all costs
- Devotion to excellence in craftsmanship
- Living the entrepreneurial spirit
- Reverence for the Earth, and respect for its resources
- Relationships are everything

CORE PURPOSE

To support CLCA members as they create beautiful, enduring landscapes that improve the quality of life.

BHAG

(BIG HAIRY AUDACIOUS GOAL)
 CLCA members will dominate the landscape industry through commitment to our core values.

California Landscape Contractors Association
 1491 River Park Drive, #100, Sacramento, CA 95815-4501
 hq@clca.org // www.clca.org // (916) 830-2780 // (916) 830-2788 fax

MISSION

The California Landscape Contractors Association serves the interests of its members, promotes professionalism and advances public awareness of the landscape industry.

VISION

The California Landscape Contractors Association members will be recognized by the public as the best qualified professionals of the landscape industry. CLCA accomplishes its mission through a program of work in the following areas:

- Legislation
- Education
- Professional Development
- Public Relations
- Business "Products"
- Industry Forum

CHAPTERS

CC	Central Coast
CI	Channel Islands
IE	Inland Empire
KC	Kern County
LA/SGV	Los Angeles/San Gabriel Valley
NC	North Coast
NV	North Valley
OC	Orange County
PC	Pacific Coast
SAC	Sacramento Valley
SD	San Diego
SFV	San Fernando Valley
SFBA	San Francisco Bay Area
SFBA/E	San Francisco Bay Area-East
SJV	San Joaquin Valley
SLO	San Luis Obispo
YC	Yosemite

CLCA Membership Benefits

Resources

- Membership Directory — puts statewide contacts at your fingertips, listing all the members with their primary services and specialties. It also includes the current Education Catalog and Peer Consulting lists.
- Website — www.clca.org
- State Staff — (800) 448-CLCA (2522) or hq@clca.org.
- Chapter Board
- Attorney on Retainer — specializes in license, labor, and contract law. In many cases, legal questions can be referred without a fee. Extensive consultations and representation can be provided at reasonable fees.
- HR Hotline

Business Benefits — to help you grow your business

- Group Insurance — includes workers' compensation, general liability, vehicle, loss of earnings, medical, dental, and life insurance.
- Credit Union — provides individualized and personalized services to suit your needs.
- Discounted computer hardware, software and training
- Credit Card Processing
- Benevolent Fund
- Legislative power and political action
- Free Peer Consulting — use this to solve on-the-job problems with advice from your peers
- Marketing Materials
- Industry Forum
- Industry and Business Trends
- The Cutting Edge, state newsletter - updates on the latest legislative information, as well as technical and business information that impacts your future.
- California Landscaping Magazine — providing a steady stream of ideas and information that can help you manage your business more profitably through better marketing ideas, new product information and cost-reducing management tips.
- Chapter Newsletters
- Legal Forms
- Legal Contracts — use the most current for your business, available only to CLCA members
- Idea Bank
- Free CLCA logo sheets and Truck Decals
- Free CLCA Brochures
- CLCA Presentation Folders

Personal and Professional Development — helping you grow!

- Networking
- Leadership Opportunities — Whether you want to get involved at the local or state level, CLCA has something for you. Gain leadership training through various seminars and workshops.
- Leadership Training
- Certified Landscape Technician (CLT) — this program accredits workers who pass unique tests of hands-on landscape skills. First developed by CLCA in 1983, it recognizes proficiency in the landscape workforce. Today, it's now administered in over a dozen states and two Canadian provinces. This exam consists of three core testing components: landscape installation, maintenance and irrigation.
- Certified Landscape Professional Program (CLP)
- Educational Seminars and Workshops
- Landscape Educational Advancement Foundation (LEAF) Scholarships — designed for students who are in the horticulture field.
- Women's Auxiliary
- State Events — Landscape Industry Show, Annual Convention, Summer Meeting and the Leadership Summit.
- Nationally recognized industry speakers
- Professional recognition through public relations
- Outreach programs
- Achievement/Beautification Awards — earn recognition and publicity for your accomplishments by entering. The Awards program is the hallmark of excellence in the California landscape industry.
- Community Projects
- Dinner Meetings

CLCA Bookstore

- Get exceptional discounts on publications, reference materials, training videos, brochures and much more!

Note: CLCA's Educational Catalog lists the available materials for your review.

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Chairperson of the Board

BASIC ROLE

This person is primarily the "guidance counselor" of your chapter. He/she has been through the ladder of success and although this person's position is usually thought of as the "I'm done as President, I don't have to do anything" position, it's usually not the case.

This is the "mentor" position which is designed to give a lot of support to the chapter president. As the chairman of the board, you're there to help the president succeed in his/her position. You're there to provide "templates" of how things are done without interfering with the president's style of leadership.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Attend your chapter board meetings as well as general membership meetings.
- Provide input to the chapter board based upon your experience as a chapter president.
- Assist in guiding and monitoring your chapter's various committees.
- Assist in areas that need your expertise (i.e. community projects, seminars, social events).
- Help welcome your chapter's new members.
- As part of your chapter's member retention, help with phone calls to your chapter's existing members, asking them how things are going and offer to help them in some way.

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

President

BASIC ROLE

This person is responsible for the overall administration of the chapter. Although everything that happens in your chapter is of primary interest to this position, some of the major responsibilities are listed below:

- Attend the CLCA Leadership Conference (this is the first official state meeting for the year).
- Once elected, hold a planning meeting with the outgoing president and board to establish objectives for the coming year. Determine your chapter's special projects that need to be pursued.
- By the end of October, you should have a list of your board members (based on your chapter's election results, unless you appoint them).

NOTE: Currently, most chapters have elections in November, but ideally, it should be done in October in plenty of time for the state roster information, leadership conference, etc.

- You're responsible for giving your chapter's officers, board members and committees their charges for the year (be sure to keep record of the responsible person for a given task for follow-up purposes).
- Establish a calendar of events that the chapter will conduct during the year (this includes speaker meetings and educational events).
- Establish a schedule of board meetings and a chapter roster.
- Preside at all meetings of the board. Mail a written agenda before each meeting. Have committee chairs submit status reports at each board meeting on the progress of their objectives for the year. Be sure that minutes are taken by the secretary, and that he/she sends a copy of the minutes to each board member (especially to the newsletter editor if minutes are published in the chapter newsletters) and to the Membership Programs Coordinator at CLCA headquarters.
- Guide and monitor chapter committees and their progress.
- Adhere to your chapter's bylaws regarding all written contracts, check-writing, chapter obligations, etc.
- Co-sign (with the treasurer) all checks drawn on the chapter's treasury.

- Represent the chapter at all CLCA state functions, specifically at the Chapter Presidents Council meetings.
- If a CLCA state official visits your chapter, you are responsible for making all arrangements for the day's activities.
- You're responsible for updating your chapter on state events, programs, etc. You're the liaison between the state and your chapter. Keeps information flowing between the chapter and state.
- You're responsible for signing new member applications and sending them back to headquarters as soon as the new members are approved by your chapter board.
- Write a message for your chapter's monthly newsletter.
- Represent your chapter at civic and community affairs within the chapter area, and frequently speak on behalf of your chapter when authorized or requested by your board.
- Encourage new members to participate by welcoming them to your chapter. Call them up, invite them to a dinner meeting, recognize them at dinner meetings and assign other board members to "buddy up" with them. Your welcome will make a difference whether or not they return for the next meeting.
- *Don't forget to have fun and enjoy your year as president. It will go by too fast!*

Chapter Meetings Protocol:

1. The President is responsible for inviting the State President, Board Members, or staff to chapter meetings as needed. Sample events include:
 - Chapter officers' installation
 - Any board meeting
 - Any chapter meeting (general membership)
 - Special events such as holiday parties
 - Presentation of life member plaques
 - Beautification awards
2. When a chapter invites the State President, other Board Members, or staff to attend a meeting, their travel expenses are budgeted at state level. However, it is the chapter's responsibility to take care of their dinner or lunch expenses.

3. Alcohol is not encouraged at any chapter board meetings because of liability issues.

Although not encouraged, a chapter member may provide wine or alcohol at meetings, but the chapter as a whole cannot. And if a member does bring alcohol to a chapter meeting, he/she is responsible for designating a driver at the end of the meeting if needed.

PLANNING SESSION

A Planning Session is an annual meeting during which the outgoing and incoming Board members discuss the Chapter's upcoming year's goals, how to achieve them and what to include in your calendar of events. Planning Sessions also provide a structure which facilitates the transition between Boards.

Timeline

Schedule your Planning Session as soon as your new Board is elected. Allow plenty of time for discussion, documenting and decision making. This can take anywhere from 3 to 5 hours.

Participation

Outgoing and incoming Board Members should attend. This meeting can also be open to the membership at large. Inviting participation from your membership will help insure that the year's events will meet their needs and be well attended. Announce this meeting in your Chapter newsletter and consider sending out a reminder broadcast FAX and/or email a week or two before the event. The President Elect can facilitate or your Chapter may bring in a facilitator. Be sure to designate someone to take minutes during the meeting.

Venue and Format

Select a venue which is conveniently located and will accommodate your group. Prepare an agenda. Allow ample time to cover your topics. There is no right or wrong way to set up your Planning Session although it is recommended that you follow a structure that starts from a broad vision and gets refined down to specific tasks. Set up what is appropriate for your Chapter's size and needs.

- Know your Chapter's Mission.
- Convert your Mission Statement into specific goals.
- Define what actions need to be taken to achieve your goals, in what timeframe and by whom.

1. Know your Chapter's Mission

The Mission Statement describes the purpose of your organization, the essence of why it exists. It generally identifies its target audience and may refer to its geographic area of operation. A Mission Statement should be simple, clear and direct.

CLCA's Mission Statement is: "CLCA serves the interests of its members, promotes professionalism, and advances public awareness of the landscape industry." You can adopt this as your Chapter's Mission Statement, modify it or write your Chapter's own.

2. Convert your Mission Statement into specific goals.

A Mission Statement can last forever. A goal can be short-lived. Define goals for your Chapter for the upcoming year. For example:

- Increase Chapter visibility through public relations and advertising.
- Increase number of events held.
- Increase attendance at events.
- Increase your Chapter's membership.
- Recruit additional sponsors.
- Set up mentoring program for new members.

3. Define what actions need to be taken to achieve your goals.

Be sure to assign a time frame and a responsible party for each goal. Certain actions will be required for almost every goal, i.e., budget discussions, committee appointments, etc.

- Increase Chapter visibility through public relations and advertising. How do you currently utilize P. R. to increase Chapter visibility and enhance your members' image in your community? (*See your CLCA Leadership Manual for more information on P.R.*)

Consider these ideas:

- have CLCA members positioned as experts in community activities such as fairs, garden shows, etc.
- participate in a charitable endeavor and donate expertise and materials
- submit a press release regarding your local design awards to the media and trade publications.
- promote Chapter award winners in the media and trade publications
- have members write articles for publication in local media and trade publications

- designate a Board member as your Chapter's P. R. contact with the media
- create a referral list of all members, specifying what type of work they specialize in, which can be mailed to potential customers inquiring about landscaping
- What actions did your Chapter take last year which had a positive effect on the Chapter at large and/or the image of CLCA in your area?
- use your monthly newsletter as a P. R. tool and send it to other editors, potential members and sponsors.
- Increase number of events held.

How many events do you currently hold?

Monthly meetings/events promote camaraderie, membership recruitment and retention and attract sponsors. If your Chapter is small, consider joining with an adjacent chapter and having monthly events. (See your CLCA Leadership Manual "Events How-To" Section for helpful hints about how to set up various events.)

- Increase attendance at events.
- Review last year's events: what worked, what needs work.
- Was the event successful?
- Did you attract the targeted attendance?
- Did you attract the targeted sponsors?
- Was it well attended?
- If not successful, what would you change?
- Was it held at a convenient/appropriate time and location?
- Was the event attractive to the membership at large?
- Was weather a factor?
- Did you advertise the event enough?
- Did you give members enough notice?
- Did someone follow up on the invitations by contacting the members or sending them a broadcast FAX and/or email?
- If successful, what worked well and could you utilize the same successful elements in another event?
- Was it profitable?
- Did it recruit members?
- Did it attract sponsors?

Conclusion

Distribute copies of your Planning Session Document to Board Members and anyone assigned to a committee.

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Vice President, Education

BASIC ROLE

This individual is responsible for planning and coordinating the education programs of the chapter. These are the formal seminars that focus on a specific topic. It may also include some responsibility for educational seminars sponsored by the state's Education Committee unless a separate person has been named. Build a strong committee by finding volunteers who have the passion and expertise for this area.

Specific Responsibilities

- In conjunction with your Board, determine the number and types of educational programs that will be conducted. The schedule should reflect a balance of offerings based on both educational content and geographic location.
- Consider which topics can be developed within the resources of your chapter, both in speakers and logistical costs.
- Closely work with your chapter's VP of Programs (if that's not you) in selecting meeting space, details of the meeting including meals, AV, rooms, etc.
- If there are any materials to be distributed, obtain them from the speaker and provide for duplication and distribution.
- As needed, coordinate seminars with staff at headquarters.
- In your chapter newsletter, be sure to have an announcement prior to the program date and a summary after the presentation to share its success with the members.
- Conduct an evaluation of the program at the end of the meeting to determine its success and provide input for future planning.
- As needed, attend and report to the Board on the success of your programs.

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Vice President, Membership

BASIC ROLE

This position's responsibility is to manage the chapter's recruitment and retention efforts, incorporating the state committee's ongoing membership campaign.

Specific Responsibilities

- Set a membership goal for your chapter (both recruitment and retention) for the year.
- Develop a member recruitment campaign for your chapter which includes such activities as personal phone calls, direct mail invitations, membership articles in your chapter newsletters, keeping a close watch on the ten most wanted companies in your area, etc.
- Responsible for keeping track of your chapter's membership status by reviewing the monthly membership reports sent by staff at headquarters. These reports show how your chapter is doing in new members as well as your chapter's member retention.
- Request for prospective member kits from headquarters and make a point of having them available at all chapter events.
- Request for membership applications from headquarters so that you have them readily available at all times. Distribute them to your chapter's board members.
- Try having a membership night inviting one or two individuals from each company you know in your area to attend a general membership meeting at no cost.
- Forward prospective member names to headquarters for recruitment so staff can send them information and follow up with them.
- Encourage the rest of your chapter's board members to participate in your efforts to recruit and retain members. Membership isn't a one-person task; it's everyone's responsibility. You just need to lead the group.

Other Responsibilities:

- Review the attendance lists for your programs and identify less active members who may need personal encouragement to get involved.
- Assist your chapter president in sending letters to the members who participate on a regular basis. Also, send thank you letters to the landscape contractor owners who send

their staff to participate in your chapter's events and seminars, and reiterate the benefits received by their companies for belonging to CLCA.

- At dues renewal time, assist headquarters staff in calling those who did not renew their dues.
- Attend state membership committee meetings as needed.
- Work closely with your chapter's VP of Programs to ensure good attendance at chapter meetings.
- Work closely with your chapter's Editor to make sure that new members are recognized in your chapter newsletters. Also recommended is for you to write membership articles in the newsletter to keep reminding members the benefits of CLCA membership.

Selecting a Membership Committee

Your chapter should have a membership committee consisting of at least three people so you can divide up the tasks of recruitment and retention.

Recruit

One person could be assigned to work with a list of prospective members in your area to coordinate calls on landscape companies and suppliers and follow up contacts after each call.

Welcome

The second individual should introduce new members to the chapter by:

- Introducing and welcoming new members at meetings
- Personally contacting new members with notices of local meetings
- Periodically surveying new members for input on chapter activities and responding accordingly

Retain

The third committee member should maintain responsibility for retention of members. He/she should review attendance lists to determine participation levels of the membership and should reach out to those less active to encourage greater commitment by keeping lines of communication open and by making a concerted effort to meet the needs of all members. It is less likely that

members will drop off without pursuing other alternatives.

Your membership will suffer if you invest most of your time attempting to fill the void left by resigning members. Simply make an effort to determine which members are not supporting your chapter, and contact those members now before it is too late to retain their participation.

Tools You Can Use

CLCA headquarters have the following membership tools that can help you with your recruitment efforts:

- prospective member kits
- "Come Grow" brochures that highlight the benefits of belonging to CLCA
- membership applications
- sample copies of The Cutting Edge newsletter
- sample copies of California Landscaping magazine

NOTE: To request your supply, call headquarters at (800) 448-2522.

Membership Tips & Techniques

Membership Recruitment

1. Invite a non-member to one or two meetings during the year.
2. Invite a number of non-members to a breakfast or luncheon meeting to learn about CLCA.
3. Keep non-members on mailing list to keep them apprised of chapter activities.
4. Send non-members your chapter newsletter.
5. Send non-members an annual survey of membership needs.
6. Set up membership committee to handle both recruitment and retention.
7. Stay on top of trends — declines, increases — in membership numbers of chapter.
8. Give members the educational programs they want and need.
9. Vary types of programs, times, locations, and so forth to meet needs of various constituents.
10. Try new creative programs that will interest non-members.
11. Make sure your membership committee is well versed in CLCA benefits and services at both state and chapter levels.
12. Recognize those individuals who bring in new members.
13. Have membership committee report on progress monthly at board meetings. Involve all chapter board members in the recruitment and retention process.

14. Create round table forums for members. Share the feedback from forum attendees with prospective members or have round table participants speak with prospects directly.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVES

Your Chapter's growth determines its success.

A strong Chapter is one that provides an environment and services that support its membership. Growing your membership should be a constant goal. The process of recruiting members brings people together to share their experiences and grow professionally as well as create new relationships.

Generally speaking, events solely devoted to recruiting members are not very successful. An event should be attractive on its own merits and draw potential members. In order to take full advantage of every opportunity to recruit members, we have suggested a few strategies below.

At Chapter Events

- Have a sign up sheet at every event or have the person in charge of registrations take down the information. Note everyone's name and contact information. The Membership Chair (or whomever is designated as your ambassador), gets a copy of this list and contacts new guests to inquire about their interest in joining.
- Have applications and brochures available at every event registration table.
- Have a special area designated as a membership information area at your next all day event.
- Give a reward (i.e. a free drink ticket) to members who bring guests to an event.
- Have a Board member or a designated ambassador tend the no-host bar at your event and promote membership.
- Designate a Board member to serve as an 'ambassador' to guests and introduce them to members at their first event.
- As a matter of course, the Chapter President should devote a few words at every event regarding membership and its benefits.
- Invite representatives from CLCA State to attend an event and speak about the benefits of joining.
- Have a question and answer period during one of your events devoted to Chapter membership.

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9. Vary types of programs, times, locations, and so forth to meet needs of various constituents.
10. Try new creative programs that will interest non-members.
11. Make sure your membership committee is well versed in CLCA benefits and services at both state and chapter levels.
12. Recognize those individuals who bring in new members.
13. Have membership committee report on progress monthly at board meetings. Involve all chapter board members in the recruitment and retention process.

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- Have applications and brochures available at every event registration table.
- Have a special area designated as a membership information area at your next all day event.
- Give a reward (i.e. a free drink ticket) to members who bring guests to an event.
- Have a Board member or a designated ambassador tend the no-host bar at your event and promote membership.
- Designate a Board member to serve as an 'ambassador' to guests and introduce them to members at their first event.
- As a matter of course, the Chapter President should devote a few words at every event regarding membership and its benefits.
- Invite representatives from CLCA State to attend an event and speak about the benefits of joining.
- Have a question and answer period during one of your events devoted to Chapter membership.

- Have the President acknowledge new members at events
- Devote time at your Board meeting to discuss non-renewals and assign a Board member to contact them
- Hold a monthly lunch time roundtable where new and/or potential members can get information about everything from membership benefits to how to grow their business

Associate Members

- Trade ad space with an AM. Give him a space in your local newsletter and use his newsletter for a CLCA ad.
- Encourage vendors to join, especially when they are approaching you for business. Vendors can be invited to write an article for your newsletter introducing a new product or to do a presentation at your next event if they join.
- Promote AMs in your Chapter
- Ask AMs to supply materials for events

(See your CLCA Leadership Manual - "Events How To Section" under "Partners for Success" for helpful hints on how to set up a sponsorship program.)

Every Day Opportunities

- Post a CLCA Information Board in strategic locations. This board displays membership applications, membership benefits, who to contact with questions, etc. (CLCA State manufactures these boards and they are being successfully used in various Chapters.)
- Publish articles in other trade publications regarding CLCA and its benefits.
- Have Board members approach non-members who may be interested and suggest joining.
- Attract new start up businesses by offering an event which addresses topics they would most likely be interested in, (i.e. hiring practices, insurance, managed growth, marketing, etc.)
- Send congratulatory notes to new businesses with a CLCA brochure.
- Have joint events with complimentary associations, i.e. landscape architects.
- Have joint projects with complimentary associations, perhaps serving a local community charity. This will then provide

CLCA with publicity, which will encourage membership.

- When soliciting entries for your design awards, contact potential members and encourage them to join so they can enter one of their projects.
- Send copies of newspaper articles published about your local awards to potential members with a note about how awards are great marketing tools.
- Encourage your members to write testimonials and publish them in your newsletter. You can also spotlight one of your members' companies.
- Stay in touch with your membership. Talk to them often about their needs and how CLCA can support them. The more responsive you are as a Chapter, the stronger your membership will be.
- Publish membership benefits in your monthly newsletter and/or bulletin
- Publish articles about new members or have a 'Welcome New Members' column in your monthly newsletter and/or bulletin
- Send out a survey to your membership asking what type of training they'd like to receive
- Designate a Board member to mentor new members

Conclusion

As you can see the possibilities are endless. Every event and opportunity is a membership drive. Use your imagination and tap into your local talent. Growing your membership can be an energizing process. Once you start, one action will lead to another. Before you know it, your Chapter will have doubled or even tripled in size!

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Vice President, Programs

BASIC ROLE

This individual is responsible for planning and coordinating a series of high quality general membership meetings for the chapter.

Specific Responsibilities

- Determine with your Board the number of presentations to be held during the year.
- Determine which meetings are to include a meal (breakfast, lunch, dinner) and/or a reception.
- Decide which meetings will have a special focus such as Membership night, Golf Tournaments, Casino Night, etc.
- Based on any membership surveys that you may have conducted and other input, select the topics that will be presented at each meeting.
- Secure speakers for each meeting and keep them informed about the audience they will be addressing.
- If there are any materials to be distributed, obtain them from the speaker and provide for duplication and distribution.
- Work closely with your Treasurer to develop a budget for the general membership meetings and monitor the related expenses.
- Select meeting space and work with the facility on the details of the meeting including meals, AV, setup, etc.
- Provide the person who will be coordinating the program with all of the appropriate marketing information on the program. Ideally, this is six weeks before the date of the presentation.
- In your chapter newsletter, be sure to plan an announcement prior to the program and a summary after the presentation to share its success with the members.
- As needed, attend and report to your chapter Board on the status/success of your programs.

General Membership Meetings

General membership meetings are the most popular format used by the chapters of CLCA. They combine a technical or informational presentation of less than an hour with the opportunity to network with others. These meetings are usually coordinated by the Programs Committee.

These programs are designed for all experience and functional levels of membership. The topic can certainly be focused on a single area of landscaping but generally will appeal to a majority of members. New regulations, hot topics in the profession, and important local issues are popular.

- Speakers should be knowledgeable about the subject matter and have excellent presentation skills with a large audience. The topic could be presented by an individual or a panel of presenters. Q & A periods are useful at the end of the meeting to summarize the information.
- Handouts are preferable but they can be in outline format and be supplemented with relevant articles.
- Networking can take place before the meeting at a reception or during the meal. You need to experiment with having breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings to determine what is best for your chapter. Some chapters have also been successful having the technical program first followed by a reception and hors d'oeuvres instead of a full meal. This keeps the per person cost down and reduces the time commitment. Another alternative is to set the registration fee to allow the individual to choose the combination that is best for them - e. g. technical program only at \$15, or program and dinner at \$35.
- Special Nights can be combined in the general membership meeting format such as Past Presidents' Night, Membership Night, etc.

The general membership meetings should be your most highly attended program. Meeting Notices should be sent to all members well in advance of the meeting (at least 3 weeks). A non-member mailing list should be maintained that includes prospects. Attendance at relevant programs, even at a slightly higher non-member fee, is the best way to interest them in CLCA membership.

KICK-OFF MEETING (1ST MEETING OF THE YEAR)

The Kick Off Meeting is a social event intended to 'kick-off' the new year for the Chapter. Keep this meeting fun and light.

Timeline

Item	When/Weeks-Months Before Event
1. Budget Approval	Before January 1
2. Date Selection/PR	3 months
3. Venue Selection	3 months
4. Recruit Sponsors	3 months
5. Design/Approve Invitations/PR	2 months
6. Invitations Mailed	4 weeks
7. Review RSVP's	2 weeks
8. THE EVENT	

1. Budget Approval Before January 1

The budget for this event should be reviewed and tentatively approved by the outgoing board's last monthly meeting. At that time the board will:

- Decide if event is to make money or break even
- Review sponsorship opportunities (please see Sponsorship section)
- Review budget for previous year's holiday party, if available
- Establish estimated expenses for current year's event
- Establish projected revenues for current year's event and sponsorships
- Determine pricing for tickets
- Determine who will get comp tickets (i.e., CLCA State Reps, Chapter President, etc.)

NOTE: If you have a sponsorship program (please see Sponsorship section) you may have money available to underwrite a portion of your costs.

2. Date Selection/PR 3 months

The Kick Off Meeting is usually scheduled for sometime early in the calendar year: mid to late January or February.

3. Venue Selection 3 months

Selecting the right venue can make the difference between having a successful event or not. Remember, this is meant to be a light, fun meeting. Things to think about are:

- What meal will you be serving - lunch, dinner, appetizers? Will it be a sit down meal, buffet or will you have a happy hour?
- Will there be opportunity and room for members to network? If you're having a sit down dinner, consider having a no-host bar

for at least an hour prior to beginning your event.

- Buffets provide ample opportunities for networking. An evening of appetizers and drinks also works well.
- Will you have music? Dancing? Can your venue accommodate the entertainment?
- Is there ample parking? Do you need valet parking?

IDEA: If you have a small chapter, consider joining efforts with an adjacent chapter to create a larger group.

4. Design/Approve Invitations/PR 3 months

- Consider using a template for your invitations that can be reused every year.
- Consider giving discounts to early bird RSVP's
- State clearly on the invitation your policy for late RSVP's and drop-ins
- Have an article announcing the event in your chapter newsletter including date, time and venue

5. Recruit Sponsors 3 months

The Committee Member in charge of sponsorships writes letters to potential sponsors. Letters should clearly state sponsorship levels and what they include. (See Sponsorship section for more information.)

6. Invitations Mailed 4 weeks

IDEA: Given enough notice, many State representatives will attend other chapter events and lend support. Invite them early (and comp. them, of course!). Board members: at the event, introduce State representatives to local members.

7. Review RSVP's 3 weeks

The committee member receiving RSVP's creates a form to be used at the event to check people in. It should include: name, company, how much is owed or has been paid. This form and the checks can then be turned over to the Treasurer.

IDEA: If you haven't received an adequate number of responses, send out a broadcast fax to the membership reminding them to respond. If broadcast faxing is not feasible, set up a phone tree and ask Board members to call members who have not responded.

8. THE EVENT

Registration:

The registration table has at least 2 people to check guests in and collect any money due.

IDEA: Have Board members help at the registration desk and bar. Use the time to pay special attention to new members, potential members and sponsors.

Program:

The evening begins with at least one hour of drinks and networking. When the meal is served (or if a buffet, when everyone is seated), the Chapter President welcomes guests, acknowledges sponsors and special guests. This is a good time to acknowledge any past Presidents in attendance. It's also a great venue to acknowledge any recent CLT's. The Chapter President then gives a preview of what's to come during the year.

Debriefing:

Committee members should hold a debriefing meeting no later than 2 weeks after the event to evaluate the success of the program and to discuss areas needing improvement.

At Every Event

- Have name badges (pre-printed if possible)
- Hang your sponsorship banner and/or acknowledge them in your printed material and at the event (see Sponsorship section for more details)
- Acknowledge state representatives and special guests

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Secretary

BASIC ROLE

This position is responsible for maintaining an accurate listing of the chapter's official records: chapter bylaws, minutes, copies of monthly newsletter, chapter's correspondence, approved financial records, etc.

You're also responsible for maintaining effective communication between your chapter and its membership and between your chapter and state.

Specific Responsibilities

- Take minutes of all chapter board meetings and distribute them to board members, state headquarters and other chapter editors.
- Prepare and distribute to chapter board and state a roster of officers and board members with their addresses, phone and fax numbers and e-mail addresses as well as update the list as needed.
- Become familiar with state and your chapter's bylaws as well as membership policies at both state and chapter levels.
- Responsible for getting your chapter's letterhead printed as necessary. Chapters' letterhead includes the current chapter officers and their addresses and phone numbers.
- Work closely with your chapter's VP of membership in keeping your chapter's membership list accurate. On a monthly basis, headquarters sends your chapter's VP of membership a current list of your members; you should make sure that you have the same information at all times.
- Handle all chapter mailings.
- Support and monitor those committees assigned to you.
- Unless someone else in your chapter is responsible for it, you're the person to maintain the chapter roster with address changes, phone numbers, etc.

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Treasurer

BASIC ROLE

This office is responsible for monitoring and maintaining sound financial status for the chapter, keeping financial records in good order and meeting any regulatory requirements of the chapter.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Obtain checking and savings account records, files and legal documents from your predecessor.
- You should see that bank signature cards are filed promptly with your chapter's bank to avoid any delay in check signing or transfer of funds.
- Make a note of CLCA's tax exempt EIN number: 94-1295004.
- You, in cooperation with your chapter's officers and board of directors, should prepare and approve the chapter's annual budget prior to January 1 of the New Year. Funds for expenses should be allocated in accordance with the chapter's plan for the year.
- Invoices should be approved by the board member responsible for the project/activity.
- All chapters should require a two-signature policy for any financial transactions
- You as treasurer, along with the chapter board of directors, are liable for all chapter funds; thus you should insist on having and maintaining an accurate record of chapter assets at all times.
- Provide updates to your chapter board at every board meeting. Prepare monthly financial statements for each board meeting or as needed by your chapter.
- Collect revenues from all chapter activities, make related disbursements, and be prepared to make your chapter board members aware of any concerns.
- On a monthly basis, submit the following reports to state headquarters:
 - your chapter's monthly financial reports
 - bank statements
 - canceled checks
 - copies of invoices and vouchers

Legal Liability

The treasurer, along with the Chapter Board of Directors, is liable for all chapter funds; thus you should insist on having and maintaining an accurate record of chapter assets at all times. All chapter officers and board members share in this responsibility by ensuring the treasurer's reports are reviewed and approved at the chapter monthly Board of Directors' meeting. The chapter president should appoint someone to conduct a complete audit of chapter financial records prior to the beginning of a new year and to help train the new treasurer. All financial records are required to be kept on file for a period of seven years. Chapter treasurers should keep a copy of the prior and current year records on hand and forward all original financial records to CLCA Headquarters for storage.

Financial Records

Chapter financial records should be organized as follows:

File folder one (submitted annually by February 15, or lose 10% of March rebate):

1. A copy of the prior year chapter year-end financial report.
2. A copy of the current year approved budget.
3. A copy of the chapter Board of Directors minutes approving the original budget.
4. Copies of Board meeting minutes to support approval of chapter monthly treasurer's report and to support expenses approved for payment over and above the original budget.
5. A copy of the current year-end financial report, before forwarding this file folder to CLCA Headquarters.

File folder two (submitted monthly):

1. Current year's monthly bank statements including savings, CD's, canceled checks and bank deposit slips stapled to the statement to support each monthly bank statement. All bank statements must be reconciled. Copies must be maintained at local level for future reference.
2. The cash disbursement journal for the current month. Copies must be maintained at the local level for future reference.

3. Current year's monthly Treasurer's reports.
Copies must be maintained at the local level for future reference.

File folder three (option to submit monthly or annually):

Keep all original invoices or original disbursement vouchers to support disbursements of chapter funds. Copies must be maintained at local level for future reference. A copy of the Board minutes can be used to support payments of delegate's fees for Tri-Boards and Annual Convention, if chapters provide funds for their delegates. The first receipt in the folder should support the first check of the year with all other receipts filed in order of payment.

Record Keeping Guidelines

This section will work in conjunction with a cash disbursement journal to help streamline your tasks. Keep in mind that the system is designed to simplify the process. However, some chapters may wish to maintain more detail than is required by Headquarters. The system has been designed to accommodate that detail. In this manual you will be shown "required" steps and "optional" steps.

Income

1. On the back of the fold-out page of your cash disbursement journal, there will be space to record your deposits (*See appendix B*).
2. To the right of that deposit there will be six columns in which to show the activity that produced the income. The subcategories indicate more specifically where the income came from. These subcategories are optional for the chapters that require more detail than the chart of account numbers (for a list of chart of accounts and subcategories, see appendix A).

An example is as follows:

Your chapter wishes to know how much of your dinner meeting revenue came from reservations (this amount would include all revenue collected for dinners served at the meeting), how much from the sponsor of that dinner, and how much came from the raffle held at that meeting. After the dinner meeting, the Treasurer counts the receipts and prepares a deposit for \$567.25. The only "required" entry on the cash disbursement journal would be to enter this amount under column #19 for dinner meeting. But if your chapter desires more detail, your "optional" entries would be to enter \$567.25 in the deposit

column, then under column #19 you could use three lines to enter the components. The amount of \$24.25 is from the raffle, so you write that amount in the column and next to it enter a "D". Below that amount but in the same column you write in \$100.00, the amount the sponsor denoted for that meeting, and next to the \$100.00 you enter a "C". The remainder of \$443.00 is from individuals attending the function and purchasing a meal, so that amount is entered in the same column but on a separate line and next to the \$443.00 you enter a "B" for reservations. *See the filled in spreadsheet example in Appendix B.*

Expenses

NOTE: A new cash disbursement journal page will be used every month.

The same principles apply to expenses that apply to income.

1. In column A (*See appendix C*) the amount of the check is automatically entered as you write the check. There are 14 columns for you to allocate the expenses. You must decide which expense column or columns this check should be allocated. For example: you wrote check # 109 in the amount of \$52.93 to Quick Copy for running off your chapter bulletin; the check would therefore be allocated to column # 2, Publishing (*see appendix C*). You can also use the same subcategories as mentioned in the income section (*see appendix A*). If you were to use the subcategories, you will need to maintain a separate ledger for the breakdown (*see appendixes G and G-1*).
2. Many chapters wish to keep track of each special project they sponsor. A separate sheet (*see appendix E*) has been designed to assist the event chairperson to record this detail. The chairperson, after recording the detail on the Special Events worksheet, will give it to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will record the income and expenses in the cash disbursement journal as outlined above.
3. At the end of each month, the columns should be added for the month's activity. The totals should be recorded on the Treasurer's Report (*see appendix D*). See Treasurer's report for more detail. When beginning a new month, always start with a new cash disbursement journal. When you have completed the page, add the columns to ensure the numbers you carry forward are accurate.
4. Keep a cumulative cash balance in the "Bank Balance" column (*column B*) on the cash disbursement journal. Enter deposit amounts

on the white lines in this column and enter the daily cash balance on the shaded lines. To calculate the daily cash balance for any given day you would take the cash balance from the previous day, add any deposits, and subtract any checks written.

Treasurer's Report

At the end of each month, every column on the cash disbursement journal must be totaled. The total of columns 1 - 14 should equal column A total for all checks written. The total of columns 19 - 24 should equal column C total for all deposits made. The totals from these columns will be transferred to the monthly Treasurer's Report (See *Appendix D-1*).

Savings account activity should include only the following transactions:

- Additions for interest earned,
- Deductions for bank charges,
- And transfers to and from the checking account.

This information will not be recorded on the cash disbursement journal, but rather will be entered directly on the Treasurer's Report. For any questions regarding the recording of the savings account activity, please contact the CLCA Headquarters.

All current month information from the cash disbursement journal as well as all savings account activity will be entered in column B on the Treasurer's Report. The current month totals (*column B*) will be added to the previous month's year-to-date totals (*column A*) to generate the current year-to-date totals for the report. The ending bank balance on the report should equal your total reconciled bank balances. Your report should be attached to your cash disbursement journal and all other information required for file folder 2. This information must be forwarded to headquarters within 45 days following month's end. At year end this date is February 15th to enable the chapters to also forward all financial information and back-up with their December report.

All other interest income (7100) shall be reported on the treasurer's report. See *Example in Appendix D-1*

Required Reports

Chart of Accounts

Each chapter is required to use the same chart of accounts for income and expense categories. The subcategory accounts are optional and will be used at the discretion of the chapter. See *Appendix A* for a copy of the chart of accounts.

Monthly Treasurer's Report

Within 45 days after the close of month (i.e. by May 15 for the month of March), the monthly Treasurer's Report must be sent to Headquarters.

Bank Reconciliations

A bank reconciliation for each cash account must be prepared and agreed to month end balance on Treasurer's Report and must be submitted to headquarters with the monthly Treasurer's Report. Copies must be maintained at the local level for future reference. The bank reconciliations must be prepared as of the end of the month. If your bank statement cutoff date is not at the end of the month, you can either contact your bank and request changing the date to the last day of the month, or reconcile the account to the end of the month, including checks and deposits not cleared on the bank statement as outstanding.

Year-End Report

The December 31 year-end Treasurer's Report along with all required financial information and back-up must be forwarded to CLCA Headquarters by February 15th annually.

Sanctions

Chapter rebates will not be dispersed until completed year end reports are received at Headquarters. Any report received after the February 15th deadline will automatically have 10% of the March chapter rebate deducted. If financial information is not received prior to May 1st, the Chapter shall bear the additional financial burden of providing transportation, hotel and meal expenses for a member of the Ways & Means Committee to travel to the Chapter in an attempt to collect financial information. If Chapters fail to comply with the requirement to use the approved forms and accounting format, or if they refuse to provide financial information, their charter may be revoked in accordance with Article IV, Section II.

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Editor

BASIC ROLE

This position's main responsibility is to ensure effective communication of the chapter's activities and other information through a published newsletter.

Specific Responsibilities

- Along with the Board, determine the frequency of your chapter's publication and the type of content and columns it will include.
- Make a publications schedule that is distributed to all those who will contribute information to the newsletter with due dates for articles.
- If you make use of outside articles, make sure to get permission to reprint from the author.
- Lay out your newsletter to make effective use of space.
- Coordinate the printing of your newsletter through a professional printer.
- Oversee the distribution of your chapter's newsletter to assure that it includes not only the membership for your chapter, but others who would benefit from learning about your chapter activities (possibly non-members).
- Be sure to send copies of your newsletter to the other chapter editors and presidents so that the rest of the chapters can learn ideas and news from you.
- Be sure to send copies of your newsletter to CLCA headquarters also.
- Place the most recent copy of your chapter's newsletter at the registration table of all your chapter meetings.

Resources for Newsletter Articles

1. Headquarters - you'll receive a lot of information from state headquarters (i.e., press releases, news, new members CLCA benefits, etc.).
2. Other chapter newsletters.
3. Your chapter's dinner meeting speakers.
4. Your chapter's AMO members.
5. Your fellow members.
6. Landscape trade publications

PUBLISHING AN EFFECTIVE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

If your Chapter doesn't have a newsletter already, now is the time to start. Your monthly newsletter can bring your membership valuable information about upcoming events and articles as well as provide members and sponsors with advertising opportunities. It is a visible reminder that their chapter is active and responding to their needs. *NOTE: In some Chapters the revenue from advertisements are used to fund the production and mailing of the newsletter.*

Newsletter Format

It is important that the cover format make the bulletin easily identifiable and not be changed radically from year to year. It is also desirable that the bulletin be published at regular intervals, that is, monthly, four times a year, etc., rather than intermittently. It might be mailed one month prior to a scheduled meeting to a selected list whose field of interest coincides with the speaker's subject and a general mailing to all members prepared for delivery one week before the meeting.

The bulletin might be a single mimeographed page, four pages or varityped copy printed by offset, or whatever style is dictated by the editor, the amount of news available, and the chapter budget. Photographs improve reader acceptance but require a better grade of paper and increase the cost.

Newsletter Content

Your newsletter should be a reliable and timely source of information for your members. It's helpful to have columns reserved for information you expect to publish every month. The responsibility for the content of these columns can be assigned to different Board members at your Planning Session.

Here are some suggested topics to publish regularly:

1. Chapter Information. Include names and contact information for the Chapter's Board members, Past Presidents and CLCA State's Executive Board.

2. Publishing Information and Advertising Deadlines. How often is your newsletter published, by when and to whom should one submit articles, etc.? What is the advertising deadline?
3. President's Message. The President of your Chapter can use this section to promote Chapter participation, encourage membership, make important announcements, and keep the membership informed of local and State Board decisions.
4. Annual calendar of events. Publish your annual calendar of events (which will be defined at your Planning Session - see your CLCA Leadership Manual, "Events-How-To" Section, Planning Session). Keep the calendar located in the same area of your newsletter, like the front or back cover. Members can then have easy access to the calendar.
5. Board Meeting Minutes. This is not only informative to the members but also encourages member participation. Important: minutes should be reviewed before publishing to insure that confidential information and/or inappropriate information is not published. As with any publication, discretion and professionalism should be maintained at all times.
6. Legislative Information. A Board member can be in charge of monitoring legislative news and informing the membership as appropriate. Industry specific issues such as water usage, contractors licensing, etc. should be regularly reported in your newsletter.
7. Welcome New Members. This is a great way to help new members feel welcome and give them a little free advertising too. Renewing members can also be included here. This section can also be used for testimonials from existing members which will then encourage new members to join.
8. Welcome New Sponsors. This is an opportunity for a sponsor to publish a short description of their business, a pertinent article or announcement.
9. Spotlight one of your members' companies every month.
10. A list of your Chapter's sponsors. (See your CLCA Leadership Manual - "Events How To Section" under 'Partners for Success' for helpful hints on how to set up a sponsorship program.) If you use CLCA's Partner for Success Model, by February-March, you would have a group of calendar sponsors for

the year. They should have a section reserved in your newsletter.

11. Sponsorship Program Information. What levels of sponsorship does your Chapter have available and what do they include?

P.R. Information and Articles

A quick phone call to vendors, other chapter newsletter editors and trade publications, will place you on their mailing list. You will then receive their press releases and other valuable information for publication in your newsletter.

Small Investment in Ready Artwork

Artwork along with a good format are two items that go a long way to getting you closer to your goal of having a newsletter that looks appealing enough for your readers to open and get the information that you want them to have.

Sources of artwork that are free:

- California Landscape Magazine
- Magazines
- Chapter members who advertise heavily in newspapers
- Your printer
- Camera-ready artwork produced by the state association

Advertising

Advertising is a great way to generate revenues to support the publication and mailing of your newsletter. Important: advertising must be visible to be effective. Your newsletter should have a blend of advertising and articles/information. A page full of ads is overwhelming and ineffective.

Producing the Newsletter

The easiest and least expensive method of producing the newsletter is to have it desktop published in your office and have it printed by a professional printing company. Another way of producing the newsletter is to have your text set in type by a printer. This takes more time for you to lay out the pages and for the printer to produce. It's also more expensive but certainly gives the newsletter a totally distinctive appearance. Whichever format you decide to go with, however, in the final analysis, your newsletter's content will be your most important factor.

Mailing List, Bulk Rate

Your newsletter serves various functions:

- it provides information to the membership at large

- it encourages potential members to attend events and join CLCA
- it provides advertising for members and vendors
- it educates the public and other professionals about CLCA
- markets CLCA to other trades and professions

With this in mind, don't be stingy with your mailing list. Consider sending your newsletter to your local ASLA (American Society of Landscape Architects) members, other trade associations, your local congressmen, editors of other trade publications, etc.

A bulk rate permit can save you a substantial amount of money. For example to mail 200 ten page newsletters with a First Class stamp will cost \$0.55 each. With a bulk rate permit the cost drops to \$0.20 - \$0.35 each.

Other Basics to Keep in Mind

1. Use the correct CLCA logos.
2. Make sure your chapter's name is in the forefront; it's your newsletter.
3. Know your printer. Find one that will work with you so that you will be aware of the many options you have. If in doubt, get bids from different printers.
4. The cheapest way to go is having the newsletter "camera ready" so all the printer has to do is print it. Instant printers are usually cheaper as they have the capability of plastic plates rather than the more expensive metal plates.
5. Check into the cost of screening or the use of photos. You will find that this is an inexpensive way of adding interest.
6. Don't use Polaroid pictures. They don't print well. Even instamatic pictures are better.
7. Use captions with your photos. This basic rule gives your newsletter a more complete look. If people don't want to read the article they can look at the picture and know what it's about.
8. Remember that your chapter newsletter is the only vehicle you have for reaching each and every member. They don't all come to the meetings. Creating interest with a good front page and follow-up of pertinent information in the newsletter also creates an image of your local chapter. Make them want to read your newsletter.

Problem Solving

1. What does your bulletin/newsletter cost per month?
2. How many copies?
3. Do you meet your deadlines?
4. Do you write all of the copy by yourself?
5. Who is in charge of the advertising?
6. Who puts on the mailing labels?
7. Who folds your newsletter?
8. Do you mail a copy to other chapter officers?
9. Do you shop the price of your newsletter at least once a year?
10. Do you have to include flyers?
11. What are your sources of material to include in the newsletter?
12. What is your biggest problem in getting the newsletter out?
13. Does someone proof the newsletter for you?
14. Do you like to have news releases from the CLCA office?
15. If yes, do you want more?

Critique of Your Own Chapter Bulletin

1. Is your chapter bulletin everything you'd like it to be?
2. If not, what are the areas that could be improved upon?
3. Every bulleting has at least one weak area. Write it down:
4. List your goal for the upcoming year:

Other Communication Tools

There will be times when you need to communicate something to the membership right away. In this busy economy, we are inundated with printed information and announcements. In addition to your monthly newsletter, consider using other communication tools to encourage member participation at your meetings and events. Make it your Chapter's practice to use one of these methods to remind your membership to participate in a meeting or attend an event:

- Send a 'Save the Date' postcard 2 months before an event
- Send a reminder via broadcast FAX/email to the members about 2-3 weeks before the event
- If faxing or emails are not feasible, set up a phone tree and call members to encourage attendance

CHAPTER OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Associate Member Representative

BASIC ROLE

The Associate Member is an integral part of CLCA. His/Her role is to work with CLCA on both state and local levels as a liaison between them and all the associate members. The Associate Member Representative's responsibility is to lend support for CLCA and its projects for the betterment of the landscape industry and educate contractors on new methods and technologies.

Specific Responsibilities

- Promote CLCA on a statewide basis: assist CLCA on a local and state basis.
- Promote membership programs and increase Associate member and contractor member participation in CLCA.
- Communicate to all Associate members.
- Improve and generate education and information for all Associate members about CLCA.
- Participate on state committees.
- Promote CLCA activities - both on state and local levels.
- Associate members may be elected onto the Board of Directors as well as chapter leadership.

AM Functions (State Level):

- Summer meeting: Golf tournament - proceeds go to a named AM Scholarship Fund for LEAF (Landscape Educational Advancement Foundation); hospitality events
- Annual Convention: Trophy Awards sponsorships, hospitality events
- Encourage and support the Partners for Success Program

AM Functions (Chapter Level):

- Suppliers' Nights: Mini Trade Show
- Beautification Awards
- Chapter Projects, Supplier of the Month (Dinner Meetings)
- Develop a "Partners for Success" program for your chapter (see following pages)
- Assist the chapter as needed
- Help develop chapter dinner meeting topics
- Write a monthly column in the local chapter newsletter introducing members to Associate Members and their products and services
- Be a resource for chapter's various speakers on new & existing products, as well as technology in the industry.

CHAPTER BOARD IDEAS

PARTNERS FOR SUCCESS (Sponsorship Program/Calendar Sponsors)

Throughout this manual you will see references to contacting sponsors to help underwrite an event. As your chapter and your calendar of events grow, this can prove to be an exhausting process. One way to focus your energy and collect most of your underwriting dollars in one short block of time is to have a sponsorship program.

NOTE: Sponsors create attendance. A sponsor will attend every event they sponsor and, in most cases, bring a guest or guests.

A Sponsorship program:

- Is a great way to pre-plan your revenues from sponsors
- Is a great way for your sponsors to pre-plan their investment in CLCA for the year
- Creates close, long term relationships between CLCA and sponsors
- Facilitates advanced planning of your annual calendar of events and determining how you will cover expenses

Timing & Method

The best time to solicit annual or calendar sponsors is in the fall. Ideally, you will have commitments by January and can start planning your events with sponsorship money in the budget.

The Treasurer and the Sponsorship Committee should establish a goal amount to be collected. If this is your first year, look at your calendar of events and determine how much you can realistically expect your sponsors to underwrite. In subsequent years your sponsorship program will gain momentum since your sponsors will have a track record to look at and evaluate the exposure they received.

NOTE: You will still recruit more sponsors throughout the year and some calendar sponsors may also donate door prizes and other products throughout the year. See information about individual events for more information.

New Sponsors:

The Chapter President should write a personal letter (no form letters) to potential sponsors which should include:

- A preview of the upcoming calendar of events
- Benefits of sponsorship - ability to pre-plan sponsorship dollars and exposure, consistent exposure throughout the year, complimentary tickets, advertising in your local newsletter, etc.
- Levels of sponsorship available - what each level is called, the cost and what benefits come with it.

Renewing Sponsors:

The Chapter President should write a personal letter (no form letters) to past sponsors who may renew. This letter should:

- Thank them for their support in the past
- Remind them how their funds were used during the past year
- Encourage them to renew their support and nurture their relationship with CLCA
- Include a preview of the upcoming calendar of events and clearly state the benefits and levels of sponsorship available
- Highlight any new benefits that this sponsor is not familiar with

Sponsorship Levels and Benefits

Once you've determined your goal, identify what sponsorship levels you'll be offering and what benefits the sponsor receives. One popular way to identify sponsorship levels is to give them gem names or metals, i.e.: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Emerald, Diamond and Ruby. Each level contributes a different amount and receives a different level of exposure.

For example:

"Platinum Sponsor contributes \$1,000 and receives recognition at and one complimentary admittance to: Kickoff Dinner, Landscape Industry Show Bus Charter, Golf Tournament, Beautification Awards, and Holiday Dinner."

The budget with this sponsorship level in mind could be:

Event	Amount Allocated	Expenses
Kickoff Dinner	\$100.00	\$50.00 (Comp)
Landscape Industry Show	\$50.00	\$20.00 (Comp)
Golf Tournament	\$200.00	\$75.00 (Comp)
Awards	\$400.00	\$60.00 (Comp)
Holiday Dinner	\$100.00	\$60.00 (Comp)
Administrative Costs	\$50.00	\$50.00
Education/Scholarships	\$50.00	\$50.00
PR	\$50.00	\$50.00
Totals	\$1,000.00	\$415.00

In the above example you've allocated the full amount of sponsorship dollars and your estimated expenses. Here, you'll actually 'net' \$585.00. In a sponsorship program your maximum goal should be to break even-- this is not a profit-making venture.

NOTE: It has been the experience of the chapters who utilize this system that sponsors happily renew their commitment year after year because they can easily project their annual expenses and sponsorship benefit.

Recognition and Support Of Your Sponsors

- Print a banner listing all of your sponsors and display it at every event. (If you've started your sponsorship drive in the fall, you can have a banner printed by the Kickoff Meeting in February. If you continue to collect sponsorships you can reprint your banner once more mid year.) You can also use banners with removable letters and add/delete sponsors as necessary.
- Give your sponsors verbal acknowledgment at every event.
- Have a 'Thank You Sponsors' listing in your Chapter newsletter.
- Recommend your sponsors to your members and encourage them to use their products and services.

CHAPTER BOARD EVENT IDEAS

BEAUTIFICATION AWARDS

The Beautification Awards is one of the most important events of the year for it recognizes and honors individual member's creativity and quality workmanship. It is a lively, fun event which promotes camaraderie, membership retention and attracts sponsors.

Timeline

Item	When/Weeks-Months Before Event
1. Budget Approval	Before January 1
2. Date Selection/PR	6 months
3. Committee Selection	6 months
4. Venue Selection	4 months
5. Master of Ceremonies Selection	4 months
6. Plaque Selection	4 months
7. Send Letters Soliciting Entries	3.5 months
8. Recruit Sponsors	3 months
9. Site Arrangements	3 months
10. Recruit Judges	3 months
11. Entries Deadline	2 months
12. Design/Approve Invitations/PR	2 months
13. Judging Begins	6 weeks
14. Invitations Mailed	4 weeks
15. Review RSVP's	3 weeks
16. Complete plaques	3 weeks
17. Send Letters Encouraging Attendance	2 weeks
18. The Event	

1. Budget Approval *Before January 1*

The budget for this event should be reviewed and tentatively approved by the incoming board's first monthly meeting. At that time the board will:

- Decide if event is to make money or break even
- Review sponsorship opportunities (please see Sponsorship section)
- Review budget for previous year's awards event, if available (include invitations, venue fee, food and entertainment, plaques, photos, judges' expenses, MC, parking, planning lunch and/or meetings)
- Establish estimated expenses for current year's event
- Establish projected revenues for current year's event and sponsorships
- Determine pricing for entries and tickets

- Determine who will get comp tickets (i.e., Judges, Chapter President, etc.)

NOTE: If you have a sponsorship program (please see Sponsorship section) you may have money available to underwrite a portion of your costs.

2. Date Selection/PR *6 months*

Consider sending a 'Save the Date' postcard or FAX to the membership as soon as a date of your event is determined. Subsequent notice can be sent closer to the date of the event. Your calendar of events in your chapter newsletter should reference this event as soon as possible.

NOTE: When selecting the date of the event, allow ample time for your members to prepare their projects for photography, judging and entry submittals.

3. Committee Selection *6 months*

The following tasks/elements need to be assigned to committee members:

- Site/Logistics: catering, music, AV, seating, parking, presentation of awards at event, hire photography/video company and coordinate.
- Sponsorships: recruit sponsors.
- Judging: judge selection/recruiting, judging forms and format, transportation of judges to projects entered.
- Entries: send out letters to members soliciting entries, receive and review entries for accuracy, select and coordinate trophies, review and tabulate judging forms, review videos and photos to determine presentation arrangement at the event, determine sponsors for each award.
- Public Relations: send out at least two (2) press releases announcing event and announcing winners to local newspapers; select and coordinate invitations and RSVP's.
- Miscellaneous: establish policy regarding late entries, late RSVP's and drop-ins at the event.

4. Venue Selection *4 months*

Selecting the right venue can make the difference between having a successful event or not. Things to think about are:

- Are there any members or associate members who would have a site they'd offer for free in exchange for some publicity?

- What meal will you be serving- Lunch, dinner, appetizers? Will it be a sit down meal or will you have a happy hour and then separate seating for the actual award presentation?
- Will there be opportunity and room for members to network? If you're having a sit down dinner, consider having a no-host bar for at least an hour prior to beginning your event.
- Buffets provide ample opportunities for networking. An evening of appetizers and drinks also works well.
- Is there ample parking? Do you need valet parking?

IDEA: If you have a small chapter, consider joining efforts with an adjacent chapter to create a larger group.

5. Plaque Selection 4 months

Keep the plaque design simple: a simple frame with a photo of the award-winning project (you will have photos taken for the judges). All information should be printed clearly, easy to read and highlight the winning project and member company's name. You may want to print the name of the landscape architect or designer as well.

NOTE: Be sure to select these early to avoid any unforeseen delays. The award plaque is the 'prize' that the winners will take away from this event.

NOTE: If this is your first awards event, take time to define the category parameters (i.e., residential, commercial, maintenance, construction, under/over\$100,000, etc.) and names (i. e., special awards, Presidential awards, Special Mention, etc.)

6. Master of Ceremonies Selection 4 months

When selecting your Master of Ceremonies, keep the following in mind:

- Is he/she well known in your community?
- Will his/her presence help sell tickets?
- Can he/she provide you with additional PR by virtue of his/her job (i.e. newscaster, radio announcer or newspaper reporter.)

7. Letters Soliciting Entries Go Out 3 ½ months

Letters and entry packages to the membership will go out at least 3 1/2 months prior to the event and contains:

- Clear descriptions of the award types
- Amount of entry fee
- Guidelines for entry package contents
- Request for Thomas Bros. page number for each entry

- Entry deadline

8. Recruit Sponsors 3 months

The Committee Member in charge of sponsorships writes letters to potential sponsors. Sponsorship opportunities include:

- Recognition in all printed material, i.e., invitations, announcements, posted signs at the event.
- Sponsorship of each award (sponsor's name would then be announced by M.C. as each award is given to winner).

(See Sponsorship section for more information.)

9. Site Arrangements 3 months

The Site committee member will have arrangements made for the food, music, AV and video/photography presentation finalized 3 months before the event. The Site committee member is also in charge of coordinating the program for the event (see no. 17 below).

10. Recruit Judges 3 months

The Judging committee member recruits judges and coordinates the schedule for judging day.

NOTE: All Judges may not be available on the same day. Keep this in mind when scheduling site visits. We recommend no more than 20 site visits per judge group per day.

11. Entries Deadline 2 months

The Entries committee member tracks the receipt of completed entries, reviews them for accuracy, and sends a complete record of monies collected to the Treasurer. He/she will also prepare evaluation forms to be given to the judges.

IDEA: If you find that there are not enough entries coming in, consider sending out a broadcast FAX encouraging submittals.

12. Design/Approve Invitations/PR 2 months

- Consider using a template for your invitations that can be reused every year.
- Be sure to include a map to the event location.
- Consider giving discounts to early bird RSVP's
- State clearly on the invitation your policy for late RSVP's and drop ins
- Have an article announcing the event in your chapter newsletter including date, time and venue

13. Judging Begins 6 weeks

The Judging committee member coordinates the logistics for judging day. He/she is responsible for: transporting judges and the photographer/videographer to each project,

retrieving judging forms to be returned to the Entries committee member. After judging is complete and evaluations are tabulated, the Judging committee member will coordinate a lunch meeting with the judges to review their findings and photographs/video to be shown at the event.

NOTE: Include a Thomas Bros. guide and extra scoring sheets in the judge's packets.

14. Invitations Mailed 4 weeks

IDEA: Given enough notice, State representatives will attend other chapter events and lend support. Invite them early (and comp them, of course!).

15. Review RSVP's 3 weeks

The committee member receiving RSVP's creates a form to be used at the event to check people in. It should include: name, company, how much is owed or has been paid. This form and the checks can then be turned over to the Treasurer.

IDEA: If you haven't received an adequate number of responses, send out a broadcast FAX to the membership reminding them to respond. If broadcast faxing is not feasible, set up a phone tree and ask Board members to call members who have not responded.

16. Complete Plaques 3 weeks

The committee member in charge of plaques coordinates their completion. He/she will supply the names, photos, etc. to the company preparing the plaques.

17. Letters Encouraging Attendance 2 weeks

The Entries committee member coordinates with the person in charge of RSVP's and verifies that winning companies are sending representatives to the event. If not, consider sending a letter to the winning companies encouraging attendance.

18. The Event

Staffing: All committee members arrive at the site early enough to coordinate with caterers, musicians, seating, AV and parking.

Registration: The registration table has at least 2 people to check guests in and collect any money due.

Sponsors: The Entries committee member determines which sponsors will sponsor which awards.

Program: The evening begins with at least one hour of drinks and networking. The Site committee begins the program, welcomes guests and introduces the Chapter President. The Chapter President then gives a 'state of the Union' message and recognizes the committee and the judges. The Site committee member then introduces the MC and the program begins.

Debriefing: Committee members should hold a debriefing meeting no later than 2 weeks after the event to evaluate the success of the program and to discuss areas needing improvement.

NOTE: Have Board members help at the registration desk and/or the bar. Use the time to pay special attention to new members, potential members and sponsors.

At Every Event

- Have name badges (pre-printed if possible)
- Hang your sponsorship banner and/or acknowledge them in your printed material and at the event (see Sponsorship section for more details)
- Acknowledge state representatives and special guests

CHAPTER BOARD EVENT IDEAS

GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Golf Tournament is an all day fun event starting with the golf game and ending with a meal and prizes. It's a great opportunity to build relationships, recruit new members and attract sponsors. This can be a money making event for the chapter.

Timeline

Item	When/Weeks-Months Before Event
1. Budget Approval-Before	January 1
2. Date Selection/PR	6 months
3. Committee Selection	6 months
4. Venue Selection	4 months
5. Determination of Entry Fee	4 months
6. Letters Soliciting Sponsors	3 months
7. Letters Soliciting Door Prizes	3 months
8. Design/Selection of Invitations	2 months
9. Invitations Go Out (2 mailings)	2 months & 1 month
10. Review RSVPs	2 weeks
11. Make Pairings	1 week
12. Recruit volunteers to help at event	1 week
13. THE EVENT	

1. Budget Approval *Before January 1*

The budget for this event will be reviewed and tentatively approved by the incoming board's first monthly meeting. At that time the board will:

- Decide if event is to make money or break even
- Review sponsorship opportunities (please see Sponsorship section)
- Review budget for previous year's golf tournament, if available
- Establish estimated expenses for current year's event
- Establish projected revenues for current year's event and sponsorships
- Determine pricing for tickets
- Determine who will get comp tickets (i.e., CLCA State Reps, Chapter President, etc.)

NOTE: If you have a sponsorship program (please see Sponsorship section) you may have money available to underwrite a portion of your costs.

2. Date Selection/PR *6 months*

The Golf Tournament should be held in late Spring or early Summer, preferably on a Friday. Your calendar of events in your chapter newsletter should reference this event as soon as

possible and continue to advertise it until the date of the event.

IDEA: Consider sending a 'Save the Date' postcard or FAX to the membership as soon as a date of your event is determined. You may also send out a second reminder about 2 weeks before your invitations go out.

3. Committee Selection *6 months*

The following tasks/elements need to be assigned to committee members:

- a. Tournament Director: in charge of all site logistics, general organization, invitations and tracking of RSVP's.
- b. Sponsors/Door Prizes: in charge of soliciting sponsorships and door prizes. (This individual should be good at sales and enjoy soliciting donations.)

4. Venue Selection *4 months*

The venue should be selected based on the following criteria:

- Convenience of location
- Golf Course facilities to host meal following the tournament
- Greens fees

NOTE: Several venue choices may be brought to the Board for selection or the Board may delegate this choice to the Golf Tournament Committee.

When venue selection is confirmed, Tournament Director will sign a contract and pay a deposit.

IDEA: If you have a small chapter, consider joining efforts with an adjacent chapter to create a larger group.

5. Determination of Entry Fee *4 months*

The entry fee should cover at 90% of the following:

- Greens fee & cart
- Meals (Light dinner, Barbecue or Buffet)
- Drinks (Golf course may throw in drink tickets and have a drink cart available or you can set up cold drinks at tee boxes)
- Prize Fund (1st, 2nd and 3rd place/flight, longest drive, closest to the pin)
- Door Prizes (in addition to what will be collected from sponsors)
- Administrative Costs (invitations/flyers)

6. Letters Soliciting Sponsors *3 months*

Determine what sponsorship opportunities you will make available (tee box signs, longest drive,

closest to pin, etc.). Send our letters with a deadline to respond by 2 weeks before the event.
IDEA: Consider contacting a car dealership in your area to sponsor a hole in one and give away a car. In exchange, offer them a round of golf.

7. Letters Soliciting Door Prizes 3 months

- Door prizes should be special and fun. Consider what your members enjoy doing, i.e., fishing, skiing, boating, camping.
- Some examples of popular door prizes are: weekend getaways, golf equipment and supplies, gift certificates to sporting goods stores, specialty stores and restaurants.
- If possible, get enough door prizes for 50% of your guests
- Avoid industry specific products.
- Send our letters with a deadline to respond by 2 weeks before the event.

8. Design/Selection of Invitations 2 months

- Consider using a template for your invitations that can be reused every year.
- Be sure to include a map to the event location.
- Consider giving discounts to early bird RSVP's
- State clearly on the invitation your policy for late RSVP's and drop-ins
- Have an article announcing the event in your chapter newsletter including date, time and venue.

9. Invitations Go Out 2 months & 1 month

Consider doing two mailings of invitations. The first can be an 'official' invitation and the second can be a card or flyer type. RSVP deadline for entries should be no later than 7 days before the tournament date.

IDEA: Given enough notice, State representatives will attend other chapter events and lend support. Invite them early (and comp them, of course!).

10. Review RSVPs 2 weeks

Review your RSVP's. The committee member receiving RSVP's creates a form to be used at the event to check people in. It should include: name, company, how much is owed or has been paid. This form and the checks can then be turned over to the Treasurer.

IDEA: If you haven't received an adequate number of responses, send out a broadcast FAX to the membership reminding them to respond. If broadcast faxing is not feasible, set up a phone

tree and ask Board members to call members who have not responded.

11. Make Pairings 1 week
Create foursomes and give the information to the golf course.

12. Recruit volunteers to help at event 1 week

Recruit volunteers for the following:

- Work the registration desk
- Set up sponsor signs
- Set up drinks at tee boxes (unless there are drink carts)
- Sell door prize tickets and Mulligans

13. The Event

Registration:

Volunteers at registration table have the RSVP list and verify each person's registration and payment.

IDEA: Consider having a putting contest or giving range balls to early registrants. Door Prize Ticket and Mulligan Sales: Volunteers sell tickets for door prizes at registration and prior to meal and Mulligans
IDEA: Give them a deal: sell 4 Mulligans for \$12.
IDEA: Have Board members help at the registration desk. Use the time to pay special attention to new members, potential members and sponsors.

After the game:

- Score cards are turned in to Pro Shop for scoring and determination of longest drive and closest to pin winners
- Guests can view door prizes and buy more door prize tickets

During the Meal:

- Last call for door prize ticket sales
- Chapter President greets guests and acknowledges sponsors
- Award 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes for each flight
- Award door prizes

Debriefing:

Committee members should hold a debriefing meeting no later than 2 weeks after the event to evaluate the success of the program and to discuss areas needing improvement.

At Every Event

- Have name badges (pre-printed if possible)
- Hang your sponsorship banner and/or acknowledge them in your printed material and at the event (see Sponsorship section for more details)
- Acknowledge state representatives and special guests

CHAPTER BOARD EVENT IDEAS

HOLIDAY PARTY

The Holiday Party is a social event which includes a meal, entertainment and a toy drive (or charitable offering). Since the holiday season is such a hectic time of year, schedule this event early in the season and give the venue, food and entertainment special consideration to attract the largest attendance and sponsorships possible. Dazzle your members!

Timeline

Item	When/Weeks-Months Before Event
1. Budget Approval	Before January 1
2. Date Selection/PR	9 months or more
3. Committee Selection	9 months
4. Venue Selection	9 months
5. Design/Approve Invitations/PR	3 months
6. Recruit Sponsors	3 months
7. Invitations Mailed	4 weeks
8. Coordination of Decorations, Charitable Offering	4 weeks
9. Review RSVP's	3 weeks
10. THE EVENT	

1. Budget Approval *Before January 1*

The budget for this event should be reviewed and tentatively approved by the incoming board's first monthly meeting. At that time the board will:

- Decide if event is to make money or break even
- Review sponsorship opportunities (please see Sponsorship section)
- Review budget for previous year's holiday party, if available
- Establish estimated expenses for current year's event
- Establish projected revenues for current year's event and sponsorships
- Determine pricing for tickets
- Determine who will get comp tickets (i.e., CLCA State Reps, Chapter President, etc.)

NOTE: If you have a sponsorship program (please see Sponsorship section) you may have - money available to underwrite a portion of your costs.

2. Date Selection/PR *9 months or more*

It's never too soon to select the date for this event. Begin listing it in your calendar of events of your newsletter as soon as possible.

3. Committee Selection *9 months*

The following tasks/elements need to be assigned to committee members:

- a. Site/Logistics: in charge of coordination with venue reps regarding catering and coordination of entertainment.
- b. Invitation Selection, Mailing & RSVP's: in charge of invitation design coordination, mailing and tracking of RSVP's.
- c. Sponsorships, Decorations & Charitable offering: in charge of recruiting sponsors, table decorations, selection of charity, collection of gifts and distribution to charity.

4. Venue Selection *9 months*

Selecting the right venue can make the difference between having a successful event or not.

Remember, this is the time to dazzle your members. Things to think about are:

- People are attending this party to celebrate and be entertained.
- What meal will you be serving- Lunch, dinner, appetizers? Will it be a sit down meal, buffet or will you have a happy hour?
- Will there be opportunity and room for members to network? If you're having a sit down dinner, consider having a no-host bar for at least an hour prior to beginning your event.
- Buffets provide ample opportunities for networking. An evening of appetizers and drinks also works well.
- Will you have music? Dancing? Can your venue accommodate the entertainment?
- Is there ample parking? Do you need valet parking?

NOTE: If you are having the event catered, select the caterer about 6 months in advance too. Be sure to sample the caterer's food before committing.

IDEA: If you have a small chapter, consider joining efforts with an adjacent chapter to create a larger group.

5. Design/Approve Invitations/PR *3 months*

- This invitation should be attractive and stand out.
- If you are having a toy drive, make sure to mention what guest should bring and the charity you are donating to.
- Be sure to include a map to the event location.

- Consider giving discounts to early bird RSVP's
- State clearly on the invitation your policy for late RSVP's and drop-ins
- Have an article announcing the event in your chapter newsletter including date, time and venue.

6. Recruit Sponsors 3 months

The Committee Member in charge of sponsorships writes letters to potential sponsors. Letters should clearly state sponsorship levels and what they include. (See Sponsorship section for more information.)

7. Invitations Mailed 4 weeks

IDEA: Given enough notice, many State representatives will attend other chapter events and lend support. Invite them early (and comp them, of course!). Board members: at the event, introduce State representatives to local members.

8. Decorations, Charitable Offering 4 weeks

- Contact suppliers who may be willing to supply Christmas trees and materials for table centerpieces.
- Purchase or recruit any necessary decorations.
- Recruit volunteers to help arrange decorations and centerpieces.
- Determine the charity you will donate toys to.
- Coordinate delivery of toys to charity.

9. Review RSVP's 3 weeks

The committee member receiving RSVP's creates a form to be used at the event to check people in. It should include: name, company, how much is owed or has been paid. This form and the checks can then be turned over to the Treasurer.

IDEA: If you haven't received an adequate number of responses, send out a broadcast FAX to the membership reminding them to respond. If broadcast faxing is not feasible, set up a phone tree and ask Board members to call members who have not responded.

10. The Event

Staffing: All committee members arrive at the site early enough to verify site arrangements, entertainment, etc.

Registration: The registration table has at least 2 people to check guests in and collect any money due.

IDEA: Have Board members help at the registration desk and bar. Use the time to pay special attention to new members, potential members and sponsors.

IDEA: Have votive candles in holiday bags showing the way to your party.

Program: The evening begins with at least one hour of drinks and networking. When the meal is served (or if a buffet, when everyone is seated), the Chairman of the Board introduces the Chapter President. The Chapter President addresses the group, thanks sponsors (for this event and the past year), acknowledges special guests and then introduces the President Elect. The President Elect introduces the incoming Board of Directors and talks about the upcoming events in the New Year. Entertainment can begin anytime before, during and/or after the meal.

IDEA: Tape a raffle ticket to the bottom of one chair at each table. Winner takes the centerpiece.

IDEA: Sell the donated Christmas trees.

Debriefing: Committee members should hold a debriefing meeting no later than 2 weeks after the event to evaluate the success of the program and to discuss areas needing improvement.

At Every Event

- Have name badges (pre-printed if possible)
- Hang your sponsorship banner and/or acknowledge them in your printed material and at the event (see Sponsorship section for more details)
- Acknowledge state representatives and special guests

CHAPTER BOARD EVENT IDEAS

PICNIC

A family oriented event which is entertaining and builds personal relationships between members. This is a light, social event, no business, and provides a well-deserved break during the busiest season in the landscape industry.

Timeline

Item	When/Weeks-Months Before Event
1. Budget Approval	Before January 1
2. Date Selection/PR	6 months
3. Venue Selection	6 months
4. Determination of Ticket Price	6 months
5. Recruit Sponsor	6 months
6. Design/Selection of Invitations	2 months
7. Invitations Go Out	4 weeks
8. Review RSVPs	2 weeks
9. The Event	

1. Budget Approval *Before January 1*

The budget for this event will be reviewed and tentatively approved by the incoming board's first monthly meeting. At that time the board will:

- Decide if event is to make money or break even
- Review sponsorship opportunities (please see Sponsorship section)
- Review budget for previous year's event, if available
- Establish estimated expenses for current year's event
- Establish projected revenues for current year's event and sponsorships
- Determine pricing for tickets
- Determine who will get comp tickets (i.e., CLCA State Reps, Chapter President, etc.)

NOTE: If you have a sponsorship program (please see Sponsorship section) you may have money available to underwrite a portion of your costs.

2. Date Selection/PR *6 months*

The Family Picnic is held in late summer on a weekend, beginning late morning and ending around 6 p.m.

IDEA: Consider sending a 'Save the Date' postcard or FAX to the membership as soon as a date of your event is determined.

3. Venue Selection *6 months*

Things your selected venue should include:

- Picnic tables & cooking facilities

- Shaded areas
- Restrooms close by
- Recreation areas for volleyball, horseshoes, softball, etc.
- Ample parking

IDEA: If you have a small chapter, consider joining efforts with an adjacent chapter to create a larger group.

4. Ticket Pricing *6 months*

This is a casual event so there won't be many expenses. Your entry fee can cover the following:

- Food
- Rental fees if necessary
- Entertainment

OR

Have your entry fee cover the main meal (hamburgers and hot dogs, for example) and have members bring other dishes and drinks to share.

5. Recruit a Sponsor *6 months*

IDEA: Recruit an Associate Member to supply food and/or drinks OR have a sponsor supply the main meal (hamburgers, hot dogs) and have members bring other dishes to share OR have a sponsor supply your entertainment or supplies for the outdoor activities.

6. Selection of Invitations *2 months*

- Consider using a template for your invitations that can be reused every year.
- Be sure to include a map to the event location.
- State clearly on the invitation your policy for late RSVP's and drop-ins
- Have an article announcing the event in your chapter newsletter including date, time and venue

7. Invitations Go Out *4 weeks*

RSVP deadline for entries should be no more than 7 days before the tournament date.

8. Review RSVPs *2 weeks*

Review your RSVP's. The committee member receiving RSVP's creates a form to be used at the event to check people in. It should include: name, company, how much is owed or has been paid. This form and the checks can then be turned over to the Treasurer.

IDEA: If you haven't received an adequate number of responses, send out a broadcast FAX to the membership reminding them to respond. If broadcast faxing is not feasible, set up a phone tree and ask Board members to call members who have not responded.

9. The Event

Registration: Volunteers at registration table have the RSVP list and verify each person's registration and payment.

IDEA: Have Board members help at the registration desk. Use the time to pay special attention to new members, potential members and sponsors.

Program: This is a relaxed, social event with no agenda. You can include activities like horseshoes, volleyball, softball, etc. You can also have musical entertainment.

IDEA: Have something special for the kids: a clown, face painting, balloons, etc.

Debriefing: Committee members should hold a debriefing meeting no later than 2 weeks after the event to evaluate the success of the program and to discuss areas needing improvement.

At Every Event...

- Have name badges (pre-printed if possible)
- Hang your sponsorship banner and/or acknowledge them in your printed material and at the event (see Sponsorship section for more details)
- Acknowledge state representatives and special guests

CHAPTER BOARD EVENT IDEAS

MISCELLANEOUS

Casino Nights

Attendees get a certain number of chips at the beginning of the evening. At the end of the night, trade chips for tickets for prize drawings. The more tickets you receive, the more chances to win prizes donated by members and suppliers.

Tax Strategies Meeting

Schedule in February. Discuss business use of home, compensation of family members, auto lease/purchase and retirement.

Family Bowling Night and Board Installation

Fun, food, installation, prizes for adults and kids for high game and low game in each division: men, women, boys and girls.

Pond Night

A presentation from a nationally acclaimed pond builder and discussion on the ABC's of ponds and waterfalls, and future trends in the industry. Literature and handouts distributed.

Water Conservation

Everything you ever wanted to know about water conservation but were afraid to ask.

Technology for Successful

Small Business Owners

Hire consultant to discuss which computers and computer programs are the best and which mobile phones and plans are best for the on-the-go landscaper. How websites enhance business.

Family Night at the Movies

Combine this with an event that is typically dry like board elections. Meet prior to the movie and then provide popcorn and drinks along with the movie.

Supplier Showcase

Event features hands-on product demos with info about the new products out from a supplier. Invite crews and have sessions in Spanish available. Free BBQ lunch provided for members.

Vendor Expo

Join together with other chapters, rent a location and sell tables for \$25 to vendors and then invite members.

First Aid Training

Work with the Red Cross to provide a day of safety training.

Sports Team Outing

Join together with other chapters to meet at a sporting event. Provide round-trip bus with ticket to the game and tailgating. Invite families and crews.

Lighting Demo

Use a local lighting supplier. Hold raffle for lighting kit.

Local Parades

Enter a float in the local parade. Include free BBQ for those helping to build the float.

Softball Game and BBQ

Include your student chapter or local Hort. Department by challenging them to a game. Show interest in their program by having the game on campus and then touring the Hort. Dept.

Fishing Trip

Charter a boat for the weekend with a set price including everything. Limit company spots so a good mix of people attend.

Be Creative! Think of fun things you'd want to attend.

SAMPLE DOCUMENTS

The following sample documents are designed to provide ideas and inspiration for your own documents.

Documents Include:

1. Board Meeting Agenda
2. Board Meeting Minutes
3. Booth Sign-Up Form
4. Budget Meeting Agenda
5. Chapter Goals Document
6. Dinner Meeting Agenda
7. Education Event Announcement
8. Golf Flyer
9. Golf Tournament Welcome and Rules
10. Membership Dinner Meeting Flyer
11. New Member Letter
12. Prospective Member Letter
13. Prospective Member Second Letter
14. Partners for Success Intro Letter
15. Partners for Success Dues Letter
16. Partners for Success Menu
17. Sample Calendar

CLCA PUBLIC RELATIONS RESOURCE MANUAL

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I. INTRODUCTION

It wasn't very long ago that California Landscape Contractors were in the enviable position of being the "good guys" – representing a clean, aesthetically pleasing industry with multiple benefits simply taken for granted. California offered a favorable political and economic climate in which the landscape industry thrived. Landscape contractors providing a quality product and quality service could count on business success.

Things are different now.

A variety of factors influence CLCA members' ability to operate successfully in California. Among them are: government regulations, availability of water, slow economy, competition from unlicensed contractors and the increasing high cost of doing business.

The CLCA has a number of active committees and professional staff working to direct change and to ensure that our position on a variety of issues is heard in California. The success of these efforts depends on the support of the members. With over 2,500 members throughout the state, the CLCA is a strong voice for the industry which commands attention and respect when we all speak together.

That is what the CLCA public relations program is all about. Working together to communicate our messages, so that we reach the people we need to with the information we want them to have.

Remember, a comprehensive public relations effort works to change or develop attitudes and/or behavior about an issue, business or product. Over time, the public relations activities carried out at the state and local level will strongly benefit the industry as well as individual members. It is well worth your chapter's time and energy to plan the public relations activities you will coordinate at the chapter level so they complement the activities already occurring at the state level. Some assistance is available to chapters from CLCA staff and consultants. Just give the state PR committee chair a call to determine how we can best assist you.

The state level public relations program is designed to:

- 1) Protect the landscape industry's interests in the face of California's water crises and other regulatory issues.
- 2) Improve the competitive position of CLCA members.
- 3) Position CLCA members as the authority on issues pertinent to the industry.

- The goal of the program is to communicate to local and state officials, business leaders and the general public the broad range of benefits landscaping provides to communities and individual property.
- The program also directs consumers to utilize licensed landscape contractors for professional assistance in planning and maintaining landscapes in the most economically and environmentally sound manner possible.

A common theme among all public relations activities at the state level is enhancing the image of licensed landscape professionals, and specifically of CLCA members.

At the state level, a number of measurable objectives have been determined to support the goal of the program. At your chapter level, you should determine goals and objectives relevant to your region and specific needs, and plan annual public relations activities to support them.

II. PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM PREPARATION

The Public Relations Program should create a positive CLCA identity with the print and broadcast media, local government officials and influential members of the community.

The key to a successful program is to begin by determining exactly what's important in your region, and how to best direct your efforts.

The term "public relations" is used loosely by chapters and is usually interpreted differently by each member. One of the most important things chapters can do is decide exactly what they expect from their local "PR" efforts. Chapters may expect local PR programs to assist with:

- Positioning - Image enhancement, projecting members as the industry experts, building identity as the strongest industry advocacy group in the marketplace, etc.
- Marketing - Supporting members' sales goals and business activities.
- Advertising - Placing paid advertising to promote the chapter and members' businesses.
- Government and/or community relations - Involvement in local activities that reinforce CLCA's presence in the regions and member's areas of expertise.

Step 1

Define Your Goals

Start by identifying one major goal for the year, with 3 to 5 objectives, or action items, to support that goal. Know clearly what you want to accomplish to avoid wasting time and energy.

Update your goals and objectives twice a year. As a part of the review process, be sure to look at your chapter's "marketplace".

- Who is your competition? (for media attention, for positioning with local government, for clients.)
- What are your chapter's strengths? How can you promote these? Is your chapter weak in a particular area that impacts its image? How can you strengthen it?
- What opportunities may be available to your chapter in the upcoming year that you can take advantage of? Do some brainstorming – some "what ifs". Be creative!

For example...

"The goal of our PR program is to enhance our members' image in our community."

1. Have CLCA members quoted as experts in news stories about issues affecting the industry.
2. Organize and sponsor a community benefit project using members' expertise and materials.
3. Promote chapter award winners in the media and special business publications.

Fill in specific steps you plan to take to meet the goals and objectives. Keep it flexible.

Take advantage of unexpected opportunities to promote your chapter.

Then set the plan to a calendar, attach a budget, assign volunteers to supervise each task, and you are set.

Step 2

Build a List of Media Contacts

One of the most important aspects of your PR Program is the relationship you develop with your local media. Get to know your business and outdoor editors. Introduce yourself to reporters covering the beats which affect your industry, such as garden, water, health, lifestyle, small business, real estate, and agriculture. When you read the paper or listen to the news, note who is doing the story you are interested in and add their name to your list of media contacts.

Create a simple list of publications, television and radio stations in your region.

Make sure you have accurate mailing addresses, telephone numbers and FAX numbers for each. Add specific editor or reporter's names that are important to you. Make an effort to confirm those names at least every six months, as they change often.

Your media database or contact list should include:

Daily Newspapers and Weekly Publications:

- Business Editor
- Real Estate Editor
- Garden Editor
- Lifestyle/home Editor
- City Editor
- Special beat reporters

Radio Stations

- New Director

- Public Affairs Director
- Promotions Manager
- Talk Show Producer(s)

Television Stations

- Assignment Editor(s)
- Public Affairs/Community Relations Director
- Special beat reporters

Pass the media list on to the new PR chair each year, updating it as necessary. This will be one of your most important tools.

Step 3

Prepare Informational Materials

Before you contact a member of the media, compile information for reporters, editors, talk show producers and others. Some information has already been produced at the state level and is referenced in the addendum. Your materials should be assembled into a “media kit”, with standard information to distribute whenever you contact the media augmented by specific information relevant to the topic or event you are addressing at the time.

This should include:

- Simple cover letter on chapter letterhead. Introduce the chapter, your availability to discuss a variety of topics, interest in meeting with the editor or reporter to introduce yourself and discuss issues of specific interest to the audience.
- Fact sheet about the CLCA (localize it with your information).

- List of topics your members are available to discuss.
- List of chapter members the media can contact for information (be sure to include daytime and evening phone numbers). Ideally these will be members who have received CLCA media skills training.
- Industry statistics or specific information (i.e.: copy of legislation being considered, list of award winners, etc.)
- News release or advisory on relevant (current) subject.

Step 4

Introduce Yourself to the Media

Set up a time to meet with the reporters and editors you have identified to meet them personally and give them your media kit. Suggest that it be maintained in their background file, to reference the next time they do a story on one of the topics your members can address.

If you mail the media information, follow it up with a phone call (call in the mornings) to introduce yourself over the phone and offer any assistance they may need in putting together a story on topics CLCA is interested in.

Touch base with your media contacts on a regular basis to keep your files current and to comment on issues or activities of local interest. Establishing your chapter as a reliable, accurate media resource is one of the most important public relations activities you can complete.

III. MEDIA RELATIONS

A. Working with the News Media

The news media is one way to reach the people you want to with your messages. There are a few simple “tools of the trade” you can use to be effective in working with the media which can benefit your chapter.

- Give the media what works for them, not necessarily what works for you.
- Television stations need good visuals and brief, interesting events. Newspapers need comprehensive stories. Reporters need to examine all sides of the issues and hear from representatives with conflicting viewpoints. Accurate, attributable facts must be available.
- Have all of your information compiled before you try to encourage the media to look at the possible story.
- Identify national or regional trends and localize it for your media.
- Regulations, proposed legislation, sales projections, lifestyle trends, employment figures, and environmental issues – each of these topics can be brought home by your chapter for your local media. Don’t hesitate to follow-up on a national story with a phone call or brief note to your local media stating that “you may be interested in knowing how consumer buying habits are affecting the ___\$ industry in our city”...
- Determine if it’s really newsworthy before you write a long news release and send it off to the media with high hopes.

A good way to do this: look at your idea and ask “Would this be newsworthy if my competitor was doing it?”

- Keep it simple. Get right to the point. Don’t bury the key information in a lot of fluff not relevant to the issue you are commenting on or the activity you are promoting.
- Be respectful of media deadlines. Send news releases or advance information 2-3 weeks prior to events. For breaking stories or comments on timely issues, it is best to contact reporters or editors early in the day.
- Know who the best person is to send your information. Be familiar with the format and style of the publication or station you are contacting. In addition to news desks or specific reporters, you may want to contact:

Columnists have particular areas they are interested in, and are usually forums for expressing personal opinions not necessarily linked to the publication they write for. A good resource for CLCA is a columnist who writes about issues important to the landscape industry.

Community Calendars usually work one to two months in advance. Submit brief information about events with key information points. Be sure to include contact name and phone number. Format your information so that it’s useful to the media.

B. General Media Skills Techniques

In today’s working environment, business executives must take advantage of every opportunity to reach their targeted audience with positive messages about their company, association and causes.

The trick is to do more than “hold your own” with the media or other people you want to impress – potential customers and business colleagues, for instance. You must seize each moment to voice your agenda, instead of simply answering each question.

This agenda should consist of approximately three key messages which will leave a lasting impression with the audience.

Prepare your agenda:

- Determine your key messages before each interview.
- How do they affect your audience?
- How can you position these messages in response to questions which are likely to be asked during the interview?

Think of your key messages in terms of short, catchy “sound bites” which can be edited down to 10 seconds, 30-40 seconds and 1-2 minutes with anecdotes or supporting information. Don’t be afraid to go back to these key messages again and again.

If necessary, prepare a brief, written subject backgrounder which provides more in-depth information to the reporter or audience members.

Practice your media skills techniques! Stage a mock interview with co-workers and a camera,

give a presentation to a local business organization or pursue a feature idea with a reporter. You'll see how much easier each presentation becomes, and how much more adept you will be at stating those key messages in a variety of situations.

Remember — each presentation leaves a lasting impression. Make sure you are prepared to be persuasive, credible and relaxed by turning the techniques you've learned into action!

"If you have an important point to make, don't try to be subtle or clever. Use a pile driver. Hit the point once. Then come back and hit it again. Then hit it a third time – a tremendous whack."
- Sir Winston Churchill

C. Key Messages for the Media

Be sure to stick to your key messages whenever you talk with the media. State your point simply, and support it with facts, and then stop.

The CLCA Public Relations Program focuses on these key messages:

- Landscaping is environmentally sound.
 - Air quality
 - Cooling effect
- Landscaping is essential.
 - Energy use reduction
 - Health and aesthetic appeal
 - Fire protection
- Landscaping can be maintained with minimum water consumption.
- Landscaping is a valuable economic asset to property and communities.
- Only licensed landscape contractors can properly design, install and maintain landscaping in the most environmentally and economically sound manner possible.

IV. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

One effective way to enhance your chapter's image in the community and reinforce your members' marketing activities is to participate in community events or activities in which CLCA has special expertise.

Examples of these kinds of activities include:

- Demonstration gardens
- Fire (or other disaster) restoration projects
- Landscaping hospitals, community centers, or other civic properties
- Workshops and training staged in cooperation with other groups or community organizations
- Mentor or job-training programs for students

The key to executing successful community relations activities is good planning and excellent follow-through by chapter members. Whenever possible, incorporate the following components into community relations activities:

1. Team up with other groups, agencies or organizations for maximum results and exposure to new audiences (i.e.: water districts, civic clubs, chambers of commerce, etc.).
2. Plan with plenty of lead time to avoid last minute oversights.
3. Choose a project with real and lasting value to the community.
4. Secure as many donations of time and materials as possible. Look outside the "traditional" green industry sponsors for new partnerships.
5. Don't expect publicity miracles. Use community newsletters, sponsor publications and speaking opportunities to promote your activities.
6. Do inform the media about your project. Use the publicity resources other sponsors may have to promote the activity. (i.e.: local PR firm, paid advertising budget, etc.)

Awards Programs

Promoting local awards winners is a good way to exhibit the creativity and professionalism of chapter members. You will have the best results with small or community publications, although big publications will be interested in award winners if they represent something unusual or responsive to local issues.

For best results in promoting award winners, keep in mind the following:

- Choose one to three unique winners and focus your attention on promoting them.
- Provide professional color photographs (transparencies) to publications with a simple news release describing the landscapes and what makes them unique.
- Look for creative ways to promote award winners throughout the year. Staging events or live-remote television broadcasts from award winning landscapes are examples of ways to do this.
- Issue simple news releases (with photos when available) promoting individual winners to their own local newspapers or newsletters of business groups or organizations they belong to.
- Include a noteworthy speaker or notable local citizen on your awards dinner program to create media interest in the event.

V. GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC AGENCY RELATIONS

If your chapter isn't already active in government or public affairs, beginning the activity can be effective in bringing CLCA information to local government officials and elected representatives. Building an effective outreach program includes staying informed of issues relevant to your industry and becoming proactive in speaking to those issues.

Contact the CLCA Government Affairs Director for current information about key issues or state level activities which may impact your regions, and to ensure that chapter efforts and state efforts are complimentary. Other important steps include:

1. Monitor local regulations so you aren't caught by surprise. Assign members to review minutes of city and county meetings, or to attend meetings with pertinent agenda items.
2. Stay informed about state issues so you can localize their impacts.
3. Introduce your chapter to all of your local elected officials – city, county, state and federal representatives. Contact their office staff regularly so they know your chapter is available to discuss important issues. Include them on your chapter newsletter mailing list. Send them chapter media materials. Clip interesting articles and send to them with brief comments from your chapter: "You may be interested in knowing that in this area, we've seen..."
4. Rally chapter members, vendors, friends and relatives to write to elected officials on issues that are important to the chapter. Keep it short, keep it simple. Always include the name and address of the letter writer. Send copies of the letters to the media. Also send copies to the state CLCA Government Affairs Director.
5. Follow the public speaking tips whenever testifying at public meetings or hearings. Stick to main points and substantiate with relevant statistics. Summarize key points in a brief statement for the media.
6. Get your chapter on relevant mailing lists such as government publications, elected officials newsletters, etc. so you will be informed about important local issues.

VI. SPEAKERS BUREAU

Chapters can promote members and educate the community about the landscape industry by providing guest speakers to civic and professional organizations, conferences, or training centers.

The most important factor in establishing a successful speaker's bureau is identifying members who are comfortable doing public speaking who can prepare interesting presentations on current issues. The most effective way to polish skills is through membership in a speaker's group such as Toastmasters. Public speaking skills only get better with practice!

Suggested topics members might talk about are:

- How to hire a landscape contactor
- Increasing property values with landscaping
- The environmental benefits of landscaping
- Drought tolerant/water efficient landscapes
- Upgrading current landscapes for more beauty, value, and water efficiency
- Understanding regulations or legislation (make it specific, i.e.: Understanding AB325)

Topics need to be tailored to the audience. Audio visual materials such as slides should be used only if they are top quality. Slides of interesting or unique landscapes are always popular. Slides of statistics and facts are not!

Suggested groups or organizations to contact to offer a CLCA speaker;

- Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions
- Business Associations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Community Colleges or Universities (Business, Horticulture, Community Development Departments)

Public Speaking for CLCA

Professional actors are finely tuned to their emotions, enabling them to speak with the movement of an arm. An effective spokesperson also makes use of body movements to convey appropriate emotion.

The following gestures and expressions are considered positive and convey personal interest and self confidence:

- Look people in the eye.
- Lean slightly forward, if seated.
- Make hand movements that occur naturally as a supplement to what you are saying.
- Listen intently to anyone who asks questions.
- Listen to what other people have to say.

The following gestures and expressions tend to be negative and convey tension and nervousness:

- Inappropriate smiling, laughter
- Tightly clasped hands
- Hands gripping sides of chairs, tables, knees
- Hands toying with pencils, water glasses, buttons, microphones
- Drumming table top, microphone
- Tightening and loosening jaw
- Ramrod straight, unnatural posture

These movements convey impatience and discomfort:

- Swinging legs
- Shifting in chair
- Shifting eyes

These movements convey guilt and disinterest:

- Casting eyes looking toward the ceiling
- Failing to look at reporter or audience
- Slouching posture
- Closing eyes