

NHLA

NEWSletter

Vol. 39 No. 5

Informing and educating members of the Green Industry

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Is There a “Good” Time for Training?

by Bill Gardocki

I know that when I pass to the great beyond, you will say, Oh yeah, he was the guy who pushed hardscape contractors about education and training. Here I go again...

As in most businesses, one needs to know about materials, bidding, tools, equipment, and vehicle options. In our industry add-on businesses that you may want to consider are lighting, artificial turf installation, outdoor kitchens, water features, firepits, etc. The question then becomes, do you know how to install these products correctly? And is there

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Twilight Meetings June 27 & July 12

Reminder: We have two excellent Twilight Meetings coming up in June and July. Tuesday, June 27, we'll meet at the renowned Bedrock Gardens in Lee, NH, from 3-5 pm. This historic property has been reclaimed from an abandoned 18th-century dairy farm into an alluring landscape of gardens, sculptures, and water features that is now developing as a public garden. John Forti, author and Green Industry advocate, who was the speaker at the January NHLA Dinner Meeting, will be our host. He is the Executive Director at Bedrock Gardens.

The following month will find us at one of New Hampshire's nursery treasures, Van

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The *NHLA Newsletter* seeks to encourage a lively discussion of topics of concern to NHLA members. Opinions and proposals presented in the newsletter are those of the writers to whom they are attributed and are not a statement of official policy by NHLA, unless so stated.

Prof. Consultants

NHLA BUSINESS MANAGER

Pamela Moreau
 603-321-0329
nhla@comcast.net

NEWSLETTER EDITOR AND DESIGNER

Carolyn Isaak
 603-499-2143
editor@nhlaonline.org

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Annette Zamarchi
 603-661-3488
alzbps@gmail.com

CERTIFICATION COORDINATOR

Abby Zuidema
 Mosaic Plant Design
 603-502-4894
plantmosaics@outlook.com

EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Mike Barwell
 Perfect North Lawncare LLC
 603-491-0847
mikebarwell@yahoo.com

Committee Chairs

CERTIFICATION CHAIR

Mac McPhail
 United Ag & Turf NE
malcolm.mcphail@uatne.com

Board of Directors

Andrew Pelkey Mar. '24

President
 North Point Outdoors
 603-867-1929
andrew@northpointoutdoors.com

Heather Linehan, VP Mar. '24

Linehan Landscaping & Property Maintenance, LLC
 603-234-7267
heather@linehanlandscaping.com

Maria Rainey Mar. '24

Secretary/Treasurer
 Nature's Design
 603-609-5200
designbyrainey@gmail.com

Dave DeJohn Mar. '24

Past President
 David DeJohn Landscaping
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DDEJo71@aol.com

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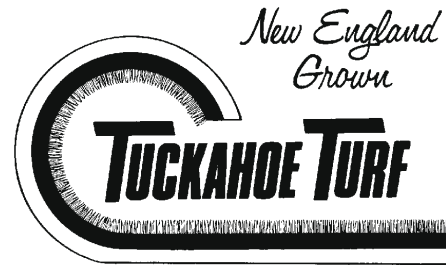
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Cori Cahow, Director Mar. '25

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 603-540-2041
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President's Notes

by Andrew Pelkey

As I write these notes for the June edition, we are amidst the "spring rush" or as some in the industry call "the hundred days of hell." Which, when written out, seems a bit drastic, but we can all relate. If you are in the Green Industry for your living, it doesn't matter if you are a single owner operator or have 100 team members under you, the stress is equal and real for all of us.

When things get busy, it's natural to focus on the immediate work in front of you and more difficult to focus on bigger-picture thinking. During this first year as NHLA president, as we've worked through the spring, it's been a bit overwhelming to submit these notes

on time and fulfill my other duties as a Board member. I also know that all of the other Board members and volunteers for the Association are in the same boat. It is a good opportunity to thank each and every

person that helps NHLA provide resources to you folks.

On that front, we have plenty of items in the works for this year. In May we had a sprayer calibration and safety workshop for women and a paver and block

wall installation workshop. In June and July, we will have Twilight Meetings at Bedrock Gardens and Van Berkum Nursery. In August we run our annual NHLA Golf Tournament and in September our annual NHLA Field Day event.

This year's Field Day will boast a larger offering, with additional vendors and more training opportunities, including hands on learning.

As a Board, we continue to roll out more resources for the Association members, planning for both the near- and long-term future. I hope you take advantage of them all, even when things are busy during the spring rush! ✨



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Hardscape Seminar: Education That Will Reap Savings in Time and Money

by Pam Moreau, NHLA Business Manager

I would like to start by thanking Bill Gardocki for teaching our first hardscape seminar. He has a wealth of knowledge! I want to thank MiltonCAT for the use of their classroom and for breakfast. A special thanks to Mike Courchaine, Kyle Saren, and David Scacchi for their help throughout the day and for the tour of their facility. Thanks to Jim Moreau from Northeast Turf and Irrigation for the notebooks and snacks. I would also like to thank the attendees; we appreciate your taking the time to attend this seminar. It takes dedication to the industry to join us on a Saturday morning. It was an incredible learning event!

This seminar was designed for contractors and sales reps who want the basic understanding of Interlocking Concrete Paver Institute (ICPI) and National Concrete Manufacturers Association (NCMA) specifications, but are not pursuing the certification processes. It concentrated on technical specifications, contractor language, and so much more! Bill did an amazing job!

As an educator myself, I love learning! As your business manager, I have no field experience, so this was a great overview of the do's and don'ts in hardscaping. I left with pages of notes, but I will only share three main points.

Safety first! Always know the specifications of your block, the materials you are using, and the location you are working in. Test the soil, check for water sources, and check out the entire property. "Use fabric; soil reinforcement is your insurance policy." "Compaction! Compaction! Compaction! Most failures are due to not enough compaction." Wear safety gear and hardness when necessary! Include safety protocols in your company handbook.

Be prepared and have the right tools for the job! You not only need the tools for the build, but you will also need to plan for mishaps, such as cutting landscape lighting wire, or breaking an irrigation pipe. They will happen and time is money! Bill suggests stocking your truck or trailer with kits for such mishaps. Do not forget

the bug spray! "Planning ahead will pay for itself in the long run." Take factory tours, so you can see and be familiar with all materials.

Quoting your job! In order to prepare the best quote, you need to be prepared. Your time is money. You should have a quote kit with you that includes more than just paper, pencil, and a tape. Know your costs, know your material, and know your competitors' material. Always sketch a quick plan. "You should never leave without giving a quote."

I highlighted just a few tips that I found extremely important. I could have gone on for pages.

The best part of the day was the open interaction, questions from both Bill and the attendees. Everyone felt comfortable asking questions regarding topics in their current jobs. Thanks again to all who attended and everyone who made this day possible.

NHLA's mission is to educate its members. Please contact us if you have a topic idea, would like to teach a class, or would like to join the Education Committee. Learning from the internet is good, but learning from an experienced horticulturalist is priceless!

**All quotes in the article are from Bill Gardocki.*



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UNH Extension Can Help You Diagnose Plant Problems

by Amy Papineau, Landscape & Greenhouse Horticulture Field Specialist, UNH Extension

What do you do when you encounter a plant problem such as disease or abnormal growth in the landscape? You or a client may find a problem occurring with a single plant or you may find a swath of plants in decline. When you suspect a plant disease is causing damage in the landscape, UNH Extension and its UNH Plant Diagnostic Lab can help you by providing accurate disease identification and management recommendations.

With an accurate diagnosis, the specialists at the Plant Diagnostic Lab can help you develop a management strategy and can help you answer questions such as:

- Will pruning out damaged parts of the plant stop the disease from doing further damage?
- Will removing affected plants stop the spread in the landscape?
- Are my watering, pruning, or other care practices contributing to development of this problem?
- Is this damage actually caused by disease, or is there something else going on here?
- Is the plant likely to recover?
- Is this likely to happen again next year?
- Can the problem be remedied with a fungicide application?

Plant disease diagnosis and management recommendations are provided to growers, landscapers, gardeners, and others through UNH Cooperative Extension's Plant Diagnostic Lab. Whether in a production setting or in the landscape, plant diseases can have devastating impacts. Quick and accurate identification of the disease or other factor that is causing plant decline or dam-

Whether in a production setting or in the landscape, plant diseases can have devastating impacts. Quick and accurate identification of the disease or other factor that is causing plant decline or damage is an important first step in successful management of the problem.

age is an important first step in successful management of the problem. Accurately identifying the cause of disease can help you avoid spread or recurrence of the problem and will provide you with the information you need to select effective controls.

When you send plant material to the UNH Plant Diagnostic Lab, plant health specialists will examine and test the samples to determine causes of poor growth, damage, abnormalities, or other symptoms. By examining the samples under a microscope and performing other diagnostic procedures including testing with advanced molecular approaches, the specialist can accurately identify fungal, bacterial, and viral infections and will give you management recommendations based on the disease-causing organism(s) identified.

The UNH Plant Diagnostic Lab recently moved to a new location on the campus of UNH in Durham and is now situated in a fully renovated lab space in Barton Hall. Along with this move to new space, the lab has new staff members who are integrating modern diagnostic capabilities into the lab services. With the addition of molecular diagnostic tests introduced by the lab director and plant health specialist, Dr. Bo Liu, ultra-rapid identification of many diseases will be possible. Dr. Liu,



along with plant diagnostician, Madie Hassett, provide services grounded in speed, accuracy, and value to the client.

To make use of the services provided by the UNH Plant Diagnostic Lab, mail or deliver (M-F, 8am-5pm) samples of affected plants or plant parts to the lab along with a completed submission form and \$20 sample fee: UNH Plant Diagnostic Lab, Barton Hall Room 206, 34 Sage Way, Durham, NH 03824. To ensure samples arrive in the best condition for diagnosis, follow the video instruction for packaging and sending samples found on the Extension website.

Some diseases may be accurately identified through emailed images. Sending clear images to the lab (unh.pdl@unh.edu) before you send your sample or at the time of submitting your

sample can aid in quick diagnosis and development of recommendations. Some plant diseases can be identified quickly when the lab receives them, while some diagnostic procedures take up to two weeks to complete. The lab will contact you by email when your report is ready.

If you are experiencing a plant growth problem, consider calling your local Extension Field Specialist as well. Extension specialists in each New Hampshire county are available to work with farms and Green Industry businesses to diagnose plant problems and to provide recommendations for control or management. Specialists work hand-in-hand with the Plant Diagnostic Lab.

Plant health specialists at the UNH Plant Diagnostic Lab can be reached at 603-862-3043 or unh.pdl@unh.edu.

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Pillar # 1: Make Quality Personal

by Andrew Pelkey, NHLA President

“Take pride in the quality of everything you touch and everything you do. Ask yourself, is this my best work?”

Make quality personal is Pillar #1 in our *10 Pillars of Culture* at North Point Outdoors. If you have been following along, I have shared Pillars 5 & 7 in recent articles.

Our *Pillars of Culture* are in no specific order, as all are equally important, but have been numbered simply to enable us to remember them!

Pillar #1 is intended to make sure quality is on the front of our team’s mind at all times. The obvious theme is the quality of the work completed. But when you drill into this, it is much more. We drive home the concept that the quality also

All steps need to be executed in a manner of quality to leave the client feeling that the experience with your firm was a good one.

lies in the experience the client had with you from the first initial phone call, the site visit, design process/proposal process, scheduling, work in progress, completion, and close out. All steps need to be executed in a manner of quality to leave the

client feeling that the experience with your firm was a good one.

This pillar is imperative as you scale. For those of you who are owner/operators, you most likely have your hand on each of your jobs and are able to oversee this quality daily as you work with your crews. Your team follows your lead and makes sure your level of quality is met. As you scale your business, you need to find a way to maintain this level of quality, which isn’t easy to do.

This is where we believe it’s not just about the actual work you do, but how you manage the client throughout the process. We know that we aren’t perfect, and you will never hear anyone on our team say that we are. But what you will hear is that when we do make a mistake, we handle

it correctly every time, even if it is at our loss. We strongly believe that this has been one of the driving forces in growing our business. You aren’t necessarily judged on the mistakes you make, rather on how you handle them, and they need to be handled in a quality manner.

Lead your management team to take a firm stance on the quality they are producing. Lead them to know it is okay to make a mistake; correcting this mistake after it occurs is the key to producing consistent quality even if it isn’t done perfectly the first time. 🍷

— Andrew Pelkey is chief operations officer and co-owner of North Point Outdoors. He is the current president of NHLA.



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Using Growing Degree Days to Predict Insect Pests in the Landscape

by Amy Papineau, Landscape & Greenhouse Horticulture Field Specialist, UNH Extension

Does weather factor into your landscape pest management decisions? Keeping track of weather, and specifically daily temperatures, can help you fine tune the timing of pest management activities, contributing to significant savings in costs of labor, materials, and plant injury.

You may have a good idea of when to expect certain insect pests to be active in the landscape based on your experience and observations from previous years. However, we know that weather conditions are unpredictable, can vary significantly year to year, and that temperature affects the rate at which insects develop. This means the best time to scout for and manage



Eastern tent caterpillar

individual pests will also vary year to year. You likely noticed leaf and flower buds developing early and rapidly during the recent April warm spell. These

warm temperatures sped the early development of insects as well.

Tracking the seasonal accumulation of heat units, termed Growing Degree Days (GDD), can be a

powerful tool in predicting when pests will be active and when they will be most susceptible to your control measures. The rate at which an insect develops is directly correlated with the temperatures in the surrounding environment, with warmer temperatures leading to faster development. Every insect has a lower threshold temperature (base temperature) and an upper threshold temperature, and insect development occurs only when average temperatures fall between these two thresholds.

The exact lower threshold temperature has been determined for only a fraction of the insects you will encounter, however researchers have found that assuming a

lower threshold of 50°F allows for accurate estimates for the development of most insects in NH landscapes. The estimates are not exact, but they will be much more accurate than relying on the calendar to predict pest activity.

As soon as average daily temperatures exceed 50°F in the spring, GDD begin accumulating. The average temperature is calculated by adding the day's low temperature with the day's high temperature, and dividing by 2. For example, if the low temperature on April 15 was 43°F and the high temperature that day was 59°F, the average temperature would be 51. To calculate the GDD for a single day, the baseline temperature of 50°F is subtracted from the day's average temperature. In this example, $51 - 50 = 1$ GDD accumulated. If the low temperature on April 16 was 42°F and the high temperature was 66°F, 4 GDD would be accumulated that day ($[(42 + 66) / 2 - 50 = 4]$). Each day, the GDD are added to the season's total accumulation. When the average temperature is below 50°F, and a negative number is calculated, the GDD accumulated is zero (negative values are not used).

By looking at many years of recorded GDD data, we can map on a calendar when we expect GDD milestones to be reached

in New Hampshire. This gives us a good idea of when individual pests will be active. We can further fine-tune our estimates by tracking the current year's GDD. Using current GDD, we can predict pest activity to within a narrow window of time.

UNH Extension provides resources to help you effectively use GDD in your pest management plans. UNH Extension partners with the Network for Environmental and Weather Applications (NEWA) to host a collection of weather stations across the state. The data from these weather stations is freely available online at newa.cornell.edu/. Because daily temperatures (and accumulated GDD) can vary significantly from one area of the state to another, it is best to use temperature data as local to your landscape as possible. To utilize the current accumulated GDD data available through NEWA, first find the weather station closest to your landscape on the online NEWA map. Click on the closest weather station and scroll down to 'Weather Tools'. Here, you will find a 'DD Calculator.' Within the tool, enter a start date (March 1 is recommended) and an end date (today's date).

Under 'Degree Day Type', select the base threshold of 50°F. The results will provide you with the daily and seasonal accumulations

Save the Date! NHLA's Field Day Will Be Bigger, Better

You won't want to miss the second annual NHLA Field Day on Wednesday, September 20, at the Belknap County Fairgrounds. This year we'll have more credit classes, more vendors, and more exhibitors with indoor spaces for classes and vendors.

Classes include Working Safely with Ticks, Using Drones in Landscape Design, a pair of two-hour chainsaw safety classes, a DES class on waterfront/stream permitting, and Cooperative Extension credit classes on plant identification and other topics.

We'll also build a firepit for the fairgrounds and plant a new maple tree, both for credits.

This year we are keeping attendance pricing the same: pre-registration is \$25 per person for NHLA members; \$45 for non-members. Same day, cash-only attendance is \$35 for members and \$50 for non-members.

Vendor and exhibition spaces are bigger and better this year, with indoor vending spaces available for only \$500 and outdoor spaces available for \$500 and \$800. Food vendors will be on site as well. Contact Mike Barwell, 603-491-0847, mikebarwell@yahoo.com.

See you there. Registration details will be available soon.

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of GDD for that location.

Knowing that insect development is correlated with accumulation of GDD, we can use this local data to guide our pest scouting and management activities. Several resources are available that provide lists of GDD thresholds for individual pests which indicate when we can expect these pests to be active and the range of GDD when control measures will be most effective (see The New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, UMass Extension's Landscape Message, and Cornell Extension).

As I am writing this in mid-May in Brentwood, NH, we have accumulated 153 GDD so far this season. Historically, this area reaches 150 GDD around May 25, so development is occurring just a little early at this point in the year.

Here are just a few of the landscape insect pests that become active below 250 GDD.

- Balsam Gall Midge
- Eastern Tent Caterpillar
- Spongy Moth
- Imported Willow Leaf Beetle

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Featured Plant for June

by Cori Cahow, NHCLP, Organic Garden Girl

Epimedium x versicolor 'Sulphureum'

Zone 5-9

9"-12" T & 18"-20" W

Sulphureum Barrenwort, Bishop's Hat, Fairy Wings, Horny Toad Weed



There is no secret as to why groundcovers are so important: they reduce landscape maintenance, serve as erosion control, provide options for hard-to-grow areas, and of course add biodiversity to gardens; but finding the right possibilities for a specific area can be overwhelming.

If I could recommend an easy, almost pest- and disease-free ground cover for a shady environment with dry, well drained soil it would be this hardy perennial that never seems to let us down.

Epimedium is typically a clump forming perennial, however, when massed it can create quite the border or groundcover. Spreading by rhizomes, this *Epimedium x versicolor 'Sulphureum'* roots can grow over and under existing roots, and through the rockiest soils eventually covering a foot and a half by two foot area. The delicate, airy, stems unfold to a striking, light green veined, cordate leaf with light red margins. The pale yellow flowers emerge mid-spring (late April-early May). Growing quite quick it is best to divide this perennial late summer/early fall.

The Genus Epimedium is known to have over 50 species mostly native to Asia, grows in a variety of colors, is known to have medical properties, and most importantly is resistant to deer and rabbits, making this a great option to add to your clients' landscapes. 🌱🌸🌿

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General-Use Pesticide Applicator Certification Option

by Amy Papineau, Landscape & Greenhouse Horticulture Field Specialist, UNH Extension

Becoming a licensed pesticide applicator can bring value to your business, opening new opportunities for services. UNH Extension provides classes and resources to help you prepare for the required certification exams to become either a supervisory or operational license holder.

Any business using pesticides of any type in NH is required to have at least one individual licensed at the supervisory level. If you wish to become a licensed applicator, but you don't yet have the required three years' experience working under a licensed supervisor, then the Supervisory Registration Certificate-General Use may be of interest to you. This license allows the holder

to apply lower-risk general use products in specific situations including shade tree, ornamental, or turf pest control and does not require previous experience under a supervisor. UNH Extension offers the 16 hours of classroom training required for eligibility for this certification. Once you have completed this training, you will be able to schedule your certification exams with the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food – Division of Pesticide Control.

One component of the required training is UNH Extension's "Core Training." This course provides 8 hours of instruction in safe and effective use of pesticides. Participants develop a



working knowledge of concepts such as proper use of application equipment, human and environmental hazards, protective clothing and safety equipment, state and federal pesticide laws and regulations, and principles of Integrated Pest Management.

The second required component of training is 8 hours of instruction in pesticide use topics specific to the category in which you aim to become licensed (Shade & Ornamental, Turf, Right of Way, etc). Extension offers these trainings two-three times each year, with the next opportunity to participate coming up in October/November 2023.

Once licensed, you will need to earn recertification credits to maintain that license. Credits

are often available at Twilight Meetings, conferences, and webinars. The upcoming NHLA Field Day, Sept. 20, will provide multiple opportunities to earn recertification credits. The Core and Category trainings this fall will also provide recertification credits for licensed individuals who wish to participate.

The goal of Extension's Pesticide Safety Education Program is to develop responsible, safe, and effective users of pesticide products. Contact Rachel Maccini Rachel.maccini@unh.edu 603-351-3831 for more information about the steps to becoming a licensed applicator. Contact Jacob Winn Jacob.winn@unh.edu with questions about registering for upcoming classes.

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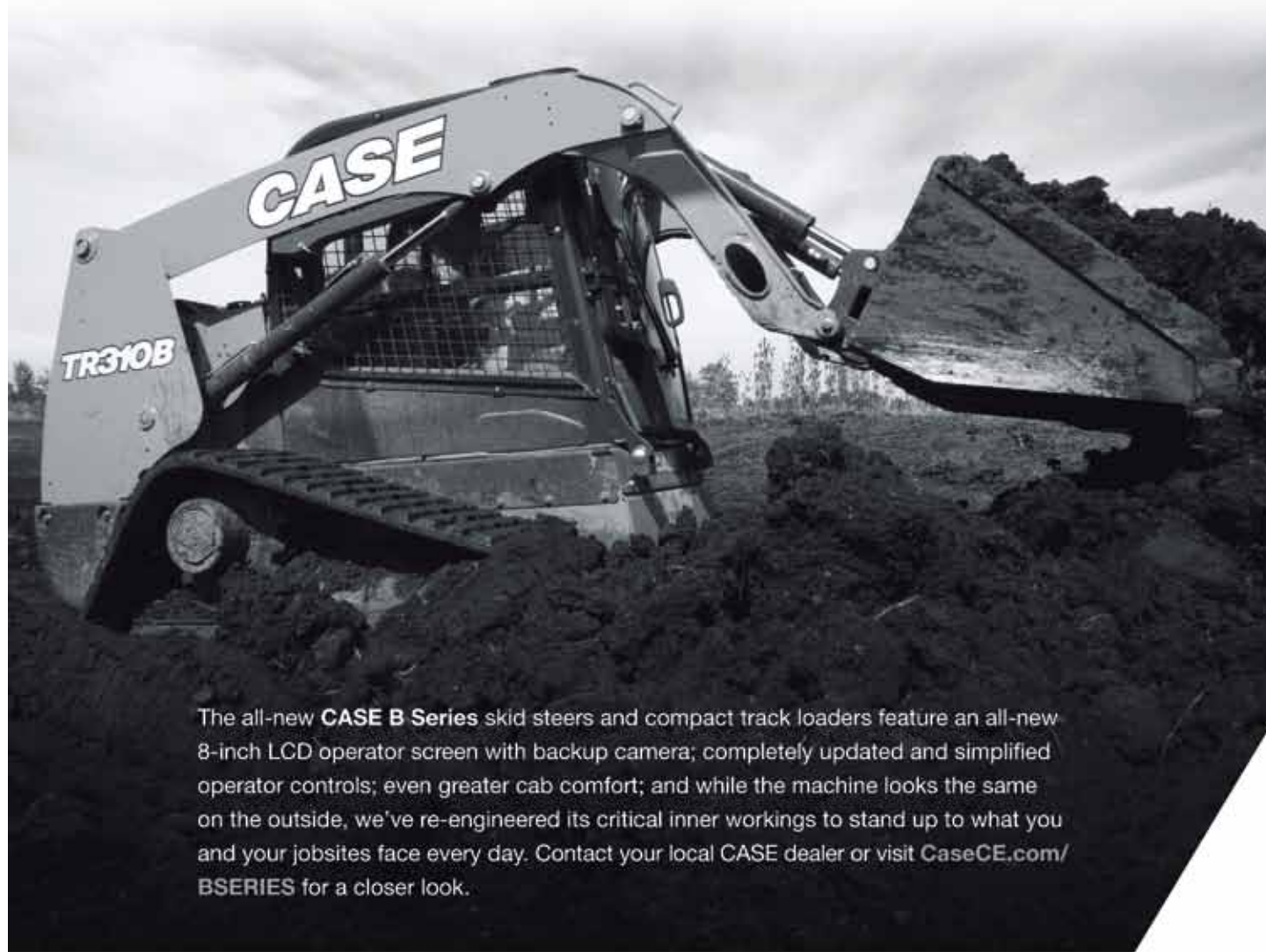
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IS THERE A "GOOD" TIME FOR TRAINING? *Continued from page 1*

training needed to also perform these installations efficiently, safely, and profitably?

I became an ICPI and NCMA instructor about 20 years ago because I saw the need for education in the hardscape industry that was just starting to really take off. Prior to then it was the Wild West and you had to figure it out on your own.

My son Tom, who owns an excavation business, just finished 3 days of training in Portsmouth on a new software program that he is implementing in his company that will help him bid more accurately. Pretty important stuff to get right when you are bidding \$500,000 jobs or \$50,000 jobs or \$5000 jobs or \$500 jobs. You won't stay in business long if you don't bid correctly. Ask Tom and he will tell you taking the time during the week out of a very

So, one of the important questions for NHLA is, when is it best to offer contractor training? Fall, winter, spring, weekday, weekend?

busy spring schedule to learn and implement this new "tool" in his business was well worth the sacrifices made.

So, one of the important questions for NHLA is, when is it best to offer contractor training? Fall, winter, spring, weekday, weekend? It was my recommendation that we do not do workshops during

the week in the spring. My sentiment is to hold the training for hardscapers on a Saturday. As you may suspect, we got push-back when it was announced that the NHLA Paver & Block Wall Installation Workshop held on May 6 would be on a Saturday. "We will be working" was the cry.

The question for you becomes, is four hours in the classroom on a Saturday worth the possible savings of hundreds of hours a year by your employees? Is taking a Saturday for training in the spring worth it in the long run? Eleven of your peers thought so.

So I ask you... when IS a good time? Email me, call me, send a message by Pony Express if you want.

— *Bill Gardocki is a past president of NHLA (1994). He is now a Hardscape Educator.*

TWILIGHT MEETINGS, *Cont'd from page 1*

Berkum Nursery in Deerfield, NH. Van Berkum's offers plants for New England woodlands, meadows, and is a nursery that provides "wicked rugged" and other ecotype plants. Join us on Wednesday, July 12, 5 pm. Our host is Van Berkum's new owner, John Gedraitis.

Twilight Meetings are free but registration is required. Watch for registration information on our website and via email and social media promotions for both Twilight Meetings. 🦋



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Pellettieri Associates (PAI) is looking for outdoor enthusiasts to join their Construction & Fine Gardening Teams! These opportunities are full-time or part-time seasonal positions and involve working on some of New Hampshire's most impressive properties. For more information, visit us at pellettieriasoc.com/employment or call 603-456-3678.

Terrain Planning and Design is seeking a creative self-starter to join our growing firm. Responsibilities will include, drawing production, permitting and project management. Current Openings: **Entry – Mid Level Landscape Designer**, 2-8 years' Experience; **Senior Level Landscape Architect**, 10+ years' Experience. Interested candidates should please respond with letter of interest, resume and portfolio to Eric Buck, at ebuck@terrainplanning.com

See current listings at: <https://nhlaonline.org/job-opportunities/>

Certification Corner

by Abby Zuidema, NHCLP Certification Coordinator

2023 NHLA Summer Plant Identification Course

The 2023 NHLA Plant ID Summer Course will meet Tuesdays, June 13 - September 12, 5-8 pm. Classes will be held at nurseries, parks, and estates in NH, central to the majority of participants. Past classes have been held in the Concord and Seacoast areas.

Over 250 woody and herbaceous plants will be reviewed in the course, roughly 18-20 plants per week. Quizzes will be held to review the identification, common name, and scientific name of the plants covered. The plant list is posted on the NHLA website.



To register, fill out the application available online and send it along with payment. Be sure to include your location preference with your application. Additional information can be found on the NHLA website.: nhlaonline.org/plant-id-summer-course/

2023 NHCLP Exam

The New Hampshire Certified Landscape Professional Exam will be held September 23, 2023. The Plant Identification and Written Portion will be offered on this date. More information on the exam and application can be found on the NHLA website, nhlaonline.org/how-to-become-certified

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The month of leaves and roses,
When pleasant sights salute the eyes,
And pleasant scents the noses...”

—Nathaniel P. Willis (1806-1867),
American author, poet, and editor

See the NHLA website for Newsletter copy and advertising deadlines:
nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter/

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Calendar

■ **JUNE 13-SEPTEMBER 12 (TUESDAYS)**

NHCLP Summer Plant ID course, see page 22

■ **JUNE 27**

NHLA Twilight Meeting, Bedrock Gardens, see page 1

■ **JULY 12**

NHLA Twilight Meeting, Van Berkum Nursery, see page 1

■ **JULY 27**

Massachusetts Nursery Association Down to Earth Summer Conference & Trade Show, Marshfield Fairgrounds, Marshfield, MA, mnl.com

■ **AUGUST 1**

SAVE THE DATE: Annual NHLA Golf Tournament, see page 9

■ **SEPTEMBER 20**

NHLA Field Day, information coming soon at nhlaonline.org and in the July Newsletter

■ **SEPTEMBER 23**

NHCLP Exam, see page 22