

January 2024

# NHLA

# NEWSletter

Vol. 40 No. 1

Informing and educating members of the Green Industry

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## Winter Opportunities to Improve Your Business

*by Amy Papineau, NHLA Education Coordinator; Landscape & Greenhouse Horticulture Field Specialist, UNH Extension*

**J**anuary Dinner Meeting — **Growing, Scaling, and Managing the Evolution of Your Business:** 1% of landscape companies in the country achieve gross sales over \$1 million. Scaling past this mark is no easy task. We've assembled a panel of owners who have scaled well above this, and they're ready to share how this was done.

Join us at the Puritan Conference Center in Manchester, NH, on Wednesday, January 17, for an evening of networking with industry colleagues at the January Dinner Meeting. Learn from a panel of local large and mid-sized landscape business owners and managers as they share insights from their experiences with growing and scaling their businesses to become the local industry leaders they are today.

*Continued on p. 15*

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ASSOCIATION

The *NHLA Newsletter* is published by the New Hampshire Landscape Association for its members, free of charge, 10 times a year.

### Memberships:

See enclosed application or the website for a membership application.

**Additional Subscriptions:** Firms desiring additional subscriptions, can purchase them at \$40.00 each. Contact Pamela Moreau.

**Editorial Submissions and Advertising:** Articles and notices for publication should be sent to Carolyn Isaak, Editor. Advertisers wishing to appear in the *NHLA Newsletter* should submit their ads to Annette Zamarchi. The editorial and advertising submissions schedule is online at [nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter](http://nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter).

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.

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## President's Notes

by Andrew Pelkey

The days are long, but the years are short... Perspective is certainly interesting. Those with kids have probably heard this saying a time or two and we all know it to be true. The same for our professional careers. In our industry the days are certainly long, and when we finally come up for air another season or in this case another year has come to a close.

January is a perfect month for reflection in your personal and professional lives. In my personal experience I let our industry get the best of me for several years dealing with a face paced growth. It took a toll on my mental and physical health. About 18 months ago, I said enough was enough, and I worked to deal with the

stress and get in better shape.

Doing so has made a tremendous difference in both my personal and professional lives. I share this with you because I know I am not alone and in hopes that maybe there are one or two of you reading this who might be inspired to do the same. My ability to perform for my family and my NPO team is drastically better than it had been prior. Without health and wellness, we can't perform to our potential.

In our operation we are reviewing next year's budget with our sales and production teams, evaluating the previous year's efficacy and how to improve. There is a saying: "If not you aren't growing, your dying." Growth doesn't need to be measured in top

line dollars. It can be measured on professional growth, team growth, and certainly bottom-line dollars. Taking the time to figure out how to squeeze more juice out of what you already have can be easier sometimes than adding to the whole.

NHLA is poised to offer you events this off season to aid in this effort. This month (January 17) we are presenting a panel discussion with local industry leaders discussing the concept of growing and scaling your business. Following that is a tentative workshop in February to help build your budget and

understand your costs to price for profit. This February event's success stems from interest if we can get enough of you on board!

I hope that you all had a great season and are looking forward to the next. Take time to evaluate and review to move forward for next season. We will continue to work hard to provide you with the resources to do so. If you have input or are looking for something we haven't offered yet, please reach out to me or any of the Board members to provide your feedback for us to take it into consideration.

Be well. 🌱

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### Educational Session Hours

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Wed., March 6 • 8am-11am & 1pm-3:30pm  
*Golf, Sports Turf, Equipment Techs. Winter Injury (11am)*  
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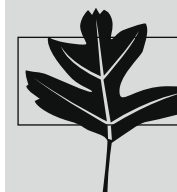
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## Letters

To the Editor,

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank Pam Moreau for her valuable service to NHLA. The role of Business Manager is possibly the most important position in the Association. The job keeps the entire Association moving, or in a stagnant condition. Pam has handled the job with dignity and respect but also has had a firm hand when needed. With her teaching background she has led many new initiatives and programs for NHLA members. She will be sorely missed.*

*Bill Gardocki*



## NHLA Welcomes...

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## Certification Corner

by Abby Zuidema, NHCLP  
Certification Coordinator

### It's time to show your Leadership in Landscape! Earn Your NH Landscape Professional Certification

New Hampshire Landscape Certified Professional (NHCLP) Exam

Date: Saturday March 2, 2024, 1-3 pm (written portion only)

Location: Millcan Nurseries

Advanced Registration Required. Applications must be received by February 24, 2024. For more information and to download the registration forms visit the NHLA website. Submit your application packet today!

#### Winter 2024 Manual Review Course:

All of the material in the NHCLP Exam comes directly from the Certification Manual, so taking the Manual Review Course is highly recommended. The course is also open to non-exam takers.

The Review Course will be offered remotely via Zoom, Tuesdays 6-8 pm. Topics are as follows:

- Jan. 30: Botany, Soils, Fertilizers, Composting
- Feb. 6: Plant Identification, Nomenclature, Hardiness, Native & Invasive Plants
- Feb. 13: Turf, Planting Instructions, Plant Maintenance, Safety
- Feb. 20: Landscape Design, Hardscape, Bidding and Estimating

Register at [nhlaonline.org/manual-review-course/](http://nhlaonline.org/manual-review-course/). Fee: \$35.00 per session or \$120 for 4 sessions.

Check out the website for more information and to register: [nhlaonline.org/how-to-become-certified/](http://nhlaonline.org/how-to-become-certified/). Contact: NHLACert@gmail.com with any questions.

#### Plant Identification Summer Course

This course consists of fourteen 3-hour sessions covering the basics of woody and herbaceous plant identification and identification of each of the plants on the NHCLP Plant Identification List.

The purpose is to teach plant materials to people who are new to the industry or people with little plant knowledge. The first class introduces students to methods of identification and plant families and the rest of the classes are spent identifying plant material. The NHCLP Plant Identification List covers a wide range of common plant materials used in the landscape industry.

The course is appropriate for anyone who wants to strengthen their plant material knowledge and is also designed to prepare people for the identification portion of the NHCLP Exam. It is open to both members of NHLA and non-members.

Over 250 woody and herbaceous plants will be reviewed in the course, roughly 18-20 plants per week. Quizzes will be held weekly to review the identification, common name, and scientific name of the plants covered. The Plant List is posted on the NHLA website at [nhlaonline.org/plan-id-summer-course/](http://nhlaonline.org/plan-id-summer-course/).

Date and time: Tuesdays, June 11-September 10, 5-8 pm



The NHLA Certification Committee would like to acknowledge the anniversaries of these NHCLPs. This achievement reflects their commitment to continued leadership, learning, and engagement in the landscape industry. We appreciate your continued leadership!

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Dave DeJohn #38  
DeJohn Landscaping LLC  
Concord, NH

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Jeffrey Meulenbroek #73  
Studley Flower Gardens  
Rochester, NH

Stephanie Sanford #75  
Belknap Landscape Co., Inc.  
Gilford, NH

#### 10 Year

Cori Cahow #133  
Organic Garden Girl  
Manchester, NH

#### 5 Year

Lisa Mitrano #154  
Barnstead, NH

John Sigmund #155  
Fox Ridge Landscaping  
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Ed Wilson #157  
University of New Hampshire  
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Emily Kallgren Macduff #159  
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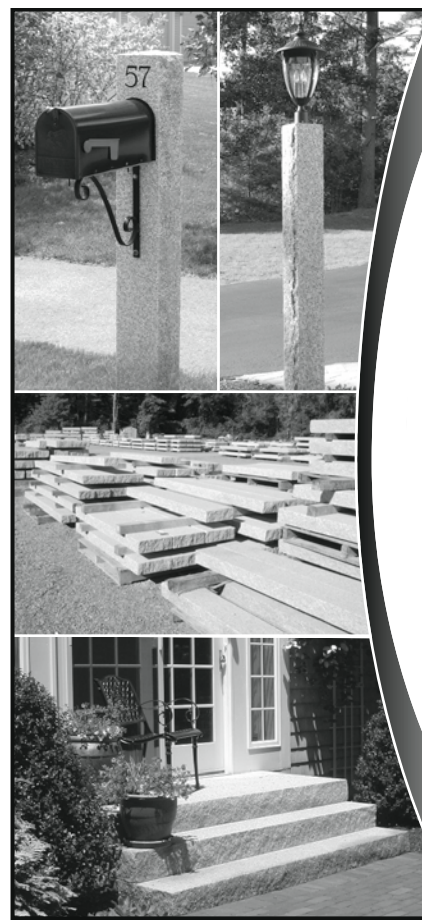
Location: NH nurseries, parks, and estates

Fee: \$525

Register by May 31, 2024. Check out the NHLA website for more information and registration: [nhlaonline.org/plan-id-summer-course/](http://nhlaonline.org/plan-id-summer-course/)

#### About the NHCLP Program

The NHCLP designation provides credibility that helps customers choose who to work with in an industry with a wide range of skills and competencies. An NHCLP must commit to continuing education to learn the latest industry developments, newest products, and best practices. They go the extra mile for their customers. ✨



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# The State of the Hardscape Industry

by Bill Gardocki

I just returned from the Mid-Atlantic Hardscape Show in Atlantic City. The attendance was up from last year. In October I attended Hardscape North America in Louisville, KY. In March the Northeast Hardscape Show will take place in Uncasville, CT, and is predicted to break records for attendance.

So, what does this all mean? I spoke to several contractors in Atlantic City and Louisville who said business was down 5-7% this year. In talking to sales reps I heard the same thing. But hey, that's down a little from a crazy upward trajectory for the last 5 or 6 years so things still look good for next year.

From what I could see, there are two things happening in the industry.

1. Large concrete paver slabs and porcelain slabs are becoming wildly popular. The product is strong and durable for our environment and more and more manufacturers are offering lines



of the product because homeowners and contractors are demanding it. There is a frenzy in the

industry for paver manufacturers to team up with or purchase porcelain companies. I talked to Phil Graves, the National Sales Manager at Daltile, and he said that he expects a doubling of growth in the general porcelain industry in the next 3-4 years. The industry stands at \$130 million in annual sales. He says that there is a clear trend for more "indoor-quality" aesthetics

for outdoor spaces. That means fancier outdoor kitchens with higher-end counter tops and backsplashes, nicer veneer products and a general blurring of the line between the indoors and the outdoors. There will also be many more innovative products in the near future from this industry. The porcelain manufacturers are looking at hardscape installers to install all these products and they

## Large concrete paver slabs and porcelain slabs are becoming wildly popular.



There is a new industry forming now of owning large suction equipment and renting out the equipment with an operator for the installation of slabs.



are ramping up their training.

2. Because slabs are becoming so popular the fear of injury to employees has greatly increased due to the increased size and weight being lifted by workers. The suction tool industry sees their tools flying off the shelves. A large suction tool lifting machine can be purchased for \$23-25K. Whether it be an attachment on an excavator or stand-alone

machine, these attachments not only reduce employee injury but can reduce crew size in a very tight labor market.

There is a new industry forming now of owning large suction equipment and renting out the equipment with an operator for the installation of slabs. Many will do this for a square foot or daily price. I have seen a good operator and one laborer (who never

touches the slabs) install 2000 square feet in five hours or less. Think about it. Pavers and slabs are getting larger and heavier. These tools save employee backs, knees, and fingers. Landscaping is laborious so anything we can do to reduce strain and injury needs to be seriously considered.

The winter months are a good time to evaluate your business and equipment needs for the upcoming

season. The industry looks like it will be strong again in 2024. You may want to consider how the latest trend of porcelain slab and large concrete paver slab installations may play a part in your business. 🦋

— Bill Gardocki is a past president of NHLA (1994 & 1995). He is now a hardscape educator.



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## NHLA Winter Educational Opportunities, Continued from page 1

Details and registration at [nhlaonline.org](http://nhlaonline.org). Email Education Committee Coordinator, Amy Papineau, with questions, [amy.papineau@unh.edu](mailto:amy.papineau@unh.edu).

### J.R. Huston Consulting, Inc. Seminar Understand your Costs – Price for Profit!

The NHLA Education Committee is thrilled to bring Green Industry consultant, Jim Huston, to New Hampshire on February 7 for an in-depth, full-day hands-on seminar, that will help you develop or fine-tune an effective estimating system for your business. The seminar, held at North Point Outdoors in Derry, NH, is based on the speaker's books, *How to Price Landscape & Irrigation Projects* and *A Critical Analysis of the MORS Estimating System*.

The six most common methods of estimating used in the market today will be discussed in depth, including detailed explanation of the key principles involved in:

- The estimating budget process
- Calculating and controlling equipment costs
- Calculating labor burden and average wages
- Measuring, allocating, and controlling general and administrative overhead costs
- Reviewing a bid
- Determining general conditions costs in a bid
- Understanding market predisposition
- Understanding the six most common methods of estimating used in the market today

To get the most out of this workshop, we encourage participation by firm owners/managers AND their accounts manager. In order to offer this seminar, we will need at least 20 participating companies. Please join us! Details and registration at [nhlaonline.org](http://nhlaonline.org). Email Education Committee Coordinator, Amy Papineau, with questions, [amy.papineau@unh.edu](mailto:amy.papineau@unh.edu).

### Joint Meeting of NHAA, NHLA, and UNH Extension

The NH Arborists Association (NHAA) holds an annual meeting in March of each year. This year, NHAA has invited NHLA to partner in offering a March meeting that brings members of both associations together to build relationships while learning about the latest in tree and landscape topics. The full-day event takes place at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, NH on Tuesday, March 19, 2024.

Sessions include updates about current and emerging tree pests and diseases, shoreland protection rules, ANSI standards, and OSHA regulations, construction planning and damage mitigation, technological innovation in site analysis, right plant/right place, and integrated landscape design.

Join us as we build connections across associations. Vendors, door prizes, food, and credits included!

Details and registration at [nhlaonline.org](http://nhlaonline.org). Email Education Committee Coordinator, Amy Papineau, with questions, at [amy.papineau@unh.edu](mailto:amy.papineau@unh.edu).



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Please check appropriate areas:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arborist                | <input type="checkbox"/> Educator                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Gardening          | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Center                 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architect     | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Construction        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Designer      | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Lighting            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn Maintenance        | <input type="checkbox"/> Licensed Pesticide Applicator |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale Nursery       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale Supplier            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____             |  |

Would you be willing to serve on an NHLA Committee?  
 Yes  No



### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY APPLYING FOR:

(Please check one.)

- MEMBER (1 year):** Someone actively engaged in the landscape industry or allied professions or industries. **Annual Dues: \$175.00**
- MEMBER (3 Years):** Someone actively engaged in the landscape industry or allied professions or industries. **Dues: \$475.00**
- STUDENT MEMBER:** Full-time student of horticulture-related studies. **Annual Dues: \$40.00**

A renewal notice will be sent to you when your membership is near expiration.

I hereby apply for membership and I agree to abide by the By-Laws established by the New Hampshire Landscape Association.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Please detach and return application to:  
 Pamela Moreau, NHLA Business Manager  
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*Address Service Requested*

“I wonder if the snow *loves* the trees and fields, that it kisses them so gently? And then it covers them up snug, you know, with a white quilt; and perhaps it says, ‘Go to sleep, darlings, till the summer comes again.’”

— Lewis Carroll, English author, poet, mathematician, and photographer (1832-1898)

See the NHLA website for Newsletter copy and advertising deadlines:  
[nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter/](http://nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter/)

New  
Hampshire  
LANDSCAPE  
ASSOCIATION

# Calendar

■ **JANUARY 17**

NHLA January Dinner Meeting: *Growing, Scaling, and Managing the Evolution of your Business*, see page 1

■ **JANUARY 30 TO FEBRUARY 20 (TUESDAYS)**

NHLA Winter NHCLP Manual Review Course, see page 7

■ **FEBRUARY 6**

Genest Bootcamp, Italian Heritage Center, Portland, ME, see page 16 and [genestconcrete.com](http://genestconcrete.com)

■ **FEBRUARY 7**

Special NHLA Event: *Estimating System Overview*, see page 15

■ **FEBRUARY 8**

Genest Bootcamp, Regatta Banquet Center, Eliot, ME, see page 16 and [genestconcrete.com](http://genestconcrete.com)

■ **FEBRUARY 21-22**

30th ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace, online virtual conference, [ecolandscaping.org/](http://ecolandscaping.org/)

■ **MARCH 2**

NHCLP Exam, see page 7

■ **MARCH 5-7**

New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show, see page 4

■ **MARCH 19**

NHAA, NHLA, UNH Extension Joint Meeting, see page 15