



North Coast Journal

CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



Dinner Meeting

Tuesday
Sept. 17th
6:00 PM
Palms Grill
Petaluma

SOIL, ORGANICS & THE PLANET

Speaker: Will Bakx

- ~ SB 1383, Short-Lived Climate Pollutants: Organic Waste Methane Emissions Reductions Bill
- ~ Carbon Farming and Sequestration
- ~ How the landscape industry can make contributions to reversing the impacts of Climate Change
(See more info on the presentation and speaker on page 2)

~ Construction Training ~ SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 14TH

Saturday Class Includes:
**Instrument & Grading
Equipment, Escavators & Tractors
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Plan Reading & Layout**



Sign-up deadline is September 6th
Call Connie for more info (707) 217-2139
(Application can be found on page 11)

NORTH COAST CHAPTER EVENTS

September 14th.....Final Training of the Year -Construction @ Buckeye Ranch in Petaluma
September 17thDinner Meeting on Organics with soil guru Will Bakx



More Info from our September Speaker, Will Bakx



Will Bakx started composting in 1982 at Sonoma State University as student manager of the Ecological Food Production Garden. In 1985 he launched Bennett Valley Farm Compost, processing various agricultural and fish industry discards.

In 1993 he started the Sonoma county-wide yard debris composting program as Sonoma Compost Company (SCC). He has diverted over 1,800,000 tons of organics from the landfill, creating high quality mulches and composts allowed for organic food production, including biodynamic® composts.

Currently, Will is working as compost consultant and is a principal in Renewable Sonoma, a rebirth of Sonoma Compost which includes anaerobic digestion. **His educational focus is on creating healthy soils and carbon farming as a tool to mitigate climate change.** He is the adjunct compost instructor at the Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) and serves as chair of the SRJC Sustainable Agriculture Advisory Committee.

He also serves on the US Compost Council Compost Training Committee and is a co-instructor for its Compost Operator's Training week. He is the co-founder and chair of the California Organics Recycling Council (CORC) and the executive board member of the California Compost Coalition (CCC).

Will earned a BA in Environmental Studies from Sonoma State University and an MS in Soil Science from U.C. Berkeley.

Meeting Discussion Points for Tuesday September 17th

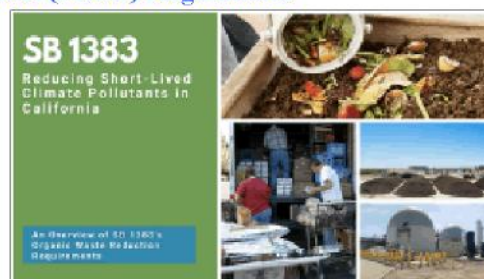


~ **How the landscape industry can make contributions to reversing impact of Global Climate Change**

~ **Carbon Sequestration**

~ **Discussion of SB 1383 – Organic Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCP) Regulations**

The world stands at the brink of impacts from global climate change that will affect the future of mankind. The landscape industry has the opportunity to make great contributions in reversing these impacts. We will discuss SB 1383, Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCP): Organic Waste Methane Emissions Reductions bill as well as Carbon Gardening.



Discussion of SB 1383. This bill requires a 50% reduction of organic materials going into landfills by 2020 and a 75% reduction by 2025 compared to 2014 levels. Yard debris is a large fraction of the diversion needed and commercial landscape projects will be held accountable for diversion. This organics diversion will lead to more organic soil amendments available to the industry.

Talk about the way we use these organic soil amendments matters as well. **We can manage our soils in ways that we take atmospheric carbon and lock this carbon long-term into the soil.** We will need to use our soil amendments wisely and plant appropriately to grow soil carbon. This is carbon sequestration through which we remove atmospheric carbon, reversing impacts from climate change, while creating healthy soils for a resilient, water conserving landscape.



President's Message

Vision (From the State Mission and Vision Statement)

"The California Landscape Contractors Association members will be recognized by the public as the best qualified professionals of the landscape industry."

Fall Welcome

For the landscape September is the start of a new year. *Planning for fall* plantings, getting soil work done before the rain, bulb and bare root orders, lawn renovations and many other tasks take place as the weather cools. It is also a time when the pace slows, and we can think about future projects and procedures.

When planning for next year consider improving your company's sustainability. **Sustainability** is less fuel, less fertilizer, less water and containing the products we put into a landscape on site. Huge improvements in sustainability have been made in the past 10 years by better manufacturing, more product choices, better design and higher jobsite awareness. Remaining challenges are vehicle and equipment emissions, site runoff, and irrigation improvements on older sites. The CLCA is offering a Sustainable Summit Oct 15 in Alameda that should help us improve our carbon footprint. Check out CLCA.org for event details.

This month at our September meeting on September 17 we will be talking about organic gardening techniques and moving toward an organic maintenance program, led by AJ de Lopez & Will Bakx. Come on down and get some tips or share your experiences.

Lou Penning

Lou Penning – *President, North Coast Chapter of CLCA*
Lou Penning Landscape



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Keeping your Bamboo Fire Safe in Wildland/Urban Interfaces

As climate change makes wildfire disasters more common in California, particularly in wildland/urban interfaces, it is more important than ever to mitigate fire danger in your landscape. With bamboo, proper placement and maintenance are key to fire safety. There is a lot of misinformation being spread about the flammability of bamboo, and we would like to dispel the myth that bamboo is a fire hazard.

As experts in our field, we would like to clarify that *bamboo itself is not a fire hazard*. Live bamboo canes are made up of cellulose, hemicellulose, lignin, unusually high amounts of silica, and water.¹ In addition, bamboo contains very few volatile oils. In fact, live bamboo is very hard to ignite, even with direct flame. While it is true that even well-maintained bamboo will burn eventually if engulfed in hot flames, it is no worse than many other landscape plants (and better than most)! So it is instead *improper placement and maintenance*, not the plant itself, that we should be concerned about.



Pleioblastus viridistriatus
'Chrysophyllus'

Proper maintenance consists of regularly removing dead canes, clearing out dead leaves and culm sheaths, and properly watering so that bamboo doesn't dry out and die. As you know, bamboo is a natural approach to privacy screening and is a wonderful living alternative to wood fencing. Dry wood will burn easily during a natural fire disaster. Contrarily, live bamboo, which lacks volatile oils and has a high silica and water content, is much harder to ignite.

Because each individual culm can live for up to 10 years, there is not a big turnover of culms, unless you have neglected to regularly dead-cane your bamboo. If done once per year, the work is minimal. However, if your clump, hedge or grove has not been maintained for many years, the first time can indeed be a chore! Thinning dead or crowded canes will not only reduce fire danger, but will maintain your access and greatly beautify your bamboo.

You will need a sharp pruning saw or sawzall with a pruning blade. For safety, take care to cut straight across and as close to the ground as possible, and consider wearing protective eye gear when you are working within a hedge or grove to prevent eye injuries. Generally, the best time to prune is the fall and winter, or after new shoots have hardened, branched and leafed out.

In some situations it is advisable to prune the bottom branches off of each culm so that they do not become a "fire ladder", carrying flames up into the tree canopy or any nearby structures. This also exposes the beautiful structural quality of bamboo. How high you prune the branches depends on the size of your bamboo, aesthetics and screening needs, and proximity of other flammable items.

While you are pruning, it is a good time to pull out and rake away any accumulated dead material around the base of your bamboo, or alternatively, cover dead leaves with a thick layer of nutritious compost or decomposed mulch. This will conserve water, improve your soil quality, and add nutrients to your bamboo, while making the dead leaves less available to embers. This is also the time to check your root barrier edge (if you have one) to be sure it is not buried or otherwise compromised.

Regarding the *placement* of bamboo, and all landscaping plants for that matter, fire-safe organizations recommend planting only succulents in the zone 3-5 feet, or in some situations 10 feet, from the walls of your house. This makes sense, since you don't want a fire ladder of any kind tucked under your eaves.

Outside of that inner zone, the appropriateness of bamboo should be considered on a case by case basis, as there are so many factors to consider, such as species selection, topography, evacuation routes, and nearby structures or forest canopy. We are eager to work with homeowners and fire officials to further develop sound placement and maintenance guidelines.

Ironically, given the recent climate change driven fire danger in California and the emergence of local vegetation management ordinances, bamboo sequesters carbon from the atmosphere and produces 35% more oxygen and consumes 4 times more carbon than an equivalent stand of trees. It is highly effective for erosion control and can be used to quickly replenish damaged landscapes after fire, flood, earthquake or other disasters. In short, in the event of a natural disaster, bamboo can greatly help to restore the landscape.

In closing, we ask that if you hear of any rumors about new vegetation management ordinances that ban bamboo in your community, please let us know. Instead of bans that require the entire removal of bamboo, we are advocating for proper maintenance and placement. In addition, we are willing to lend our expertise to educate the public, policymakers, and fire officials about how to keep bamboo fire safe.

Joe Ruffato and Jennifer York
Owners

Seasonal Bamboo Care Tips

- Check the function of your irrigation systems.
- **Water, Water, Water!** Keep in mind - if your leaves resemble hard taco shells, they are not getting enough water!
- Prune out dead canes and clear away any flammable dead leaves and culm sheaths (*see article below*).
- Fertilize with a 15-15-15 standard blend or a 16-6-8 "lawn food" blend.
- Mulch with compost. We do not advise using wood chips, since wood can deplete the nitrogen level in the soil, interfering with bamboo nutrient uptake.



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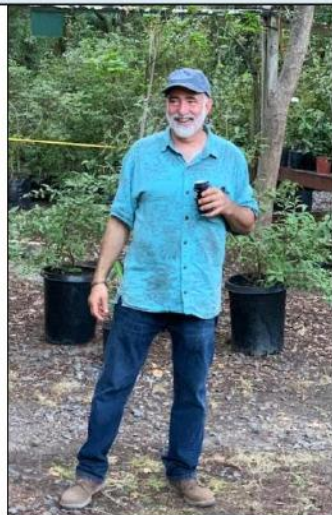
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August Dinner Meeting @ Sonoma Horticultural Gardens & Nursery



Above left: New owner, **Mike Boss**, was very proud to relate the history of this 7½ acre botanical wonderland in Sebastopol! *Center:* Tacos and local Craft Beers were consumed under the Dawn Redwood forest. *Above right:* Daniel Levy of Gardeners' Guild chats with Mike Desmond from Golden Eagle Distributors and Bill Beatie of Horizon.



Clockwise from above right: Nancy & Jim Dibble from Dibble Landscaping swing and visit with Chris Zaim of Akita Landscape.
The bridge over the bog area, complete with giant ferns and Gunnera Tinctoria.
Mike Boss leads the group through the numerous pathways and points out some of the special plantings.
Chris Stewart takes a little forest stroll with his adorable one year old, Roland.
A peek through the trees at the spring fed pond reflecting the last of the sun's light on the treetops.



North Coast Chapter CLCA

APPLICATION FOR TRAINING

Third Training of the Year

September 14, 2019.....Construction Training

8:00 AM – 3:00 PM (Check-in is at 7:00 AM)

The North Coast Chapter CLCA education committee is proud to be offering more valuable training again this year. Thanks to Kim & Tony Bertotti for allowing us to use Buckeye Ranch for these hands-on classes.

▶ APPLICATION DEADLINE for IRRIGATION is September 4, 2019

This is an all-day event and attendees are required to arrive 7:00 AM the day of the training to sign in. They should also have with them work clothes and the hand tools they use in their every workday practice.

These hands-on field Seminars will be held at Bertotti Landscaping in Petaluma:

◆ Buckeye Ranch - 2425 Adobe Road - Petaluma on the following Saturday◆

- This Saturday Class Includes: Instrument & Grading Equipment, Escavator & Tractor Pavers Plan Reading & Layout

Table with 3 columns: September 14th, 2019, Construction, (INCLUDES LUNCH). Rows for Company Name, Employee Name(s), and \$85.00 Per Person.

Discounts TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

- 1. Companies enrolling candidates in any three seminars need only pay \$75 (can't be used in addition to trainer discount). This is the last scheduled training of 2019 at this time.
2. If your company supplies a trainer on any of these days, then you receive a 25% discount on final total. If you are interested in volunteering as a trainer, please contact Henry Buder @ (415) 686-9228

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Sweet Lane Wholesale Nursery Elevates their North Coast Chapter Partnership Status to Platinum Level

by *Connie Salinas*

Even way before our chapter instituted the formal Partnership Program as we know it today, Sweet Lane Wholesale Nursery, was an 'unofficial partner'. Over the 20 years I have been with the North Coast Chapter, they have always sponsored Award categories, provided plants for the Awards Banquet, donated wine to our events, hosted meetings and lighting seminars on their grounds and even provided a hayride at one of our dinners there. Not to mention the gatherings we have had at Sweet Lane around one of the largest firepits in the Sonoma County!!!

We are always eternally grateful for all that Sweet Lane has done to support our chapter over the years. **Many thanks to Ed Grossi, Susie Sweet & Joe Hadley for always being there for us!!!**

So now they have decided to increase their partnership level from Gold to Platinum status. The success of our chapter is based in this kind of support from our Associate Members and the participation in the Partners program as well as advertising in our monthly North Coast Journal.

THANKS SWEET LANE!!!



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The foundation stones for a balanced success are honesty, character, integrity, faith, love and loyalty.

~ Zig Ziglar

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— Craig Strong, Human Resources Director, California Employers Association



clca.org/store



Why have 500m bees died in Brazil in the past three months?

by Thor Hanson – *The Guardian*



The likely culprit of the sudden deaths? The loosening of pesticide restrictions

While thousands of fires roar and crackle through the Amazon rainforest, Brazil faces a quieter tragedy playing out in farm country: the silence of empty hives. Earlier this year, beekeepers reported losing over 500m honeybees in only three months. The speed and scale of the die-offs recall colony collapse disorder, a malady that began decimating bees across North America and Europe in 2006.

But the symptoms are tellingly different. Where colony collapse caused worker bees to abandon their hives and disappear, the bees in Brazil are dropping dead on the spot. And where scientists blamed colony collapse on a combination of factors, the evidence in Brazil points to one overarching cause: pesticides.

The parallels between Brazil's Amazon crisis and its bee die-offs are many. Just as the relaxation of forestry rules has led to more fires, so have loosened pesticide restrictions exposed more bees to lethal doses. Nearly 300 new products have been fast-tracked for approval since the beginning of the year, including known bee-killers banned or strictly regulated in other countries. And just as burning a rainforest impacts a lot more than trees, so does the loss of bees stretch far past the walls of the hive.

Depending on how you parse the numbers, bee-pollinated crops account for as much as a third of the food in the human diet. Yields of everything from canola to soybeans drop in their absence, while fruits and nuts like blueberries and almonds depend upon them entirely. Beyond agriculture, scientists can only guess at the scale of the problem, but the situation begs a troubling question. If colonies nurtured and tended by professional beekeepers are dying, then what is the fate of bees in the wild?

When we think of bees, our minds turn immediately to the one species we know best – the domestic honeybee. Their hives have been a buzzing part of our farms for at least 4,000 years, longer than such familiar crops as apples, oats, peas, and coffee. But honeybees are just the tip of the iceberg. Our landscapes abound with wild bees too – diggers, miners, masons, wool-carders, leafcutters, bumblebees, and more. Estimates put the total number of bee species above 20,000, more than all the world's birds and mammals combined. Many of them are also essential pollinators, of crops as well as the native plants at the heart of ecosystems from tropical forests to mountain meadows. And while most wild bees have never been studied in detail, we know they're vulnerable to the same chemical threats as honeybees. So whenever domestic hives start failing, it signals a much broader problem in nature.

The challenges facing Brazil's bees, as well as its forests, boil down in part to bad policy. But that doesn't let anyone off the hook, because in a democracy government policy amounts to an expression of collective will. And Brazil is hardly the only democratic country where environmental protections are wavering. Recent moves in the United States have shrunk wilderness areas and weakened the Endangered Species Act, not to mention promoting the use of pesticides in National Wildlife Refuges and re-approving sulfoxaflo, a product banned in 2015 specifically for its toxicity to bees.

Yes, we should demand better from our leaders, but we should also demand better from ourselves – at the ballot box and beyond. Buried in recent news coverage on Brazil is a remarkable uptick in the demand for

Continued on next page.....

.....*Brazilian Bees continued*

organic foods, reflecting a global trend expected to double sales and production in less than five years. It's a reminder that how we buy food directly impacts the way that we grow it, and organic methods – even if interspersed with conventional fields – support a far greater diversity of pollinators. But to help bees more directly (or when organics are unaffordable), it's possible to take steps even closer to home through the simple act of planting flowers. Pesticide-free sources of nectar and pollen can increase bee abundance in any habitat, from urban window boxes to city parks, backyard gardens, and even roadside verges. And since well-fed bees are more resilient to other threats, flowers can even be a hedge against pesticides.

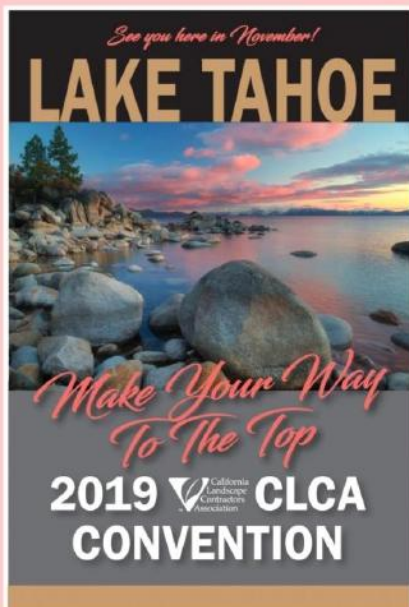
Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* gave the environmental movement its most enduring metaphor, a world without birdsong. But she also warned of blossoms without the drone of bees, and there are landscapes where that vision is already becoming too close to the truth. The good news is that bee declines, like deforestation, are preventable tragedies. The first step is taking notice. Now it's time for action.

- Thor Hanson is the author of *Buzz: The Nature and Necessity of Bees*, which is new in paperback from Basic Books on September 3



CLCA 2019 Convention in Lake Tahoe November 13-16

Learn! Engage! Relax! Enjoy!

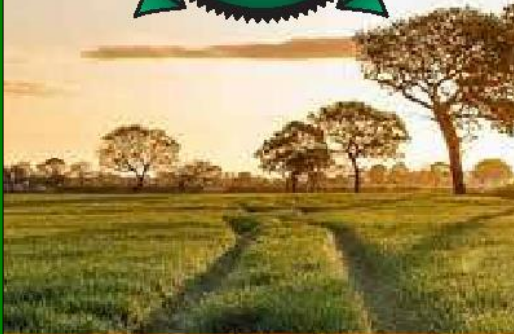


Plan now to make your way to the top! Mix play with work as this year's convention focuses on the inspirational and practical knowledge you need for cultivating your team and propelling your business ahead!

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LANDSCAPES UNLIMITED NURSERY

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David Letterman Quotes

- Next in importance to having a good aim is to recognize when to pull the trigger.
- Fall is my favorite season in Los Angeles, watching the birds change color and fall from the trees.
- USA Today has come out with a new survey - apparently, three out of every four people make up 75% of the population.
- New York... when civilization falls apart, remember, we were way ahead of you.
- There is a new billboard outside Time Square. It keeps an up-to minute count of gun-related crimes in New York. Some goofball is going to shoot someone just to see the numbers move.
- Traffic signals in New York are just rough guidelines.
- I cannot sing, dance or act; what else would I be but a talk show host.
- Here's a little known fact - Arnold is the first body builder to run for governor since Janet Reno.
- New York now leads the world's great cities in the number of people around whom you shouldn't make a sudden move.
- Tip to out-of-town visitors: If you buy something here in New York and want to have it shipped home, be suspicious if the clerk tells you they don't need your name and address.
- Television: A medium. So called because it is neither rare nor well done.
- Fine art and pizza delivery: what we do falls neatly in between.
- I was Christmas shopping and ran into a guy on the street. I noticed his watch and said that it runs slow. He said, "So does the guy I stole it from."



Landscapes Unlimited is a wholesale nursery located 3 miles west of downtown Petaluma, California. We offer over 800 varieties of landscaping plants in 1 through 15 gallon sizes. If we don't have what you need, we will special order it for you.

Landscapes Unlimited has been in business since 1981 and has a reputation of supplying beautiful and healthy plants. Our staff has an average of almost 20 years experience in the industry and is very knowledgeable about plants and the climates they tolerate.