

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Shade keeps money in your wallet. Green is the thing.
- Certified technicians working at Apex.
- Award winners. ILCA has 2 awards for maintenance and construction
- New employee
- Spaghetti Bake

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Ahhhh.....SPRING!

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

APRIL | 2009

Another Winter Gone

By Bob Atwater

Winters Gone Bad

Wow!!! These two above average winters in a row have left us all a little snow weary at best and all of us are looking forward to the return of spring. These long and snowy winters remind me of those infamous Chicago winters of the 1970s when.... Oh wait I was only two years old! I only know about them from the tall tales I hear but as they say, history, even weather history seems to repeat itself. We'll all have to wait and see how this one ends and wonder how bad it might be next

winter. Enough of this, let's all say "hello" to SPRING!!!



Rubio, Spanish word meaning blonde, the new office puppy. We call him Rubio.

We have a lot of exciting news and information in this year's Spring Newsletter so please take the time and look through it. It has been a busy winter season here at Apex Landscaping

including receiving an ILCA Silver Award, CLT certification of our Operations Manager and Construction Manager, and even having a new puppy in the office. Despite a challenging economic environment we remain poised to grow and further our ability to provide you with a high quality and affordable product. As always, we value your patronage and continued support. Good or bad we always welcome your comments. Call or email us, we would like to hear from you. Happy Spring!!!!!!!

We have two CLTs...What is that?

By Bob Atwater

What is a CLT and what does it mean for the client?

The Illinois Landscape Contractors Association, in an effort to further professionalize our industry, has joined forces with PLANET, a national organization that develops con-

tinuing education and training programs for the landscape industry and now offers the Certified Landscape Technician Program to its member companies. This rigorous multiple part training and certification program ensures that members are qualified and up-to-date on

landscape industry practices.

In an effort to provide the best service to our customers, Apex Landscaping now has two CLTs. Jack Sheehan, Operations' Manager is now certified in Lawn and Ornamental Maintenance, while Construction Manager Dave (Cont. on pg. 2)

GOING GREEN

By Dave Jendras, CLT



In an effort to further our commitment to environmental concerns, we are implementing a waste recycling program at our Northbrook facility. This will primarily consist of collecting office and shop related recyclable waste as well as encouraging our employees to separate recyclables gathered during the course of their work out in the field as much as possible.

Further, we have started to use our GPS sys-

tems installed in our vehicles to analyze our maintenance routes and have found some more efficient route scheduling which will help lower our fuel usage. This is yet another effort which not only helps the environment but our costs as well.

Also, we are now offering organic based fertilizer and pesticide options where possible. While there can be an increased expense to these options, we feel it is essential that we offer these

services to our customers.

Lastly, we ask that you send us your email addresses and urge you to use our website, www.apexlandscaping.com, to further reduce our use of paper in the course of our customer communication. We are committed to being an environmentally responsible company and look forward to expanding our "green" footprint wherever possible.

Economy got your wallet?

By Bob Atwater

"electricity usage and costs will be 11.4 percent less if a house has just 17.5 percent heavy shade coverage."

With everyone trying to save money, maybe you should have a landscape evaluation with one of our professionals. Often times we notice things during our inspections that may help save you money. We can recommend installing trees for shading or foundation plantings like an evergreen hedge to cut the cold north winds in the winter. Even relocating

obstructing shrubs from around your heat and mechanicals can help lower energy costs over time. According to Professor David Laband in the Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences "electricity usage and costs will be 11.4 percent less if a house has just 17.5 percent heavy shade coverage. This is compared to a house with no

shade". Care for these trees is akin to protecting your investment. The addition of a shredded bark mulch will go a long way in helping to maintain a healthy landscape.

Sometimes sprinkler systems are broken and waste a great deal of water, which you pay for, so let us take a look. Simply adjusting the frequency for less often (continued on page 3)

CLT continued....

CLT
Insignia



Jendras recently completed his certification in Hardscape and Softscape Installation.

"It was a more complete and thorough examination than I anticipated," Sheehan noted. "I like the fact that it will also require me to attend and complete

classes and seminars throughout the year to remain certified." Both agreed it is good for the landscape industry as a whole to have certification like these. "Let's face it, a lot of people don't know what they are doing and have no interest in this. It will help all the companies that have a history and commitment to

quality to get their employees certified," Jendras added.

Look for Apex Landscaping to continue and expand its involvement with programs like these to better provide our customers with knowledgeable and professional employees.

ILCA Awards us with Silver



Apex Landscaping Wins ILCA Silver Award!!

We are proud to announce that we have received two awards from the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association for projects completed in 2008!! At a March landscape industry event, a 2009 Silver Award for Residential Landscape Construction and an Honorable Mention for Residential Landscape Maintenance for a private residence in Glencoe were presented to Robert Atwater and

Apex Landscaping Inc. "It always feels good to be recognized for a job well done," Atwater stated. Never one to look back, he added, "but now I am focused on which projects we can submit for next year's award ceremony." Awards are given to only a small percentage of submitted entries and this helps further establish our reputation for excellence within the landscape industry.

"It always feels good to be recognized for a job well done"

Welcome Dave Jendras

By Jack Sheehan, CLT

In the spring of 2008, a new member was added to the Apex Landscaping team. Dave Jendras was hired to take on the many duties that are associated with the construction end of the business. He had been working for another landscape company since 1992 throughout the Chicagoland area. With his 16+ years of experience in landscaping, Dave brings along a lot of

energy, enthusiasm, and knowledge. His knowledge of the many aspects of landscaping was recently tested as Dave passed the 19 tests necessary to receive his CLT (Certified Landscape Technician) from the Illinois Landscape Contractors' Association. Dave enjoys learning about the green industry and attends seminars throughout the year to continue his landscape educa-

tion. "The more I learn, the more I can educate our crews and our clientele on a plethora of landscape issues," Dave recently said. With a year at Apex under his belt, Dave is looking forward to helping Apex grow and become the best in the industry. His experience thus far at Apex? "Two thumbs up!" exclaims Dave.



Economy Cont.

but deeper watering can save both water and money, helping your pocketbook and the environment at the same time.

Rain water harvesting and green roof technology are other new and exciting systems we are now offering. These can produce a significant reduction in water and energy use in both large and small applications. The natural rain which can be redi-

rected into underground or above ground storage can later be used to water plants, filling your pond or even washing your car. Green roofs can lessen both heating and cooling costs by using the otherwise wasted energy of the sun and also help sequester greenhouse gases into the root zones of the plant material used.

Lowering your consumption of energy over time is a

sound way to lower your energy bills and save money long term to help get this economy rolling again. Not only will money be saved, but all of these actions will help the environment.



Chicago City Hall's Green Roof



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Mosquito Treatment For Your Outdoors

Last summer I found out that an acquaintance of mine owns a mosquito control business. He mentioned that it is guaranteed to work and it will protect the entire yard for up to ten days. I didn't believe it so I tried it myself last year and amazingly, it does work! They can treat all areas of your property or partial areas. The treatment is safe for your family and pets. The spray was actually developed to treat ants around the house and ticks in animals. It is not absorbed through the skin and is environmentally safe. **SKEETER BEATERS** is the name of the company and they service properties in all of the Chicagoland area regardless of size. If interested, call us at the office and we will provide you with some pricing. They offer many different packages. With the threats of west Nile from mosquitos and lyme disease from ticks, it's a great solution to a potential problem.

We're on the web
www.apexlandscaping.com

Spaghetti Bake

This is a great recipe that is easy to make. It is great for families and leftovers.

Ingredients

- 1 LB Vermicelli
- 1 1/2 C Sharp Cheddar
- 1 1/2 C Colby
- 1 1/2 C Monterey Jack
- 1 1/2 C White Cheddar
- 2 LB's Ground Sirloin
- 1 Pkg Italian Sausage (ground or diced)
- 1 Diced Onion
- 1 Diced Green Pepper
- 1 Large Can Stewed Tomatoes

Sauce Seasonings

- Dash of hot sauce
- 1/2 T Seasoned salt or to taste
- 1 T BBQ Sauce
- 1/2 T Pepper or to taste
- 1/2 T Garlic Powder or to taste
- 1 T Ketchup
- 1/2 Cup Parmesan Cheese



Fresh spaghetti

Cook vermicelli al dente, set aside. In a large frying pan, brown sirloin and Italian sausage with onion, add seasonings and simmer for 30 minutes.

Layer ingredients in a deep 10x14 baking dish with the pasta on the bottom followed by the sauce and finally the cheese. Bake in the oven 30-40 minutes till cheese is browned at 350 degrees. Cut in 2-3" squares and enjoy!!!!