

Contractors Newsletter

Issue 1 - Spring 2009

HORTICULTURAL TRADES ASSOCIATION
landscapeontario.com



Welcome

Landscape Ontario, at least the working bones of our trade organization, is comprised of 10 sector groups: Contractors, Designers, Garden Centres, Grounds Management, Growers, Interior Landscaping, Irrigation, Lighting, Lawn Care and Snow and Ice. Our mission is to raise awareness for the environmental, economic, and lifestyle benefits of gardens and green spaces. Our ultimate goal is to Landscape Ontario. This is the first in a series of newsletters for the Contractors group.

My name is Arthur Skolnik and I became a landscape contractor in Montreal in 1982. In 1988 my wife Barbara and I moved to Toronto. I joined LO in the mid '90's and have sat on the Contractors Group board for 4 or 5 years. My business partner, Dave Power and I formed Alliance Landscape Contractors last year. Previous to that I owned Shibui Landscaping and he owned The Deck Builders.

We are a group of approximately 10 volunteers, (business owners, top employees and several LO staff members). We meet 4-6 times a year (at LO in Milton and during Congress at the Doubletree Hotel) to discuss a wide range of topics and determine their direction and outcome. For example, we are involved with Canada Blooms (feature garden selection, judging), Toronto Chapter Lecture Series, Awards of Excellence, city permits, human resource issues, business development, mediation services, consumer protection, etc. Meetings usually last 1 ½ - 2 hours and lunch is provided. We'd also like to have contractors from any other sector group attend, to contribute to our discussions and report back to their respective

groups. Sometimes research or further discussion on a particular topic is necessary because we can't always resolve every issue every time we meet. A sense of continuity from one meeting to the next is needed. So, if you'd like to join our group, we ask for a commitment that includes not missing more than 3 meeting per year.

I don't personally know all contractors, but I do know all contractors have opinions born out of experience. There are a lot of contractors, so by inference, there must be a lot of experience. If you have comments, criticisms, opinions, helpful hints or suggestions related to being a business owner, or ideas on how to improve our effectiveness as contractors, drop me a line. I'll look at what you've sent and may include your thoughts in a subsequent newsletter. And if you are really gripped by the urge to contribute, the Contractors Board is looking for a few good people, contractors or top employees with experience, who are willing to participate in our group.

One last thought... I'm looking forward to the new Green for Life promotional material. The goal of this "advertizing" campaign is two-fold: to inspire our customers with the beauty and benefits of horticulture, and to connect them with Landscape Ontario members. This promotional material is available in many forms. Check out www.horttrades.com/GFL for more details.

Again, I look forward to hearing from anyone who would like to add thoughts or information to our newsletter. You can reach me at arthur@alliancelandscaping.ca.