

# CAI - LI Chapter News

Serving Long Island, New York

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## FALL IS THE TIME FOR TURF IMPROVEMENTS

By BRUCE HELLERICK, SENIOR HORTICULTURIST, BRICKMAN GROUP

On many of the sites we maintain, the areas of turf are extensive, highly visible, and customer expectations are high. The sweltering heat and dryness this summer have taken their toll on the overall quality of much of the turf. Throughout the year, but especially in the fall, is an excellent time to evaluate the quality of the turf and make improvements where they are needed.

The first step in such an evaluation program is to identify and correct the primary causes of turf decline. Such causes may include: drought, severe compaction, shade, tree root competition, poor drainage, inadequate fertility, acid soils, weed, insect or disease infestation, thatch build-up, poorly adapted grass species and cultivars, or a combination of causes.

After evaluating the turf you should take steps to correct the problem to improve the health, quality, and the overall appearance of your site. Depending on the primary causes there may be several horticultural solutions. Unfortunately, **many customers choose techniques that give them a “quick fix”** but in the long term, will **not solve the primary cause**

of the problem. The long-term solution may appear to be more expensive but is actually least expensive because the core problem has been corrected. Listed below are the **primary horticultural techniques commonly used to improve turf quality.**

### Fertilization

Fall fertilization does more to improve poor quality turf or maintain and thicken good quality turf than any other management practice. Grass plants normally need nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium in greater amounts than can be supplied naturally from the soil.

### Aeration

Fall is the best time of year to aerate the soil. Aeration is the process of removing plugs of soil from the turf, thereby creating a system of large pores that carry moisture and plant nutrients into the soil. Aeration is used to reduce soil compaction and can significantly reduce thatch. Aerating machines are equipped with hollow tines (usually three to four inches in length and 1/4 - 3/4 inches in width) which remove

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plugs from the soil. Adequate moisture is needed for the tines to penetrate the turf and remove the plugs. Equipment having solid tines or spikes should not be mistaken for aerating equipment. Spiking machines do create holes in the soil but the insertion of the spike actually causes the soil nearby to become even more compacted. Aeration should be completed during periods of cool, wet weather to facilitate rapid recovery of the grass.

### Thatch

Thatch is a layer of partially decomposed grass stems and roots that develop beneath the actively growing green vegetation and above the soil surface. **Grass clippings are 97% moisture and do not cause thatch build-up.** Thatch decreases the vigor of turf grasses by restricting the movement of water, fertilizers, and pesticides into the soil. Thatch should be removed using dethatching equipment with vertically rotating blades or aeration equipment.

*Continued on Page 10*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By FRANK X. RIGGIO, CAI-LI CHAPTER PRESIDENT FOR 2014

Greetings everyone. I hope that each of you is having a terrific summer. I would like to take a brief moment to thank everyone who attended our "Legal Roundtable Presentation" on May 15 at Fairfield at St. James Community Association. Gene, Vic & Augie, and the Board at Fairfield were, as always, excellent hosts and we thank them for their warm hospitality. Five of the most renowned legal firms on Long Island specializing in all critical aspects of condominium and tax law joined us as guest panelists. I am very pleased that they were able to so generously spend their time with us and I thank them very much. They are Vinson Friedman, Esq. of Berkman, Henoch, Peterson, Peddy & Fenchel, P.C.; Edward M. Taylor, Esq. of Taylor, Eldridge & Endres, P.C.; Michael Cohen, Esq. of Cohen & Warren, P.C., Michael T. Schroder, Esq. of Schroder & Strom, LLP, and Jason A. Stern, Esq. of the Weber Law Group, LLP.

Our intent with this session was for the panel to stimulate discussion amongst our volunteer association members, to help them to develop a few different ways of solving some of our significant issues, or suggest alternatives for working around problems. I'm very sure that all who attended came away with a few new ideas to work with. Well done to all.

Did you know that you are among the more than 60 million Americans who live in homeowners associations and condominium communities? We think most residents are happy living in our community—and we certainly hope you are among them. But how do these 60 million residents feel about their own associations? Are they happy with their elected boards? How do they feel about the rules?

The Foundation for Community Association Research, an affiliate of Community Associations Institute (CAI), sponsored a national public opinion survey to answer these and other questions.

The research, from this national public opinion survey shows that more than seven in 10 community association residents say they are satisfied with their community association experience. Only 9% express dissatisfaction, and 19% are neutral on the question.

Here are a few more findings from that survey:

- 88% of community association residents believe their association board members strive to serve the best interests of the community.
- 73% say their professional managers provide value to their communities.

- 77% say they get a good return for their assessments, while 20% expressed some level of dissatisfaction.
- 74% believe their community association rules "protect and enhance" property values. Only 3% say rules harm property values, while about 22% see no difference.

This same survey also indicates that 86% of their respondents said they knew they were moving into an association when they decided to purchase or rent a home in their community. For 61%, the existence of an association had no impact on their decision, but 30% said the association made them more likely to buy or rent. Only 9% said they were hesitant to join an association community. This finding should assure sellers and Realtors that the existence of a well-run association can and should be part of the sales pitch.

While these findings are positive, I would like to think that here on Long Island, we can do even better than the national averages. Our vigorous participation in this Chapter's educational program is a giant step toward taking these numbers to the next level. It's really simple, the more you participate, the more you learn and the better you get at your job of running your respective community.

Before I forget, with the hurricane season already upon us, I wanted to remind you that **The Institute for Business & Home Safety** has published a series of **free brochures** for protecting property from hurricanes, tornados, wildfires, hail and freezing weather, water damage and floods, earthquakes and other disasters. A section on protecting your home has numerous publications on water intrusion, oil tank safety, tree pruning, leaks alert systems, washing machine hose failure, home inspection checklists and more. Copies can be downloaded free at [www.ibhs.org/publications](http://www.ibhs.org/publications).

*Continued on Page 4*

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Now let's take a moment to talk about our Annual Budgets. During the terms that all of our volunteer association members have been working in their respective communities, I'm quite sure that just about everyone has received a draft of their communities proposed annual budget for review and comment. A lot of work goes into preparing the budget as it is a complex activity that has to start early so it can be finalized and approved prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year. Here's how we do it:

- Our budget committee (consisting of our Treasurer, Property Manager and the HOA President) works closely on all of the following tasks.
- The Treasurer and Property Manager gather all financial information needed to project expenses for the coming year. This could be a reserve analysis, bids for contracts, projections for utility or service increases, comparisons of past years' budget trends and many other details.
- They also examine all sources of income—assessments, interest on investments, proceeds from concession or club operation and other types of miscellaneous income.
- The full committee then creates a working draft by adjusting the expenses and income until they balance. This may be accomplished by foregoing certain expenses to avoid raising assessments. Or it may be necessary to raise assessments to cover increased expenses such as utilities that the board cannot control.
- When the committee has developed the best possible draft budget, they send it to every member of our Board of Managers and Homeowner's Association for review and comment. One of the reasons we start the process early is to allow you plenty of time to study the budget, ask questions and offer comments.
- Based on member comments, the committee revises the draft budget as needed.
- After the final draft has been distributed to everyone once again it is brought up at the next Association Meeting for a vote to approve the final budget. Then it is distributed to all members.

This is not the only way to prepare an annual budget, but it works well for us in my community. Some of you may have better approaches to the process, and if so, that's terrific. However, if what you now have comes up short for you, then this guideline may help you do a better job with your next annual budget process this year.

As a closing reminder, our **September 18<sup>th</sup>** meeting at Capital One Bank in Melville will be a very informative **presentation on FRAUD**, its impact on our communities and how you might want to protect yourselves. Look for the flyer.

After that, we host our **Annual Trade Show** at the Hilton Long Island in Melville on **Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>** from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. and it is shaping up to be our best one ever. Please make plans to join us for this truly interesting and rewarding experience.

Following the Trade Show, we are looking forward to once again offering our **Basic Essentials Class** which is specifically designed for all of our volunteer association board members. It will take place at the Belfor Restoration facility in Ronkonkoma on Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. Also taking place at this time from November 6<sup>th</sup> thru the 7<sup>th</sup>, and at the same Belfor facility, will be the **M-201 Course for Property Managers**. This is an excellent course and a great chance to enhance your skills so please take advantage of this opportunity. Until next time, be well. ■



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## WHY A CMCA CERTIFICATION?

By JOHN H. GANOW, CAE


EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAMICB (COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGERS INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION BOARD)

Paul Orlando, a CMCA from Gaithersburg, Maryland credits the CMCA® credential with **bolstering his reputation** as a professional and increasing his income over the past several years. This is not an uncommon sentiment among association managers. In an ever changing world a successful community association manager has the skills – financial, administrative and interpersonal – to guide a community association responsibly and effectively. And many have the Certified Manager of Community Associations CMCA credential.

Research has shown that Community Association Managers with the CMCA credential **earn 18% more** than those without the credential. According to Paul, “It is not just about the money. There are 60 million Americans who live in covenant-protected communities and often rely on CMCA certification as proof of ethical, knowledgeable, professional community association management.”

Helping people protect what is likely their largest investment, and the dream of home ownership, is what excites many people in the industry. Christopher Owens, a CMCA and Community Manager in Washington DC, **recommends that you invest in your career**, sign up for the Professional Management Development Program (PMDP) course and work toward your CMCA credential. “You can do the course work on your own schedule, and while the CMCA examination is rigorous, completing it successfully was a great feeling of accomplishment,” added Christopher.

Paul Orlando cautioned, “After investing in your career by getting the CMCA credential don’t let it lapse. Once you become certified it is important to maintain that certification.” Fortunately it is easy to renew your CMCA. Learn more about obtaining and maintaining your CMCA at CAMICB.org. ■



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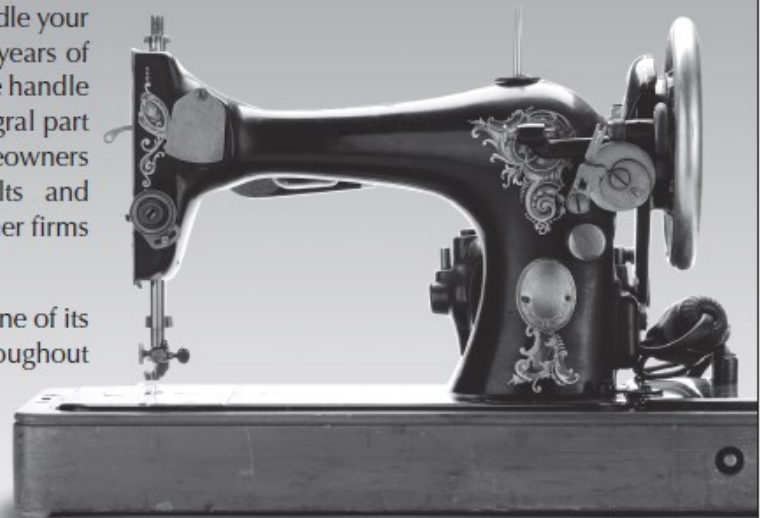
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## SIGN ME UP!

While serving on the board is probably the most visible example of volunteerism in an association, there are many other ways that you can contribute your time and talents to improving our community. Your participation in the community is beneficial to you, your neighbors and the association. For example, common benefits gained by volunteering include:

- making a positive difference in other peoples' lives
- sharing or learning new skills
- boosting your resume—volunteer jobs are fair game
- meeting new people
- and just having fun!

Don't let your community suffer from lack of enthusiasm. Even a few hours of your time can make a **big difference** in the culture of the community. Generate goodwill, encourage **"paying it forward"** and strengthen your community today. ■

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## HOW YOU CAN PREVENT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Article Provided as a Public Service by CAI National

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is a poisonous gas that can be particularly dangerous because it is colorless and odorless. Headache, nausea, dizziness and even permanent brain damage or death can occur. Hundreds of people die each year from accidental CO poisoning, many of them while using portable generators during severe weather.

A byproduct of burning fuels such as gasoline, propane, kerosene, natural gas, oil, wood or coal, carbon monoxide is emitted from internal combustion made by engines, like those that power lawn mowers, portable generators, cars, power washers and many household appliances such as furnaces, ranges, fireplaces, water heaters and room heaters. To prevent CO poisoning in your home, be sure to take the following precautions:

- Educate your family about the causes of CO poisoning and how to prevent exposure to this deadly gas.
- Do not use portable generators indoors, including in garages, carports, storage sheds and the like, even with doors and windows open. CO can quickly build to lethal levels in even partially enclosed spaces.
- Do not place pressure washer engines indoors, and, when using pressure washers outdoors, keep engines away from open windows, doors or vents during use, as CO can seep inside through the openings.
- Hire qualified professionals to install new furnaces and appliances and to inspect and service your HVAC system, chimneys and flues.
- Never service fuel-burning appliances without proper knowledge, skills and tools. Always refer to the owners' manual when performing minor adjustments or performing maintenance on fuel-burning equipment.
- Never use portable fuel-burning camping equipment or burn charcoal indoors.
- Never leave a car running in a garage, even with the garage door open.
- Never use your gas oven or clothes dryer to heat your home.
- Never operate unvented fuel-burning appliances in any room where people are sleeping.
- Do not cover the bottom of natural gas or propane ovens with aluminum foil. Doing so blocks the air flow through the appliance and can produce CO.

- Install CO detectors throughout your home, especially in hallways near sleeping areas, and follow the manufacturers' instructions for testing and replacing. Keep detectors unobstructed by furniture or draperies. ■

For additional details about how to prevent CO poisoning, visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website at [www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/466.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/466.html) or the website for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the Centers for Disease Control at [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/co/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/co/).

### Long Island Chapter 2014 Events

*Thursday, September 18th - 6:00 p.m.*

*"Fraudulent Activities and a  
Board's Responsibilities"*

*Capital One Bank*

*275 Broadhollow Road, Melville*

*Saturday, October 11th - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

*Annual Trade Show*

*Hilton Long Island*

*598 Broadhollow Road (Route 110), Melville*

*Thursday & Friday, November 6-7th*

*M-201 Facilities Management Class*

*Belfor Property Restoration*

*60 Raynor Avenue, Ronkonkoma*

*Saturday, November 8th*

*Basic Essentials Class for Board Members*

*Belfor Property Restoration*

*60 Raynor Avenue, Ronkonkoma*

Continued from Page 2

Complete this practice when the thatch is one inch thick or more and only during periods of cool weather and adequate moisture. Maintaining a good soil pH will favor microbial activity and the break down of thatch

Overseeding

Overseeding into thin areas or small patches of bare soil can be accomplished during the fall. Seedlings normally are more successful at this time of year than in spring because of increased natural rainfall and reduced weed competition. Seeding can be done following aeration, dethatching, or by using a disk-type seeder that drops seed into slits in the soil. When over seeding, it is important that the seed comes into contact with the soil and is provided with adequate moisture.



Liming

Most turf grasses prefer a soil pH range from 6.2 to 7.0.

If the soil is too acid for proper turf grass growth, limestone can be applied. Fall applications of lime are best because winter rain and snow, combined with freezing and thawing of the soil, help to work the limestone into the soil.

Broadleaf Weed Control

The first step in weed control is to develop a dense, properly managed turf. If this approach fails to prevent weed infestation, herbicides are available that will control most turf grass weeds. Broadleaf weeds, such as

dandelion and ground ivy, are usually controlled with broadleaf herbicides. Broadleaf weeds are easier to control in the fall because the plant is actively growing and herbicides are taken into the roots more readily. ■

*Bruce Hellerick is a Senior Horticulturist at Brickman — a world-class landscape and snow services company. He may be reached at 516.678.1767.*

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Congratulations to Celeste Tardalo from Country Pointe at Coram! She was the winner of Mets tickets, compliments of BankUnited, while attending the Long Island Chapter Summer Social which was held in July at Jewel in Melville and sponsored by BankUnited. Celeste is accompanied by Peter J. Dumelle, Vice President at BankUnited (left) and Frank X. Riggio, LI Chapter President - 2014.

**SAVE THE DATE**

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**Saturday / 10.11.14 / 9:00AM - 3:00PM**  
**Breakfast & Lunch will be served.**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**M-201** NEWLY REVISED

# facilities management

**2014  
Long Island  
Course Location -**

**Belfor Property Restoration  
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Ronkonkoma, NY 11779**

**Thursday, November 6th &  
Friday, November 7th**

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**Learn how to preserve and enhance your association's property and prepare for emergencies.**

This course provides a hands-on approach to help you analyze, evaluate, communicate and plan for property maintenance. Your community will benefit from your increased understanding of the various types of maintenance—routine, previous, emergency, corrective and scheduled.

**ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED**  
Visit [www.caionline.org/pmdp](http://www.caionline.org/pmdp) and register for this course online. Register online four weeks ahead and receive a \$25 discount.

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Long Island Chapter Meeting  
 May 15, 2014  
 Hosted at Fairfield at St. James  
 Community Clubhouse  
 Sponsored by James F. Sutton Agency, Ltd.



**Were you in attendance at our Legal Roundtable in May?**

Empowering yourself with resources and information can make the difference between success and failure as a Community Association Volunteer Board Member. We know that you are continually expected to anticipate issues, solve problems, meet the expectations of your residents, and protect property values within your community. The Long Island Chapter offers you more opportunities than ever to connect with peers, consult with industry service professionals, and provides you with the educational tools to properly assist you.



Our education sessions, Annual Trade Show, and a variety of networking events will help you build practical skills and give you new solutions that will save you time and money in your role as a community leader.

The Long Island Chapter would like to take a moment to warmly thank the evening's event moderator Doug Weigler of Total Community Management and our panel of distinguished attorneys who participated at this well attended event to convey information, guidance and perspective on legal matters in order to help our chapter members.

Michael Cohen, Esq. of Cohen & Warren, P.C.

Vinson Friedman, Esq. of Berkman, Henoch, Peterson, Peddy & Fenchel, PC

Michael T. Schroder, Esq. of Schroder & Strom, LLP

Jason A. Stern, Esq. of Weber Law Group, LLP

Edward M. Taylor, Esq. of Taylor, Eldridge & Endres, P.C.

Be sure to register for the next Chapter Meeting which will be held on Thursday, September 18th at Capital One Bank — "Fraudulent Activities and a Board's Responsibility."

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LONG ISLAND CHAPTER

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