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INSIDE

Elevator Maintenance Control Program.....	2
The Unsung Florals of Spring	3
5 Ways to De-Escalate Stressful Situations.....	5
HVAC Maintenance	8
Cam's Corner	14
Welcome to Our New Members	16
Thank You to Our Sponsors	17

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The North Gulf Coast Chapter has been extraordinarily busy this first quarter of 2021! We have hosted 8 lunches, 1 Annual Meeting and 1 Conference & Expo –altogether over 500 attendees at our events in three short months. We all wondered what 2021 would look like and we are happily back -- meeting in person (following COVID safety precautions) and renewing our connections.

Thank you to our program volunteers this quarter, including our panel on CAI Credentials and our many business partners. We had an outstanding event at The Gulf for our January Annual Meeting and Board Swearing In. Keep in mind our Award Recognitions will be back for next year's event – CAM of the Year, Business Partner of the Year, Homeowner Leader of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Award. Our Conference & Expo Committee raced to get a great event in place and sold out of booths and sponsorships! "Luck O' The Emerald Coast" saw record attendees

and fulfilled our education mission of serving our Community Association Managers. We hope you all enjoyed a little Irish hospitality, learned something new and took home one of the fabulous prizes supplied by our wonderful Business Partners.

Your 2021 Board of Directors continues their work on the Strategic Plan. The Membership, Newsletter, Education, and the Golf Committees are hard at work and gearing up for a great year. Soon, we will announce our new Scholarship Program for CAM Credentials.

Looking forward to a great second quarter for the North Gulf Coast Chapter. We have continued to grow in membership and in participation. It is an exciting time and we thank you for your generous support!

Danny Ellis
President of CAI-NGCC
Board of Directors



Danny Ellis, LCAM, CMCA
Chapter President

Upcoming Events

Please visit our website at www.cai-ngcc.org to learn about our upcoming events. Pre-registration is required for most events. If you are logging in for the first time, your email is your username. If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Barber at (850)797-3472.

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ELEVATOR MAINTENANCE CONTROL PROGRAM

by Ami Cavinder

An Elevator Maintenance Control Program (MCP) is exactly what it sounds like, a program to ensure that an elevator is maintained correctly. Much like vehicles require regular maintenance at specific mileage and designed for that specific vehicle, elevators require the same.

Are you aware per National Elevator Code ANSI A17.1-2013, commercial elevators are required to have a Maintenance Control Program (MCP) designed specifically for each elevator? This means the ownership and/or a representative of the property has a voice in negotiating the frequency, coverage, etc. when developing an MCP, which ultimately dictate the terms and conditions of your elevator maintenance contract and pricing.

Although the ownership is ultimately responsible for the enforcement of the National Elevator Code, your elevator vendor should be providing a "MCP" for each elevator, which is to be onsite at all times. The National Elevator Code specifies what must be included in each MCP. The MCP assists management and owners to hold their elevator vendor accountable, ensuring at the very least they are showing up to maintain the elevators per their contractual obligations. An MCP is designed to assist in keeping track of the required maintenance that is occurring on the elevators. Therefore, elevator vendors following the required MCP will provide a safer, better performing elevator.

Are you in compliance with your Maintenance Control Program (MCP)? An MCP starts with listing the Owner ID, State or Government ID and a checklist. The checklist is what your elevator vendor should be checking off each visit confirming the maintenance was completed per the



designed MCP and their contractual obligations. The checklist and MCP must be kept onsite and readily available at the request of your state inspector. In addition, the MCP must include the following:

Examinations, maintenance and tests of equipment of scheduled intervals in order to ensure that the installation conforms to the requirements of the elevator code.

The maintenance procedures and intervals shall be based on

- Equipment age, condition, and accumulated wear
- Design and inherent quality of the equipment
- Usage
- Environmental conditions
- Improved technology
- The manufacturers recommendations for any SIL rated devices or circuits
- Cleaning, lubricating and adjusting applicable components at regular intervals and repairing or replacing all worn or defective components

where necessary to maintain the installation in compliance with the requirements of the elevator code.

To summarize, it is important to have an understanding of your Elevator Maintenance Control Program (MCP) in order to make sure that your elevators are running safely and according to the National Elevator Code requirements. In addition, the MCP is a great tool to be sure your elevator vendor is fulfilling their contractual obligations and doing their inspections in a diligent and timely manner.

Please feel free to contact Cavinder Elevator Company with any questions or concerns regarding the maintenance of your elevators or your Elevator Maintenance Control Program (MCP).

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THE UNSUNG FLORALS OF SPRING

Lindsay Malke
lmalke@landscapeworkshop.com
Landscape Workshop

With 2020 fading in the rearview mirror, let's look ahead to beauty and new life. Couldn't we all use a little cheer? To usher in this much-anticipated (much-needed) season of sunny days and time spent outdoors, we would like to give some attention to some of our favorite flowering plants that don't get near enough stage time. Read on to discover these unsung beauties and the benefit they can add to your landscape.

Scaevola: This dainty yet enduring plant is the ideal option for a border or planter. Maintaining a low growth height, Scaevola looks great in the flower beds or in planters. Even better, you will get to enjoy the blooms throughout the spring and summer. It thrives in heat, doesn't cycle often, and can tolerate drought once established. Look for this flower in blue, white, and pink. Mulch or Pine Straw -I typically recommend a January – March application due to the premium quality of Pine straw that is available at this time of year. If you haven't completed this yet, I highly recommend applying now. A 2-3" layer of pine straw or 1-1.5 inch of decomposed hardwood mulch will suffice. Plus, it will breathe new beauty into your landscape. Make sure that your contractor provides a trenched edge, with smooth flowing simple curves, between turf bed lines. This helps to contain the mulch with in the bed and provides a detailed edge that leaves that crisp clean appearance.

Euphorbia: Perhaps the most underused, the carefree Euphorbia makes an excellent addition to a spring landscape. It blooms throughout the summer heat and settles very nicely in a bed or planter. Some may call it "weedy," but we find its delicate and breezy appearance the ideal filler for beds or pots.

Gomphrena: Described as "tough as nails" by Floriculture Director Leah Quarles, Gomphrena can withstand drought and blooms prolifically, even when summer heat is in full-throttle. In addition to its resolve, Gomphrena boasts versatility, working nicely in beds, planters, as cut flowers, and even dried. You can find this flower in shades of purples, red, and orange.

Pentas: When looking for a plant of medium height for a bed, consider Pentas. These pretty flowers come in vibrant shades of pink, red and purple, as well as white. Pentas not only add variety to a bed, they thrive in heat and can be drought tolerant once established. You will be glad to know that Pentas require little pruning and do not "cycle" quite as often as other flowers.

Daffodils: As the perennial of the group, it's been called the "tolerated" flower of its more showier companions. But, with blooms that appear at the first hint of spring, the daffodil delights us with its beauty while ushering out dullness of winter. Who doesn't love to see the first pop of bright color at a time when it's needed most? A hardy plant that requires little to no maintenance and a range of varieties that will continue to delight through spring, you can't go wrong with the daffodil.

Forsythia: Speaking of bright colors in early spring, Forsythia are often known as the "Easter Tree," symbolizing the imminence of the coming season of hope and new beginnings. Praised for their toughness and reliability and adored for their bright yellow showy blooms, Forsythia is an early spring favorite that often gets taken for granted. Common varieties, like intermedia and suspensa, make this attractive shrub a versatile option for gardens or planters.



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5 ways to de-escalate stressful situations

Don't be a bystander. Learn how to gently step in, and soothe stress, with these simple steps

Writing | Kathryn Wheeler Illustration | Rosan Magar

It's never easy to see someone else going through a stressful time. It can often leave us feeling hopeless, agitated, and maybe even stressed ourselves. But, with the right amount of caution and gentle management, there are several things that we can do to support those going through stress, helping them to manage their emotions in the moment, and also look forward to addressing the root of the problem. Here, with help from psychologist and wellbeing consultant Lee Chambers, we explore five ways that you can step in to de-escalate stressful situations.

1. BE EMPATHETIC

We all appreciate being heard and having our feelings taken seriously, so this is a good place to start when you're trying to support other people. "Utilise empathy to help the individual involved know that you care about how they feel, and understand why they are acting in this manner," advises Lee. "A simple observation such as, 'I can see how upset this has made you',

shows you understand their pain, you appreciate their concerns, and you're treating them as an equal. Feeling heard and valued when in distress is a powerful defusing mechanism."

2. BE RESPECTFUL

When we're at the height of emotion, we're often also feeling quite vulnerable. According to Lee, respect is a powerful situational resolution tool when we find ourselves dealing with a very stressful situation.

“

If we remain calm, attentive, non-judgemental, and objective, they will start to adjust to your state

"Many times, when we're stressed, it is likely something isn't being respected, and if we can fill that gap it has an instant

calming effect," he says. "By giving a respectful compliment or statement, suddenly they will feel like a respected person, and this will shift their emotional balance to a more stable point."

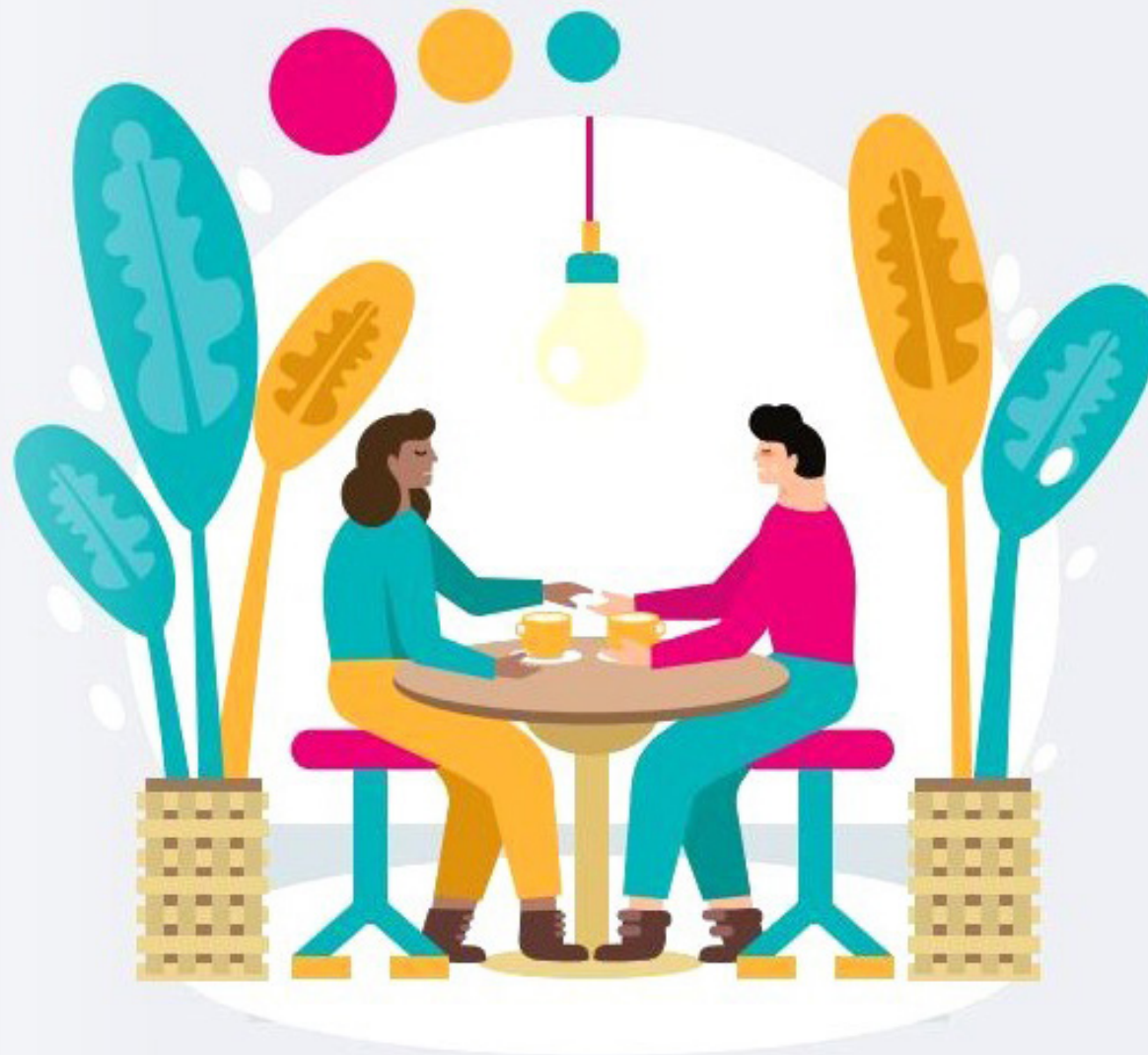
3. PAY ATTENTION

"Nothing fuels the fires of stressful situations more than a person who storms off, or is clearly not present," says Lee. We don't always need to offer up solutions – in fact, the heat of the moment is rarely the right time to do this – but being present and engaging in the problem in a sympathetic manner goes a long way. "Listen to the other party, ask questions, and be curious to understand why they feel that way," Lee adds. "Just being there will allow them to process their own emotions, often getting more clarity and bringing themselves down from a high arousal state."

4. BE MINDFUL OF MIRRORING

As humans, we get a lot of our social and emotional cues off each other, which is something you should keep at the front of your mind when facing a

Continued on page 6



challenging situation. “If we remain calm, attentive, non-judgemental, and objective, they will start to adjust to your state, reducing the emotional charge,” Lee explains. “This can take some practise and effort on our behalf, as we tend to react immediately, instead of choosing our response. But if we can stop the initial feeling of being attacked, and it being personal, we can respond in a measured and rational way. So often, it

isn’t the immediate trigger that has caused their feelings, but a build-up of events, and if we can look at the bigger picture, we can connect with them, rather than attack them.”

5. ASK GENTLE QUESTIONS

Sometimes, stress is like an iceberg. You might be able to see the tip, but can’t see what’s going on below the waterline, or how deep it goes. So, if it feels appropriate, you might

want to ask gentle questions to try to figure out the root of the problem. “Asking questions is an incredibly powerful way to show we are respectful, and summarising the other person’s concerns shows that we are listening and appreciating them,” says Lee. “You can even start to see if you can be part of the solution, as suddenly you become a supportive ally, and can move them on from ruminating on the issue causing the stress.” ■



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HVAC MAINTENANCE

It's that time of year again! Beaches are crowded, the weather can't make up its mind, flowers are blooming, and the nice carpet of yellow covering everyone's vehicles tells us one thing...summer is coming! While we struggle to decide if we should carry a jacket for the day, the certainty is that in just a few short weeks, the jackets can be put away for a few months. The anticipation of warmer temperatures and longer days is enticing, and many of us will get so busy planning vacations and family getaways that we'll forget one of the most important parts of beating the heat. After all, our air conditioning systems are out of sight and mostly out of mind, right? That is until it doesn't work...

We've all been there. We walk into the house after a long day of work,

anticipating a cool breeze to greet the thin layer of perspiration beading on our forehead. But there's no cool breeze. There's not even cool. In fact, the house just feels "stuffy." And what's that smell? Or in the middle of the budget worksheet and the daily Zoom meeting, we get a text, call, email and visit from an owner or seven, reporting that something isn't right with the cooling in the building. And what's that smell? Yes, we've all experienced the dread of an air conditioning system that just won't work right. Whether it's your home air conditioner, or the big cooling tower "thing" that's connected to all of the AC units in your building, there is a key to getting ready for summer. And that key should be turning all year long.

Continued on page 9



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Continued from page 8

Routine, planned preventive maintenance is crucial for the proper and consistent operation of a mechanical air conditioning system. Having a professional, licensed contractor review your HVAC systems on a regular basis will go a long way toward avoiding critical failures in the heat of summer that result in agonizing (and hot) downtimes. To be clear, air conditioning system are machines. And the reality is that machines break from time to time. But a planned maintenance program with a quality licensed contractor can give you peace of mind that the equipment responsible for providing cool, crisp air in the middle of a swampy Florida summer is in top operating condition. And as an added bonus, routine maintenance provides several other benefits, as well.

Increased Energy Savings

The air conditioning system in your home can account for as much as

65% of your total utility bill. Ensuring the system is operating correctly is key to keeping these costs as low as possible. Dirty filters, dirty coils and low refrigerant levels can cause your AC system to overwork, using more energy and directly contributing to higher utility bills. By keeping coils clean, filters changed, and correct refrigerant levels, your HVAC service contractor can help you save on your next power bill! Routine maintenance has been proven to increase operational efficiency by anywhere from 5 to 40 percent. That's direct savings on your monthly utility bill, which means money in your pocket adding up!

Increased Equipment Life

Mechanical equipment is designed and manufactured with average useful life in mind. On average, a residential HVAC system can be expected to last about 10 years. Some larger commercial HVAC equipment can last up to 15-20 years. However, with routine maintenance performed on a regular basis, it's not

uncommon to see residential AC units last 12-15 years. Large commercial equipment can run for as long as 25 years if properly cared for. Unfortunately, our corrosive salt environment here on the Emerald Coast will often have the final say, but maintenance service can certainly be a formidable weapon in your arsenal.

Decreased Equipment Downtime

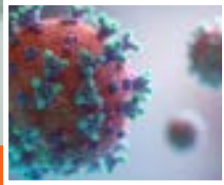
Whether it's that one night at home rolling around in sweaty sleepless misery, or the blissful peace of putting an end to reporting calls, texts and emails, when an air conditioning system is down, time is of the essence! We know mechanical failures happen. And we know it can take time to find parts for repair. But planned preventive maintenance is proven to reduce the frequency of equipment service issues and downtimes. In some cases, our property and asset management clients have seen a 40% reduction in HVAC service-related issues after committing to a planned preventive maintenance program. This kind of

reduction in service calls can likely be the difference in a sleepless night, or a positive online review, or sanity!

Improved Air Quality

We have spent the last year living in unique times. Quarantine life has brought many dynamics to our lives that perhaps we didn't think were possible. It has also brought a heightened sense of awareness about the quality of air we breathe. Routine maintenance on your HVAC systems can ensure that the air circulating in your home or business is as clean and well-filtered as possible. It's hard enough to make it without cold air in the summer. Don't bring foul odors into play. What's that smell?

The heat is coming. Don't wait until it's too late. Be prepared ahead of the wave. Call a licensed HVAC contractor now to review your HVAC systems in preparation for the upcoming cooling season. If you need a reference for who you can call to get the job done, we may know someone.



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How to say 'no'

When you're overwhelmed, and just *cannot* deal with one more request – regardless of the size – here are some polite ways to express yourself...

Thank you for the opportunity, but I'm afraid I can't help with that.

I'm actually busy then, but I'd love to next time. Let me know then!

The timing isn't great right now – can we raincheck?

I'm taking a step back for my mental health at the moment, so I'll have to decline.

That doesn't work for me, but perhaps we could look at that next week instead?

Thank you for thinking of me. I'm unable to take on anything more right now though...

I love the sound of that – unfortunately I'm not available, but let me know how it goes.



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GETTING TO KNOW OUR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGERS

An Interview with Claire Durham

How did you start your CAM career?

I am third generation property management where I was born into this business. I've earned a business degree in Real Estate with a Concentration in Property Management from the University of North Texas. I relocated to the Florida Panhandle in 2018 where I began my CAM career within our market.

What was one of your favorite communities to manage and why?

I've managed COA's, HOA's, and commercial associations with the

variety of associations that I've managed I can say "no two associations are alike". However, I don't have a favorite but I have enjoyed developer controlled properties where the CAM can listen in on the development and share new innovative ideas for owners and residents.

What was one of your biggest challenges as a CAM?

My biggest challenge has also been my greatest success as a CAM, Hurricane Michael rebuilds. Our panhandle was hit by a category five hurricane in 2018. As our panhandle was covered in blue tarps, the manager role was stronger

than ever. Being a manager after a name brand storm that destroyed homes and associations throughout our town was hard but rewarding. Learning customer service without internet or cell power, communicating with Board Presidents, insurance adjustors, contractors, legal teams, clean up crews and your teammates was a challenge but if you stayed focused and said "I love my job I love my job I love my job" 300 times... you'll get to the light at the end of the tunnel. I can easily say, 3 years later my greatest challenge has been my greatest reward. I was rewarded with knowledge.

How was CAI helpful in your career?

CAI has been helpful for me because of the support system it brings for CAM's. I can easily find a vendor who is associated with CAI where I then know that vendor knows how CAM's operate (Through the Board of Directors).

If you could retire today, how would you spend your time?

I would continue working two nonprofits, Second Chance of North West Florida and TBI One Love. I'd also be working on developing and managing communities throughout the southern region of the United States where hopefully I can help people through both of those paths.



Claire Durham
Community Association
Manager, Notary



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