Is a picture worth 1,000 words?

EXCLUSIVE

Blogging lends to a deeper level of sharing information than social media
The Daniel Urban Kiley Teaching Fellowship will be awarded annually to an emerging designer whose work articulates the potential for landscape as a medium of design in the public realm. The Kiley Fellow will be appointed Lecturer in Landscape Architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design for the 2012-13 academic year. While the Kiley Fellowship will be awarded competitively on an annual basis, successful Fellows are eligible to have their academic appointments renewed for a second year at the rank of Lecturer, dependent upon review of their teaching, research and creative practice.

For details and more information, please visit Kiley Teaching Fellowship or send an email to kileyfellowship@gsd.harvard.edu.
On the cover

Pronghorn
Bend, Oregon

Photo courtesy of DTJ Design, an architecture, landscape architecture and planning firm located in Boulder and Denver, CO.

exposures is published four times a year by the Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA Colorado). Subscriptions and Advertising Please contact us at 303-830-6616. General Inquiries Please write to us at ASLA Colorado, PO Box 200822, Denver, Colorado 80220. Opt-out To be removed from the mailing list, contact us at info@aslacolorado.org. Articles, Letters to the Editor and Firm News Please email all general exposures inquiries to news@aslacolorado.org.
Happy New Year from ASLA Colorado! I am very excited to assume the role of Chapter President, and I look forward to working with many of you over the coming years. We have some very exciting initiatives on the horizon and we are very hopeful that they will continue to be opportunities that our members find interesting, helpful and fun.

Here's a rundown of what to expect from your chapter:

**Board Restructuring**

With thoughtful guidance from ASLA National we have decided to split our very large Executive Committee (one of the largest in the country) into two separate oversight bodies. A smaller, nine person Executive Board will now meet monthly to manage the day-to-day operations of the chapter, while a larger group of nearly 30 advisors will comprise the Council of Directors. The Council will help guide the larger, big picture ideas for the chapter. As always meetings will continue to be held on the first Wednesday of every month at 5PM and is open to all members of the chapter.

Along with these changes to the structure of the chapter’s leadership we will also be focusing our efforts on the active involvement of twelve key committees. Various Board and Council members will be the chairs for these committees, and we will be looking for volunteers to help us reach our goals for the coming years. The 12 operational committees are:

- Advocacy
- Communications
- Conference
- Education
- Events & Service
- Fellows
- Contractor Outreach
- Membership
- Organization
- Public Relations
- Sponsorship & Advertising
- Student Chapters

**2011 “Your Environment. Designed” Campaign**

On August 17th ASLA undertook an unprecedented effort to raise public awareness for the profession of landscape architecture. Members, non-members, and allies of the profession took action in a simple, unified way to communicate the importance of the profession in a way we’ve never been able to.

To do this ASLA has adopted the mantra of The Understory—the section of a forest between the floor and canopy that teems with life. It’s the Understory that connects a forest’s ecosystem together. Despite its importance, we easily miss the Understory for the canopy, for the trees. As landscape architects, much of our work is similarly missed. That’s why ASLA set up The Understory as a rallying cry for landscape architects to step out and tell our story to the public.

The event consisted of groups of landscape architects engaging the general public in plazas or green spaces to increase public awareness of the profession. Here in Colorado we had over 35 landscape architects participating.

**National Landscape Architecture Month**

Hoping to pick up on the successes of The Understory from last year we will be trying something new this year for National Landscape Architecture Month in April. The Events & Service and Public Relations Committees will be working together to plan events to occur throughout the month and across the state. We’ve typically used the Doors Open Denver event to be our outlet for NLAM, so please plan on getting involved this year for something exciting.

**2014 National Conference & Expo**

I hope that most of you know that the ASLA National Conference and Expo will be coming to the Mile High City in 2014. Many of the organizational changes that we are making to the chapter are in preparation for this great event and showcase for our chapter. I hope that several of you will want to be involved in the pre-planning for the conference.

**Awards Event & Holiday Party**

On December 1st we held our first ever Awards Event and Holiday Party at the Four Seasons Hotel in downtown. With 190 in attendance it was a great success. The event was highlighted with a phenomenal keynote speech by Auden Schendler of the Aspen Skiing Company, the JSR Foundation silent auction and a three piece jazz combo. The night was about celebrating the profession and having fun. We will definitely be doing it again this year. We hope that even more of you will come.

Thanks,

Brian Koenigberg, RLA, AICP
Colorado Chapter President
Executive Committee & Council of Directors

The Executive Board is the governing body of ASLA Colorado and is chaired by Brian Koenigberg, Chapter President. The board meets monthly to provide guidance and direction relating to the activities and finances of the Chapter. The Council of Directors meets quarterly to support the executive board in providing region- and practice-oriented direction on issues related to the program, activities and membership of the Chapter. Executive Board Meetings typically occur on the first Wednesday of each month, beginning at 5:00 pm, and are held at member offices along the Front Range. Council of Directors Meetings typically occur mid-quarter and coincide with the Executive Board Meetings. Attendees typically include those on the Executive Board and Council of Directors respectively. All chapter members are welcome to attend or to participate in person or by teleconference.

The November Council of Directors meeting was held at The University Club Lounge and served to introduce Board and Council members to their new roles, positions and expectations. Brian Koenigberg outlined the new committee structure, purpose, and expectations. The Council also discussed the upcoming National Conference in 2014 and the upcoming DORA Sunset review for architects and engineers (July 2013).

The December Executive Board meeting was held at 600 Grant Street in Denver. The meeting began with a discussion of the awards event, and we all shared the positive and negative feedback we had received. Mark Tabor overviewed the transition to the PLA designation, and we discussed the opportunity to publish a book in time for the 2014 Conference.

The January Executive Board meeting was held at the office of HOK at 17th and Gaylord in Denver. The primary focus of this meeting was to present and review the budget for 2012. We also spoke about the need to find a North Area Director and a Professional Education Director.

Volunteer opportunities for interested members are always available. If you are interested in volunteering for a committee or an event that is hosted or supported by ASLA Colorado contact Judith Ward, Volunteer Coordinator, at jward@criticalhabitats.com. For more information on current ASLA Colorado events, be sure to visit www.aslacolorado.org and review the “Calendar” tab located on the website’s title bar. If you have a design event you would like listed on our Chapter’s social media pages, please email details to info@aslacolorado.org. To be placed on an upcoming agenda contact Brian Koenigberg, Chapter President, at brian@kmkstudio.net. Contact information relating to the Executive Board and Council of Directors members can be found by clicking on the “Chapter Leadership” page from the “About” tab on the main title bar.

Government Affairs

The 2012 legislative session is underway, and we are monitoring legislative activities. SB12-006 “Efficiencies in State Regulatory System” has been a bill introduced in the Colorado Senate. Though this bill does not directly threaten state licensure, it does call for creating a task force to review the State’s regulatory system and report its findings and recommendations to the committee on legal services by January 1, 1013. The committee on legal services will then recommend to the general assembly such legislation regarding the findings and recommendations of the task force “as may be necessary”. Depending on the recommendations of this task force, there is a potential that we could face a challenge to our licensure in 2013. Licensed professionals should keep a close eye on this bill.

A top priority for Government Affairs/Advocacy Committee is promoting compliance by municipal and county government agencies with the “Landscape Architects Professional Licensing Act”, as passed by the State in 2007. The law was passed at the State level, but, to be effective, the provisions must be administered by hundreds of the local government public works and planning agencies. So far, understanding and implementation of the state law by city and county government agencies is sparse and inconsistent. If we can improve local compliance it will not only open up new opportunities for our profession, but will also significantly benefit the public health, safety and welfare.

We have identified several areas where policy changes may be warranted by local government agencies:

1) Implementing provisions requiring landscape architects to sign and stamp contract documents. With exceptions for residential landscape design, consisting of landscape design services for single and multi-family residential properties of four or fewer units, not including common areas, a landscape architect’s stamp and signature should be required to establish a record set of contract documents for landscape designs.

2) Accepting site plans for review that are signed and stamped by licensed landscape architects. Many jurisdictions still require an engineer or architect to stamp site plans submitted for review by landscape architects. According to the state law, landscape architects can now sign, seal and be in responsible charge for site design and construction plans. Prohibiting one licensed profession from sealing plans, while allowing another to do so, is professional discrimination. It also restricts fair competition, and can add unnecessary time and expense to the approval process.
3) Requiring that all decisions made and actions taken that fall within the defined practice of landscape be performed under the responsible charge of a licensed landscape architect. The LA Practice Act has no exemption for local governmental entities, be they cities, counties, or special districts. If such a body is performing activities within the practice of landscape architecture as defined in 12-45-103 (8)(a), a licensed landscape architect should be in responsible charge.

Are your city and county government agencies in compliance with the state law? Let’s help them understand and implement the State Licensing Act.

With a grant from ASLA National, ASLA Colorado has created an advocacy package to educate local government agencies about the Licensing Act and to help persuade them to update their codes and procedures to be in alignment with provisions of the State Law. The advocacy documents can now be downloaded from the advocacy page of our website, under the heading “Licensure Compliance Materials”. If you would like hard copies of the advocacy package to promote compliance in your community, please let us know.

ASLA Colorado meets regularly with the GreenCo Legislative Committee (and their lobbyists) to keep apprised of ongoing and upcoming issues of legislative and regulatory importance. When an urgent issue of importance arises it is conveyed to the membership as an advisory in the bi-monthly E-News Bulletin. ASLA Colorado is represented in the legislature and before state agencies by the Colorado Council of Landscape Architects. Gregory Williams of Redpoint Resources LLC and Scott Meiklejohn of Meiklejohn Consulting LLC are under contract from December-May to monitor state legislative activity and regulatory developments. They also represent ASLA Colorado at meetings involving other allied organizations on new and ongoing issues of mutual concern. Neil McLane is Vice President of Government Affairs and chair of the ASLA Colorado Government Affairs committee. This committee also oversees the activities of the Colorado Council of Landscape Architects. Neil can be reached at neil@mclaneassoc.com.
Create a Sub-Zero/Wolf Outdoor Living Space

Sculpted in double-wall stainless steel and bell-mouth welded for seamless strength, Wolf gas grills use two types of heat, direct and radiant. This achieves the temperature range and the uniform heat distribution that are the keys to flawless grilling. Available in Natural Gas or LP, and in 30”, 36”, 42” and now 54” sizes. Add to your outdoor project by specifying the Sub-Zero outdoor refrigerator, ice maker, Wolf warming drawer or the 26,000 BTU-13” burner module.

Learn More by Visiting the Sub-Zero/Wolf Showroom by Roth Distributing or one of our Qualified Dealers www.subzero.com/trade

17801 E 40th Ave. | Aurora, CO 80011 | 303.373.9090

Distributed by:

www.cpsdistributors.com
(303) 394-6040 • info@cpsdistributors.com
Capturing a busy subject with multiple elements is often a challenging photographic situation. By scouting the site beforehand and determining lighting conditions at various times of day, an experienced photographer can make an otherwise complex composition look almost dreamlike. (Photo courtesy of D.A. Horchner/Design Workshop).

By Sarah Chase Shaw

The other day, while browsing through some on-line photography sites, I came upon this headline on petapixel.com.

This Photograph is Not Free.

The first sentence reads, “So this was the first sunset I captured in 2012. It cost me $6,612 to take this photo.”

The author, John Mueller - a photographer in Ventura County, California, goes on to explain why.

$12 in gas to go from work to this spot and then home. The camera I took this with cost $2500. The lens was another $1600. The Singh Ray Reverse Neutral Density filter was $210. The Lee Wide-Angle Adapter and Foundation kit was another $200. The Slik Tripod was another $130. The shutter-release was another $60. When I got home, I uploaded it to a computer that cost me $1200, and then I used Lightroom 3 which I got for $200. I then exported it and tinkered with it in Photoshop which costs about $500.

12+2500+1600+210+200+130+60+1200+200+500 = $6,612

While he doesn’t detail the amount of time he spent scouting the site and waiting for the right light conditions, we intuitively know that this wasn’t a click and shoot moment. Which brings me to the very core of the issue. Why, in such a visually-oriented profession where we’re trained to recognize the value of good design, do we skimp on the visuals?

Roger Foley is a Virginia-based landscape photographer whose most recent book, A Clearing in the Woods, highlights the work of several contemporary landscape architects including Raymond Jungles and Oehme, van Sweden & Associates. “I find that it’s an uphill battle trying to convince landscape architects to spend money on photography. In my experience, architects take it as a given that they are going to have to pay for photography. Landscape architects tend to have a much lower standard with regard to documenting their legacy.” Dale Horchner, staff photographer for Design Workshop agrees. “Architects have high expectations, and they don’t have trouble getting their checkbooks out. Landscape architects seem to do everything on the cheap when it comes to publications. But, if you pay for good writing and good photography, you end up with a high-end quality product.”

Bonny Hershberger, principal of Hershberger Design in Jackson, Wyoming, echoes the sentiments of most landscape architects. “Our profession is so sensory that visual portrayal of our work is extremely important. Photography communicates our interpretations and design sensibilities and allows us to tell the
story of our work. Clients make their decisions to hire us based, in large part, on how our work looks. We also use photographs of our work to communicate imagery and concepts on new projects, to scrutinize our own work internally and document concepts like details, scale, endurance, and longevity to publish our work, to post to our website and to make awards submissions. So the question is not whether to photograph, but how.”

And, it's a question that many landscape architects struggle with through the course of their careers. For start-up firms working on a shoestring budget and minimal overhead, professional photography is a luxury. Add to that the complications of usage and copyright and suddenly the whole process is overwhelming and apt to get pushed to the back of the to-do list.

These two photos capture the same scene, but one is taken by a professional. Time of day, atmospheric conditions and focal length all play a part in these two perspectives of the same garden and patio. Notice how in the vertical composition, the foreground to the right is cropped out, but more of the flagstone pathway is included to lead the viewer into the garden, providing a more open & spacious feel. Adding the element of dramatic light & sky provides additional visual interest and completes the composition. (Photo courtesy of D.A. Horchner/Design Workshop (left) and Sarah Chase Shaw (right)).

Todd Winslow Pierce is an Eagle County-based photographer. “Businesses that have stuck to their standards for quality are the ones that are becoming busy again. The concept of using professional photography may be difficult for those who believe that it would be easier and cheaper to go out and buy a decent digital camera and take their own photos. But the opposite is actually true. Presenting your hard-earned reputation with anything other than professional photography will cost you a lot more money in the form of lost revenue – in not attracting those clients you wish you had. If they like what they see on your website, in your brochures, or magazine ads, they will call. Once they call, you’re already halfway to making the deal.”

Sheri Sanzone, principal of Aspen’s Blue Green agrees that photography is a huge expense relative to their overall budget. But, she says, “we find it money well spent and a great investment for the studio. We use the photography mostly in our business development efforts – securing new work, garnering awards, and building our brand through the media (website, magazines). The exposure we gain through the media also helps us attract the best potential employees.”

And, as Sanzone can attest, having professional photographs on your website helps attract the attention of editors and other media professionals, which can’t hurt in business development. “Having great photography has allowed our work to be published. Even if the magazine wants to re-shoot for the story, having stellar photography to pitch the story is critical.”

Sunset Magazine’s Senior Editor, Chris Ryan suggests that a well-documented project with extensive and well-composed imagery that clearly tells a story certainly helps its chances of being published. And, because photography budgets are so low, a designer who owns the rights to the images is in a much better position to be published.

Jenny Andrews, immediate past Senior Editor at Garden Design, feels that photography is a critical component in a story, especially for a visually driven publication like Garden Design. “When I started at the magazine, we had to shoot almost everything via professional photographers that we hired. Some designers shot their projects then, but the photography was often pretty awful. As time went on, more and more landscape designers began to see the value in hiring photographers to shoot their projects, for promotional purposes. I was part of a panel presentation at ASLA where we addressed the issue of how landscape architects can get their work published. And one key thing I said was — photograph it, with a professional shooter. It gives designers a huge advantage if a project already has good, available photography. Even if we went back and shot a project ourselves for the magazine, good photography from the designer made a huge impression as far as the story pitch.”

These days, the high quality, low cost instant gratification of digital cameras allows for ultimate spontaneity. In the busy day-to-day of a typical landscape architect, having a camera on hand is critical for capturing that impromptu shot that a professional might never see. Bonny Hershberger’s firm takes 90% of
the photos they need. “The high quality, low cost and ‘instant gratification’ of digital cameras allows us to take quality shots of our work for most purposes. Taking our own shots allows ultimate spontaneity, allowing us to run out to a site to capture what we think is best about the site. And, last but not least, taking our own photos is highly cost effective.”

Aspen-based photographer Jason Dewey thinks an outside eye is critical to the process. “Designers get so wrapped up in their projects and tend to focus on a problem that they solved rather than the big picture.” Photographers offer another perspective which is often similar to what a potential client might see. Roger Foley approaches photography as a way to seduce the potential clients into saying “oooh, I want that.”

What makes a successful photograph? That, says Foley, depends on the use of the photo. “I think that the most successful photos are those where you can feel yourself in the space.” If you can feel the tactile quality of the environment, you’ve captured the magic of landscape architecture regardless of how the photo is used, he says. And, being in the business for over 30 years gives some credence to his rhetoric. “My rule of thumb is that a garden should be in place for three years before we photograph it. Public spaces should be photographed immediately before the hardscape gets beat up.”

The moral of the story? Even if you’re on a tight budget - and who isn’t these days - think about the past, present and future value of your work. Todd Pierce offers the following suggestions for a positive collaborative experience:

- Barter a portion of the Creative Fee.
- Use your own employees to assist the photographer.
- Be prepared for the assignment.
- Establish a long-term relationship with a photographer you like and can easily work with. Loyalty goes a long way with photographers and they will work with you on price and annual budgets.
- Partner with other firms involved in the project, to split the cost of production.

The bottom line is that being open and honest with a professional photographer about your needs and limitations will yield better results all around, rather than just hunting for a low ball amateur. You’ll likely get far superior imagery for a good price if you work with a pro, while showing respect for the value of their talent and professionalism.

Sarah Chase Shaw is an Aspen-based freelance writer and landscape architect who agrees with photographer Edward Weston: there simply are no short-cuts in photography. Send your ideas to her at www.sarahchase.shaw.com.
BLOGGING ANYONE?

By Susan McCabe

Social media --- Facebook, Linkedin, Land8Lounge, Twitter, Blogs—are you using them in the work place? According to research completed by the Coleman Design Group, presenters of Social Media Strategies for Landscape Architects at the last ASLA conference in San Diego, the top benefits (to date) of social media in the work place are the ability to easily keep up with new trends and news, the improvement of a knowledge base, and the development of a support network. However, the top reason for initially engaging in social media is for marketing purposes (84%). Though still hopeful as a means of finding more clients and more work, the jury is still out on whether or not social media generates or will generate tangible business opportunities. Another survey found that the most popular forms of social media are Linkedin (a professional network) and blogging. (http://thearchitecturereport.com/landscape-architecture-social-network-survey).

Blogging can be a low-cost, interesting alternative to a web site because it is easy to create, edit and update and can be developed without having to learn the web HTML language or hire a web designer. Blogging also lends itself to a deeper level of information sharing than Facebook or Twitter. B.L. Ochman, a blogging expert, internet marketing strategist and journalist states, “the major advantage of blogs is that they are interactive and require no knowledge of coding by the content creators.” She goes on to say, “Blogs are great for intranets that allow sharing of information within a company “and” are a perfect way to organize large amounts of information because posts are automatically archived and searchable.” Ochman highly recommends blogs as a way to establish a presence on the internet and build your reputation. A blog site can look and act like a website but it is easier to use and can be totally free. When deciding to develop a blog, Ochman gives the following caveats:

• Blogs are writing intensive…and it takes skill and training to write down ideas clearly and make them interesting.
• Maintaining a blog is hard work…a blog that isn’t kept up to date quickly loses its luster and its audience.
• It takes time and effort and skillful promotion to build an audience for a blog.
• A blog that isn’t well written and frequently updated will simply be ignored.

As well as, the good news:

• Blogs can help you get better search engine placements. Search engines like blogs because they are frequently updated, have lots of incoming and outgoing links and they are made up of words. Search engines like words.
• Blog software is user friendly.
• Posts in your blog can lead to coverage in mainstream, traditional media.
If a blog is being developed to reach an audience outside the company, ideally the blog should contain posts about something that the blog creator/writer is passionate about. Of course this could be related to a project or work or a pertinent issue associated with the field of Landscape Architecture. Recent discoveries about social media in the workplace indicate that a personal social network has more influence over consumers than a firm’s website and that when people engage with a social network they are interested in “bonding.” Consequently, if blogging is used as an outlet for a personal heartfelt passion, it has the potential to be not only helpful, but a contributive force in the lives of thousands of people. An example of this is a popular Denver blog, denverinfill.com, created and developed by urban planner, Ken Schroeppel. His website denverinfill.com (which chronicles Denver infill development from 2000-2009) and two blogsites, DenverInfill and Denverurbanism, were developed during his off hours and stem from his keen interest in urban development and the happenings in his downtown Denver community. According to the website and blog sites, the Denver urban core is his heartfelt passion, and he developed these sites for the following purposes:

- To inspire Denver area citizens to envision and strive for exceptional urbanism in their city and region
- To advocate for positive changes to Denver’s existing and planned built environment
- To inform and educate on topics relating to urban planning, urban design and city-building
- To serve as an online resource of notable Denver-area urban projects, plans, policies and programs

Ken’s blogs and website are not directly connected to his job but are an extension of his knowledge and vision as an urban planner. Over the years, his posts have attracted a large following, and he enjoys the dialogue that is created among all types of people interested in the urban core. According to Schroeppel, “a blog must be compelling, interesting, and well-written in order to have an impact.” He goes on to say that, “corporate blogs are a waste of time” mainly because most people aren’t interested in the rehashing of corporate happenings and achievements, which most of the time turn into a sales pitch. Unfortunately, the survey results from the Coleman Design Group, indicate that of the firms (48%) that have blogs, most were being used to post information about the firm and its projects. A better use of a blog might be to share a passion or an idea that might stimulate others to visit your site and get to know you and then link your blog to your firm’s website. If your blog becomes well followed, you might be able to expand your exposure though a link on professional social media sites, such as Land8Lounge, the Architess, and others.

If you are new to the blogging world, the first thing to learn about is host sites. There are free sites to set up and post blogs, and there are sites that charge a fee. The free sites are Blogger.com and Wordpress.com. Most of the literature comparing these two sites agree that Blogger.com is easier to use, but a little more confining than Wordpress.com. Blogger.com is hosted by Google, and you have to have a Google gmail account to use it. The site offers a variety of layout templates to help you set up and start a blog. It is user friendly and does not require a lot of knowledge about websites, etc… Both sites provide options to link posts to Facebook and/or other websites. I asked Ken what he used, and he started in 2003 on Blogger.com and eventually changed to wordpress.org. Wordpress.org is not free, but it has the software that you can load onto a host site, like GoDaddy and others. Ken went this route because he wanted the names of his sites to be free of any mention of the host site. For instance, if you set up a Blogger.com site your blog name will contain blogspot.com after the title and the same for Wordpress.com. When it comes to SEO (Search Engine Optimization) both are better than most other sites, and since Blogger.com is hosted by Google, it is subject to Google’s powerful search engine. Because it is the easiest method, let’s develop a blog through Blogger.com.

1. If you don’t have a gmail account, you must create one at gmail.com
2. Sign into gmail.com and go to blogger.com, sign up for blogger through gmail
3. Blogger dashboard will appear, click the button, ‘Create Your Blog Now’
4. Name your blog, think about this one– it is hard to change.
5. Choose a template, several layouts will appear– choose one, you can enhance it later
6. You are done, press the button ‘Start Blogging’
7. Working the tab buttons: Posting, Settings, Layout, Monetize
8. Edit your profile and give information about yourself and the blog
9. Play around with the options, the advanced options allow you to enhance your design, add pictures, change the templates, add ‘gadgets’ and many other things
10. You can monitor stats and link to Facebook and websites; you can follow other blogs and know who is following your blog; go to blogtopsites.com and find out what others are doing.

Have fun with it! Once your blog is developed, link it to other social media, so you can start building followers. Facebook is a great way to let people know when you post new ‘pieces’; announce it on your wall and a news feed will inform all your ‘friends.’ Unlike a website, a blog changes regularly and is a dynamic tool for interaction. Remember, however, successful blogs compel the reader to return. As your blog gets established and gains momentum, it should draw like-minded and curious followers; people who want to learn about and/or share in your...
heartfelt passion. Lastly, if your reaction to Facebook is like Betty White’s (who was asked to host SNL because of Facebook fans requests), “now that I know what it (Facebook) is, it sounds like a huge waste of time. In my day, looking at people’s vacation pictures was a form of punishment” (Saturday night live, May 2010), you might find that blogging is a better way to share thoughts, ideas and information with friends and potential customers in a more interesting and thought provoking exchange.

Susan McCabe is a licensed landscape architect with over 30 years of experience. She has been self-employed for 19 years and has a BLA from the University of Illinois ('78) and an MA in Urban Design ('84) from the University of Colorado. Susan is also a master gardener and certified fitness instructor. She has recently developed her own blog and invites all to visit at: www.yourgardenmylife.blogspot.com.
CAPTURING THE CAMANCHACA:
Designing Fog Collection Technology in the Atacama Desert

By Ben Bookout

In the far north of Chile lies the Atacama Desert, part of the greater Atacama Sechura ecoregion that covers a 1,300 mile stretch of Peru and Chile. The Atacama Desert receives an average of two millimeters of precipitation annually, and during the last 100 years the region’s largest city “Iquique” has not received a single drop of precipitation 60 percent of the time (Cereceda 2005). There seems to be little chance that life can survive in this moonscape environment. Yet, amongst the rocks at higher elevations, life seems to find a way to survive. Chañarcillo (Lycium leiosistemum), Sosa (Nolana sedifolia) and Pingo Pingo (Ephedra breana) are just some of the plants that etch out an existence along with lichens and beetles in the harsh desert. They do not survive on scarce precipitation but on a continual cycle of fog called the camanchaca, which blows in off the Pacific Ocean. By grouping together around the rocks and increasing their collective surface area these species are able to create small oases.

Because parts of the Atacama are inhospitable, this concentrates human populations to coastal areas or small river valleys that flow from the Andes Mountains. In an attempt to make life in the desert less difficult, humans have adapted the use of natural plant processes for their own survival through fog collection. Similar to lichens that use the rock’s surface area and plants that use their leaf surfaces, the practice of fog collection uses relatively simple technology. Sheets of polymer-based fabrics suspended between two anchors harvest the small water droplets in the incoming fog. These droplets gravity-feed to a piece of pipe cut in half so it resembles a small trough. The water collects there and is again gravity fed to a holding tank nearby. At the Universidad Católica de Chile test site, Alto Patache, these collectors are placed facing the southwest where the camanchaca comes every afternoon carrying varying amounts of water depending on the season. Spring and winter historically yield the most; autumn and summer the least (Cereceda 2002). The cost for a Standard Fog Collector (SFC) is $100 U.S. The water collection can average from one to three hundred liters per square meter of polypropylene material depending on weather conditions (Schemenauer 1994). Fog collectors at Alto Patache average around eight liters per square meter per day.
Specifications for a Standard Fog Collector.
(Image courtesy of Robert S. Shemenauer, 1994)

The excitement surrounding fog collection in the Atacama Desert is twofold. The first is the technical challenges of harvesting water in a harsh desert environment and the resourceful ability to take advantage of an untapped water supply. The second is the innovative design of the fog collection device itself and its aesthetic repercussions for landscape architecture.

Trip to Patache/ USM Fog Collectors

Universidad Católica de Chile offers a class each spring called Paisaje Xerofito (Xeric Landscape) with the intent of designing new, prosperous futures at its research facility, Alto Patache. Each class visits the test site and groups create master plans and design interventions. In October 2008 our Paisaje Xerofito class took a trip to Alto Patache to observe, analyze, sketch and gather ideas for an eventual master plan and proposal.

Professor Rodrigo Pérez De Arce picked us up on the side of a highway lined with salt from the nearby mine. The crusty white salt bound to North America gave the impression of snow but the heat, desolation and silence of the place made you reconsider. As Rodrigo pushed the overloaded truck up steep slopes and around corkscrew curves, we held our breath and clenched our fists. Having taught the class for the past five years, navigating the small truck around drop-off cliffs to the camp site seemed to be just another day at the office for our professor.

Upon arriving at Alto Patache base camp, the first thing we noticed was the sculpture park of fog collector interpretations installed by Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María based in Iquique. The installation stands alone in the desert as if waiting to be discovered. It offers no protection and seems to suffer the same feelings of loneliness and exposure that typify the Atacama Desert. One feels so vulnerable in such a landscape with little protection from the sun and wind, save a few boulders. It leaves most wondering how anything can survive in such an environment. There is not much difference in looking at images from Mars and those of the Atacama Desert. Along with learning about the intentions of research at Alto Patache, we learned about the fog collection process, its potentials for plant growth and potable water. We also learned about the plant communities that survive on water droplets from the camanchaca. Constanza Caceres, Sarah Kutz, Isidora Larrain, Thibaut Villiers-Moriame and I made group observations of the area we would eventually use for our master plan at Alto Patache.

Plan view for Camping Oasis Bajo Niebla. (Image courtesy of Ben Bookout)

Our Design: Camping Oasis Bajo Niebla

Using our experience in the desert and building on previous ideas, we decided to plan a recreation area between Alto Patache and Bajo Patache located on the hillside just above the ocean. Through a system of interlocking gabion walls, the project will protect users and plant life from the Atacama wind and sun, anal-
ogous to the way people have survived for centuries in deserts.

Locating the gardens between Alto Patache and Bajo Patache allows for greater access from the Pan American highway that follows the coast as well as access to the beach. The location’s other advantage is that it can be irrigated by a gravity system from Alto Patache, where we located all fog collection devices to supply the project with water.

We based consumption on an average of 30 liters per day per user with an average of 150 users per day and 500 liters daily for plant irrigation for a total of 5,000 liters daily use. Then we had to consider seasonal fluctuations of water supply. Thus we used a worst-case scenario in February where fog collectors receive an average of two liters per square meter of material to calculate the installation of 52 fog collectors. Installing for the lowest flow from fog collectors at Alto Patache will allow for a surplus of water the rest of the year which can be gravity fed to nearby settlements. For example, high flow is in September when it is estimated the fog collectors can accumulate 18 liters per square meter. Consequently, our project can function on just six fog collectors in September—the rest becomes surplus water for export.

The design group decided to celebrate this small surplus amount of water in such a desolate place. The irrigation system has a main collection tank at the top of the gabion wall system. This tank is fixed with a float allowing a valve to be turned on automatically when the tank is full. The tank would fill as fog collectors worked in Alto Patache and water can be gravity fed to the holding tank below. Excess water would then flow down the main canal at various moments and be collected in the lower holding tank for export. Potable water tap systems and drip irrigation would also be supplied from the main tank and dispersed throughout the site.

The gabion rooms would have distinct uses: camping, picnicking, and designated garden space. Rooms that offer a function are fixed with water taps. This water is then filtered through small gray water gardens and along with water from the solar showers, it is collected in the gray water holding tank for export to the impoverished, nearby town of Chanabaya that currently imports water by truck. Water could be further separated into potable and non-potable sources with more infrastructure. Garden rooms use native plants found at Alto Patache, and by using gabions we hoped the walls would create their own ecology and begin to encourage plant and lichen environments similar to the process at Alto Patache. There is also a plentiful supply of large cobble near the beach, providing ready stone to form the gabion walls. Bamboo rods would be spread across the tops of some rooms for shade while the materials for wooden paths would be imported.
Conclusions

The practice of fog collection in the Atacama Desert offers unusual design opportunities. The ability of this simple technology to alter the environment in the desert to create more irriguous microclimates has wide-ranging implications. More must be learned to understand the most efficient means to use this technology. The team has just scratched the surface of design possibilities for fog collectors and the water they accumulate. Universidad Católica de Chile is committed to implementing a design intervention at Alto Patache, and with further academic studies by various universities we may see a thriving desert oasis come from thin air, one that enhances local ecologies and local economies.

NOTES

All renderings are from the group studio work of Ben Bookout, Constanza Caceres, Sarah Kutz, Isidora Larrain, Thibaut Villiers-Moriane, 2008.

REFERENCES


ROOT is the University of Colorado Denver master of landscape architecture publication. Begun in 2009, it publishes 600 to 800 copies on an annual basis. Further information about ROOT can be found at www.root-land.org.
ASLA Awards Event
By Courtney McRickard, ASLA
VP of Public Relations, ASLA Colorado

ASLA Colorado held its annual Professional Design Awards event at Four Seasons Hotel on December 1st. We made a few changes to the format, submittal requirements, judging process and spontaneity of this year’s awards, all in an effort to improve the experience and recognition for our members. The goal for this year’s event was to increase attendance amongst our members. This was not meant as a revenue generator as much as a holiday celebration of all of our accomplishments throughout the year. We wanted to encourage networking and discourse between landscape architects talking about their work and what they were excited about whether an award was won or not. I believe we accomplished this as was seen through our record breaking attendance and energy throughout the evening. We had 193 attendees and many stayed well past the 8 o’clock closing time! We handed out champagne and ribbons to celebrate the winners, project boards were displayed on center and the food was fantastic. We continued our partnership with JSR Foundation which hosted a silent auction and wine event. Due to the turnout, The JSR Foundation had an extremely successful night and was able to raise double the amount of money compared to 2009 and 2010. Auden Schendler, the vice president of sustainability at Aspen Skiing Company, was also honored as part of the award ceremony.

Forty-three winners in the areas of design, planning and research, and communication were recognized this year. The entries were judged by the ASLA Arizona chapter using a 23-point scale. Each entry was required to submit a project board which will be used throughout the year to promote the profession of landscape architecture to the public. ASLA National in Washington DC passed on a mandate to the local chapters to push PR efforts to get out the word to local businesses and the general public as to what we in the profession work on and specialize in. This push to recognize Colorado and Wyoming landscape architecture firms, their people and their projects had us looking for ways to increase awareness of our best and brightest moments even in a down economy. The awards boards will be on a yearlong traveling campaign and featured in many local, public spaces throughout the state.

New ALSA Colorado Members

Welcome New Members

November
Ben Carlson, Associate ASLA, - NES, Inc.
Rebecca L. De Boer (Flood), ASLA
Matt Kintner, ASLA - Chroma Design Inc.
Charles S. Randolph, ASLA - Lifescape Assoc., Inc.
Thomas Rosenberger, Jr., Associate ASLA - Native Landscape Design
Philip E. Steinhauser, ASLA - Designscapes Colorado
Margaret I. Whitmer, ASLA

December
Thomas P. Papadinoff, ASLA - Thomas P Papadinoff - Landscape Architect
Debra Wheeler, Affiliate ASLA - Burns & McDonnell
Julie Meenan Eck, ASLA - Davis Partnership Architects

January
Caitlin R. Admire, Associate ASLA - Norris Design
Adam Barnard, ASLA - Ekistics Planning and Design
Julie Meenan Eck, ASLA - Davis Partnership Architects
Bryan C. Ganno, Associate ASLA
Christian M. Lieber, ASLA
Nick Persichitte, Associate ASLA
Shanen Weber, ASLA - Design Concepts CLA, Inc.
Debra Wheeler, Affiliate ASLA - Burns & McDonnell

We also took the time to create a ‘step and repeat’ backdrop as guests arrived to make sure our sponsors were well recognized. Without their support, we would not have been able to create such a fantastic event. A special thanks to ASLA Colorado’s 2011 sponsors http://www.aslacolorado.org/sponsors. Media sponsors: Colorado Real Estate Journal and Colorado Biz Magazine; Platinum Sponsors: Landscape Forms, Rocky Mountain Recreation; Gold Sponsors: Hunter Industries; Silver Sponsors, Land Tech Contractors, Pavestone, Rain Bird; Bronze Sponsors:A1
Organics, Arkins Park Stone Quarry, CPS Distributors Inc, Plant Select, Davey Tree, JVA, Little Valley Wholesale Nurseries, Made in the Schade, Sub-Zero/Wolf by Roth Distributing, Siloam Stone; and Friends of ASLA Colorado: Ken’s Reproductions, Valley Crest, Williamson Images.

As always, we are trying to improve the format and experience for our members; your thoughts and comments are welcomed. We are also looking for volunteers to help the Public Relations committee to continue our outreach efforts on behalf of our members. Please feel free to contact Courtney at courtney@sitedrivendesign.com.

The Jane Silverstein Ries Foundation is pleased to announce that Auden Schendler has been selected as the recipient of the 2011 JSR Award.

Auden Schendler. (Photo courtesy of Patrick Mundus)

Each year the JSR Foundation honors one individual, group or organization who demonstrates a pioneering sense of awareness and stewardship of the land in the Rocky Mountain region. The Jane Silverstein Ries Foundation is the charitable arm of the American Society of Landscape Architects – Colorado Chapter. The foundation honors pioneer landscape architect Jane Silverstein Ries, FASLA by promoting the quality of the built environment and the conservation and stewardship of our natural environment.

Auden Schendler is Vice President of Sustainability at Aspen Skiing Company and is being recognized for his work related to sustainable infrastructure and business practices. He worked previously in corporate sustainability at the Rocky Mountain Institute. Auden, a sustainable business foot soldier, has had numerous jobs leading to his current position from burger flipper to building goose nest islands. An avid outdoorsman, Auden has climbed Denali and kayaked the Grand Canyon in winter. His writings have been published extensively, and he has recently authored the book Getting Green Done: Hard Truths from the Front Lines of the Sustainability Revolution.

Contact: Patrick Mundus, ASLA President, JSR Foundation
T. 303-477-5244, ext. 25
F. 303-477-5146
pat@mundusbishop.com

Firm News

Bluegreen Hires New Landscape Architect

ASPEN, Colo. … Bluegreen is very excited to welcome Wendy Andringa to their landscape architecture and planning studio, as well as the Roaring Fork Valley. Wendy joined the firm this month from New York City.

Wendy’s passion for landscape architecture grew from a desire to combine her background in the arts with a growing interest in environmental sustainability. After working for several years as a professional photographer, she earned her Master’s degree from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) in New York, where she gravitated towards design theory. While studying abroad in Brazil, she focused her thesis research on revealing present-day vernacular culture in the historic modernist city of Brasilia.

Wendy was an instructor of landscape architecture design studios at SUNY ESF prior to working at Dirtworks, an award-winning firm in New York City. Her projects at Dirtworks encompassed green infrastructure, rooftop projects and campus design. She is a registered Landscape Architect in New York State, and she has applied her LEED accreditation to various LEED certified projects in the northeastern US. In New York she enjoyed working on green roof and rain garden projects in urban settings. She was also a Board Member of an Environmental Conservancy in Brooklyn that is committed to the restoration of an industrial urban waterway and promoting stewardship through active community participation. She plans to continue this positive role with volunteer organizations in the Roaring Fork Valley. At Bluegreen, Wendy will apply her experience to a variety of projects ranging from intimate residential landscapes to civic planning and streetscape improvements, including the remodel of the outdoor public spaces at the Hotel Jerome.

Bluegreen, founded in December 2001, includes a team of eight professionals dedicated to designing complete environments ranging from private residential landscapes to large-scale community plans. Committed to achieving an environmentally sound, innovative and strategic design process, Bluegreen creates thoughtful, inspiring and memorable places. Visit Bluegreen in downtown Aspen, or on the internet at www.bluegreenaspen.com.

News from Design Concepts

Centennial Park in Rifle Wins Three Awards with Master Plan by Design Concepts

Centennial Park. (Photo courtesy of Design Concepts)

Centennial Park in Rifle, Colorado has won three awards in 2011 from the Colorado Lottery, the Colorado Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA), and Downtown Colorado, Inc. The park was designed by Design Concepts, an award-winning community and landscape architecture firm located in Lafayette, Colorado that specializes in master planning and design for parks, communities, and school and university campuses.
“Centennial Park is an incredible amenity for the community,” said Matt Robbins, community relations specialist for the Colorado Lottery, which selected Centennial Park as one of 14 Starburst Award winners. Robbins said lottery officials selected the park because of “the vision, the collaborative funding partners, and the size and scope of the park.” He noted officials were impressed with amenities such as the great lawn, educational features, and walking and biking trails that connect to downtown and to a state park. Another Design Concepts project, the Lafayette Skatepark, also won a Starburst Award. The Lottery’s Starburst Award recognizes excellence in the use of Colorado Lottery funds. Both projects were partially funded by GOCO Lottery Grants.

The Colorado Parks and Recreation Association chose Centennial Park as a Columbine Award Winner. The park “has proven to attract residents and visitors, increase their sense of place and pride in their community, and encourage residents to interact with the space and each other,” according to CPRA.

The Governor’s Awards for Downtown Excellence and Downtown Colorado, Inc. selected Centennial Park as Colorado’s “Best Downtown Park.” The judges praised the park as a community asset with significant community gathering spaces and a history walk that highlights milestones for the city. “Centennial Park is an excellent example of a community pooling its vision and resources to create something memorable,” noted the award announcement. “It is a great public space.”

The 14-acre linear park is located along Rifle Creek in the heart of the city and connects to the historic downtown on the south end and the county fairgrounds on the north end. Phase I of the park, which opened in September 2010, features a “walk through time” along the creek with interpretive areas that highlight the city’s rich history, natural environment, and cultural diversity. The historic timeline, which follows an existing trail, includes four waysides with seating and interpretive displays that represent Rifle’s history from 1895 to 1935. The park also provides open space and passive recreation opportunities for neighboring residents and safe pedestrian connections over the creek to Rifle Middle School, downtown Rifle, and other city parks. The creek trail corridor includes a playground, an amphitheater, three gateways, picnic shelters, and additional trails, with artwork such as a supersized sundial.

New municipal infrastructure at the park includes pedestrian bridges, parking lots, an irrigation pump station, and a dam on Rifle Creek. ECI Site Construction Management of Loveland built the park. The project employed local subcontractors, creating and stimulating the area’s economy.

The park’s total cost was approximately $3.5 million. Funding sources included the City of Rifle, which dedicated $2 million from its Parks and Recreation Fund. Great Outdoors Colorado/Lottery provided a $750,000 grant, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs’ Energy Impact Grant Program gave a $500,000 grant, Garfield County contributed $200,000 and the Rifle Economic Development Corporation donated $5,000 to complete the park.

“The park has been a great addition to the community,” said Aleks Briedis, recreation director for the City of Rifle. He said the park has been a great success as a gathering place for special events such as a concert series. “This park will be enjoyed by generations to come. We look forward to continuing the planning and construction of future phases.”

Design Concepts has created construction documents for Phase II of the park, which will include a playground, a boardwalk through wetlands, waysides with interpretive displays for the years 1935 to 2005, additional picnic shelters, parking, bridges, and permanent restrooms. Design Concepts has also completed a master plan for the playground.

“It’s been great seeing the community gather here and use Centennial Park to connect to social functions, school, trails, neighborhoods, and downtown Rifle,” says Shanen Weber, Design Concepts principal in charge of the master plan. “I’m looking forward to seeing the park evolve and to helping expand its recreational, historical, and educational experiences.”

Founded in 1981, Design Concepts CLA, Inc. is a community and landscape architecture firm that focuses on master planning and design for parks, communities, and school and university campuses throughout the Rocky Mountain Region. Design Concepts’ projects have been featured in The Denver Post, Landscape Architecture, American School and University, and many other regional and national publications. For more information, go to www.dcla.net.

Contact: Linda Anderson-Biella, Design Concepts, 303.664.5301, Linda@dcla.net Shanen Weber, Project Principal in Charge, 303.664.5301, Shanen@dcla.net

News from Design Concepts
Elk Ridge Park Grand Opening Celebrates the First Community Park for Castle Pines, Colorado’s Newest City

Hundreds of residents turned out on September 17 to celebrate the Grand Opening of the new Elk Ridge Park, located off of Legae Road, south of Castle Pines Parkway, in Castle Pines. Led by the Mayor, the City Council, the Castle Pines Parks Authority Board and the Castle Pines North Metropolitan District staff, the celebration featured food, music from two bands, and activities for children.

“After many years of community involvement, it’s really wonderful to see people playing in their park,” said Axel Bishop, a founder and principal of Design Concepts CLA, an award-winning community and landscape architecture firm located in Lafayette, Colorado that specializes in parks, playgrounds, and school land-
When you choose Hunter, you get more than just innovative irrigation products. You get access to hundreds of people with decades of experience in our industry. In the field, at the office, or in the factory, we’re here to support you and your business every day.
Design exactly what you want using only what you need.

Introducing water-smart, easy-to-configure Rain Bird® ESP-LX Series Controllers and IQ™ v2.0.

Through advanced features and a modular design, the ESP-LX Series makes promoting sustainability easy. You'll be able to select the exact irrigation controls required for each project and conserve more water, all while staying within budget. Learn more at www.rainbird.com/ESPLXSeries.

Contact: Linda Anderson-Biella, Design Concepts, 303.664.5301, Linda@dcla.net
Axel Bishop, Project Principal in Charge, 303.664.5301, AxElB@dcla.net
IF YOU CAN DREAM IT WE CAN BUILD IT

Colorado’s leading resource for Custom outdoor recreation equipment

Rocky Mountain Recreation Proudly Represents:

PO Box 620411  Littleton CO, 80162
tel 303-783-1452  toll free 800-636-0199  fax 303-783-1454
www.rmrec.com