



Mark Bigej  
OAN PRESIDENT

# No one does it alone

Last month, our business took another  
step forward and opened a new location.

## What an undertaking!

It's amazing how much work can go into a new venture. It truly took a team effort to be able to pull off such a task. Everyone in the company had to work harder than usual to make it happen. Even those who weren't directly working on the new store had to keep everything else running with less attention and support. I am so grateful for everything our team did. As I was reflecting on the project and thinking of all we accomplished in a short amount of time, I realized that, all too often, I had forgotten to tell everyone how much I truly appreciated them and everything they were doing.

A simple expression of appreciation is free, easy to do and yet yields so much — why don't I do it more? I get busy, caught up in what I'm doing and just plain forget. I need to do better.

As in my business, I find that success in our association is a team effort. Being involved with the OAN on committees, then the Executive Committee and now having the privilege of being president has really opened my eyes. I not only see all the benefits of being an OAN member, but also all the work by volunteers and our great staff to make it happen.

The Government Relations Committee has been very active this year. With a long session (160 days of political mayhem), a state budget that isn't close to balancing, and politicians with agendas, there is a lot to do to promote and protect our industry.

In February, 15 OAN members took time away from their businesses to meet in person with several senators and representatives, letting them all know our industry's needs and concerns. Several more have called or written to those representing them, and some have even testified in person before committees and task forces.

The Oregon Legislature has introduced 2,866 bills during this year's session alone (as of press time). Of these, the OAN is tracking 405 due to their possible impacts on the industry. That gives you a good idea of what a huge job our Government Relations team has — and how much work remains to be done.

The Government Relations Committee is just one example of people giving graciously of their time. Several other OAN chapters, committees and task forces have numerous members volunteering on them, keeping our organization healthy, productive and progressive.

The OAN also has an amazing staff and Executive Director. Working more closely with them over the past few years has helped me realize how much they do to keep the OAN running. We have some amazing minds in our industry — so many creative thinkers and visionaries who can come up with great ideas. Those ideas would be meaningless if it were not for the staff that makes them come to life. They are definitely a professional, hard-working group that represent us well!

To all of our OAN staff and the OAN members volunteering their time for the benefit of the nursery industry — thank you! I, and many others, greatly appreciate everything you are doing to keep the OAN strong and protect our industry. I don't know where we would be without you. ☺

## 2016-2017

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