

**2017-2018
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Josh Zielinski
PRESIDENT
josh@alphannursery.com
Alpha Nursery
5050 Hazelgreen Rd. N.E.
Salem, OR 97305-3519
503-390-1286
FAX 503-390-2639

Mike Hiller
PRESIDENT-ELECT
mike@kniusa.com
Kraemer's Nursery Inc.
P.O. Box 930
Mt. Angel, OR 97362
503-845-2283
FAX 503-845-6557

Jim Simnitt
VICE PRESIDENT
simnittnsy@canby.com
Simnitt Nursery
138 NE 22nd Ave.
Canby, OR 97013
503-266-9640
FAX 503-263-6330

Kyle Fessler
TREASURER
kyle@stchristophernursery.com
St. Christopher Nursery LLC
12936 Portland Rd. N.E.
Gervais, OR 97026
503-580-4470
FAX 503-792-3902

Mark Bigej
PAST PRESIDENT
mbigej@als-gardencenter.com
Al's Garden & Home
1220 N. Pacific Hwy.
Woodburn, OR 97071-3616
503-981-1245
FAX 503-982-4608

Josh Robinson
SECRETARY
josh@robinsonnursery.com
Robinson Nursery Inc.
P.O. Box 100
Amity, OR 97101
503-835-4533
FAX 503-835-3004

Denece Messenger
MEMBER AT LARGE
denecemessenger@comcast.net
Decorative Bark Products
P.O. Box 1198
Tualatin, OR 97062
503-510-4029
FAX 503-859-3764

**STATE BOARD
REPRESENTATIVES**

CENTRAL OREGON CHAPTER
Gary S. English
gary@landsystems-nursery.com
Landsystems Nursery
541-382-7646

CHRISTMAS TREE CHAPTER
vacant

CLACKAMAS CHAPTER
Adam Farley
afarley@countryridenursery.com
Amanda Staehely
amandastaehely@gmail.com
Countryside Nursery
503-678-0511
Columbia Nursery
503-810-2598

EMERALD EMPIRE CHAPTER
Tamara Cliff
tamaragreg@msn.com
McKenzie River Nursery
541-747-2767

GREENHOUSE CHAPTER
Andrea Avila-Aragon
andrea.avila-aragon@smithgardens.com
Mark Leichty
mark@littleprinceoforegon.com
Smith Gardens
503-678-5373
Little Prince of Oregon Nursery
503-678-5687

MT. HOOD CHAPTER
Scott Ekstrom
scott_ekstrom@yahoo.com
Anthony Kinen
akinen5@gmail.com
Ekstrom Nursery Inc.
503-663-4035
Kinen's Big & Phat
Special Plants
503-866-3627

RETAIL CHAPTER
not filled to date

SUNSET CHAPTER
Matt Gold
matt.gold@midasnurserysolutions.com
Ron Kinney
rkinney@monrovia.com
Midas Nursery Solutions
503-628-3059
Monrovia
503-868-7941

WILLAMETTE CHAPTER
John Maurer
info@evergreengrowers.com
Robert Van Klaveren
vansnursery@aol.com
Evergreen Growers Supply
503-908-1946
Van's Nursery
503-463-4507

It's good to be back on top

For folks I haven't had the pleasure of meeting, I am Josh Zielinski and I am thrilled to be your incoming OAN president.



Josh Zielinski
OAN PRESIDENT

These are exciting times in our industry. It feels good to come in just a few months after USDA reported that nursery and greenhouse crops are back on top in Oregon agriculture, with higher gross sales than any other crop in our state. Good job, everyone!

Now, a little about myself: I am a fifth-generation farmer and second-generation nurseryman. I help run our family business, Alpha Nursery, which was started 40 years ago by my dad, Doug, as just a single greenhouse on the family farm.

Our business has grown, and these days, we have many more greenhouses. Early on, we serviced the local landscape trade with a dozen varieties. Now, we cater to independent garden centers across North America with hundreds of diverse offerings.

Like many in this unique industry, my nursery career started shortly after I could walk and talk. Around age 5, I was given my first paid position stacking 2¼-inch pots for \$0.75 an hour with my younger brother, Scott. From there, General Manager R.J. Tancredi (who is still with our company today!) made good use of our small statures and promoted us to weeding!

They were simple times and I always enjoyed the work, the customers, and the other "nursery people." I grew up seeing them at OAN functions such as the annual Convention, when they would be dressed for various themes, ranging from cowboys to hippies.

I got to see my dad — with the help of my mom, Jamie — lead the OAN as its president in 2000 before I left for college in Southern California, where I studied business and Spanish. Many waves and a few books later, I had graduated — only to quickly learn that most other jobs didn't offer the rewarding experience of creating living products from a cutting or a seed.

It wasn't but a couple months before I began working for a large nursery. There, I made lots of great connections and learned some valuable lessons before coming home.

Perhaps a week after returning to Oregon, I found myself in a "GR" meeting at the OAN. While I certainly recognized many faces in the room, even without their hippie costumes on, I honestly didn't know that GR stood for Government Relations — or what that even meant.

Within a half hour, I'd met with three or four state representatives and watched plainclothed plantsmen and women relate what really matters to them, their employees and their industry. I was moved by the experience. I must have gone to enough GR meetings over the years, because in 2014 I ended up chairing the committee!

One thing led to another, and with the encouragement of many mentors, my co-workers, and perhaps most importantly my family — including my wife Kattie and daughter Alyce — here I am.

As I mentioned, it feels good to be a part of a high point in our industry's economic cycle. We should take a moment to recognize the hard work that allowed our industry to achieve nearly \$1 billion in sales last year.

But, rather than use all of our energy celebrating, we should reinvest it in the future of our businesses and our Oregon nursery industry. Just how we do that is a great challenge and one I look forward to collaborating with all members on over the next year and beyond. ☺