

# Our mission is to serve

**The Oregon Association of Nurseries wouldn't have lasted for over eight decades without changing with the times, but the pace of societal change feels like it is accelerating. We must keep up.**

All across the country, trade associations have struggled to demonstrate the return on investment (ROI) to their membership. They've presented a wide array of programs and services. These have value, but the overall impression has been that of a laminated menu with too many numbered specials. What today's members really need is a dynamic and fluid set of benefits designed to serve small and large operations alike.

For 85 years, the OAN has been about community and shared goals. That's still important, but people aren't "joiners" just for the sake of it anymore. They want relevance. They want value. That's why your association has evolved and adapted, addressing member needs in ways that make sense for the future.

## Roof and pillars

During the darkness of the Great Recession in 2008, the OAN saw the need to recalibrate its offerings. We began looking for ways to maximize the personal connections our members can make, tap into knowledge, enhance the reputation of the nursery and greenhouse industry and maintain our considerable political clout. Most importantly, we sought to increase your purchasing power and use all of our communication and marketing tools to clear the road for your business to grow.

We think of the OAN as a sheltering structure for the green industry. The roof is the association itself. It covers every corner of business, always adapting to marketing and industry trends. The structure expands and shrinks as needed, and it protects against the harsh elements that would erode the industry's health. Most importantly, it is safe and welcoming. Everyone has a seat at the table.

Holding up that roof are five pillars, and they weren't chosen by accident. When I took over as your executive director, we went back to basics. If a program, service or effort didn't serve our core mission, we set it aside so we could focus on essential member and industry needs. The programs that remained became our five pillars.

**Farwest Show.** Entering its 46th year, it is still the biggest show in the West. Farwest continues to offer the industry business-to-business opportunities, tours of the elite operations in the country, and top-notch education addressing the latest trends.

**Membership.** We are who our members are. Pretty simple. The diversity of our membership is a strength. Our new governance structure reflects the priority of serving each segment of our industry.

**Government Relations.** The power of collective advocacy brings industry competitors together, transforming a tangle of voices into an impactful and persuasive shout. Threats to the industry can come from any and every corner of the political world. Our watchful eye, collaborative approach and focused agenda ensure that the OAN will remain an influential and respected force in Salem, Oregon and Washington, D.C.

**Products and Services.** Members receive a free company profile in *Nursery Guide* in print and online. Members can post photos, availabilities and an in-depth description online, and update them anytime. The site attracted 680,000 pageviews in 2017. It's a great way to bring in new customers who are looking for what you offer. Your first plant or product/service listing is free. OAN-endorsed health coverage through Leonard Adams Insurance provides richer benefit plans at a lower cost. Without our plan, most small operators would be looking at a 10–20 percent rate hike for 2018, compared to a much lower average calculated rate increase of 2.5 percent for our plans. Other services include 30 minutes of free legal advice through Jordan Ramis PC, card lock and bulk fuel discounts — even a 15 percent office supply discount with Staples. The OAN also takes worker safety seriously and hosts first aid classes and will be conducting Worker Protection Standard



Jeff Stone  
OAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

training during the course of the year.

**Publications.** Our customized content is critical for keeping an eye on everything that impacts your business. The OAN provides this through *Digger* magazine, which reaches 7,500 subscribers each month, and a weekly Member Update, exclusively for our members. Our professional writers and staff bring you 12 issues and 52 weeks of online news and colorful photography. Our offerings reflect more than ever how our members take in information. Our publications also offer a great opportunity to get your name out through print and digital advertising at reasonable rates.

I am proud of the professional staff we have at the OAN. It is not about the building in Wilsonville; it is about tremendous talent dedicated to your success. The OAN staff is lean and committed to providing exemplary service to the membership.

## Your missile defense

When the industry has faced threats to its labor force, the OAN has been there. When federal and state agencies have proposed regulations or laws that harm the industry, the OAN has taken up the fight.

Growing and selling green goods is what you do best. What do we do best? Protect the industry. Connect you to customers. Keep you informed. Give you access to cost savings so you can boost margins.

If you are a member of the OAN, thank you. We will continue to work for you 24/7 every day of the year. If you are not a member yet, let's talk. As many of our member leaders would tell you, all of us in the green industry benefit from a shared sense of purpose. We will help you tap into the power of your membership.