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# Being a part of a community

As our spring shipping and retailing season is wrapping up, it is a great time to look back and digest how that season went.

Whether you are involved in wholesale, retail or both, I hope your season was a good one.

It often amazes me how relatively short the season is and how much product is moved out of the wholesale nurseries, over to the retailers and other channels, and ultimately, to the consumers who make it all possible.

In Oregon, our season started with flooding in a few areas. The Willamette basin used to flood yearly, but with the advent of flood control dams over the past century or so, that's been far reduced. Nonetheless, we had some flooding of the Willamette River down the valley, near Corvallis and Eugene.

Our OAN communications team reached out through the weekly electronic OAN Member Update, which I hope you receive and read, to see how our members were affected by the floods. Fortunately, there were not many nurseries affected, but one near Eugene was in fact inundated with floodwaters and sustained damage.

Because we have such a strong knit community, members help each other. Kathy Brown from Simplot Professional Products reached out to me to see if they could help. We were able to connect her with the flooded nursery, so that she could donate some Apex fertilizer. Because of this, the grower was able to salvage plants and get them fertilized without the added expense of purchasing more plant food.

It's a small part of what the nursery had to do to restore its operations to normal, but it helped. Stories like this do happen, and good deeds need to be recognized.

We are a strong industry, especially when we stick together. This year at our Hall of Fame banquet, this message of working together was repeated by several of the inductees. These are titans of our industry. They know the industry best, and they can give example after example showing why cooperation is important.

They have set the bar high for us. We need to keep raising that bar, making sure our industry continues to work together to develop solutions to issues.

As you reflect on how you survived this spring season, think about who stepped up at your nursery or business. Who took on more responsibility? Who put in that extra effort to get the beautiful plants into the hands of consumers? There are likely more people than you can think of.

Don't forget — the OAN is also behind you. It plays a major role in helping you get your plants to the marketplace, whether it's marketing through *Farwest* or *Nursery Guide* or *Digger*, advocacy through our lobbying efforts to keep markets open, or savings programs to help you do more with less. The OAN is by, of and for the members.

If you are on the fence about the value of membership, just think about the example above. Through the connections that OAN facilitates, a nursery's need was made known and help was soon on the way. That's the true value of community. ©



Mike Hiller  
OAN PRESIDENT

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