

**2019-2020
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- Jim Simnitt**
PRESIDENT
Simnitt Nursery
138 NE 22nd Ave.
Canby, OR 97013
simnittnsy@canby.com
503-266-9640
FAX 503-263-6330
- Kyle Fessler**
PRESIDENT-ELECT
Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas Inc.
13009 McKee School Road N.E.
Woodburn, OR 97071
sales@woodburnnursery.com
503-634-2231
FAX 503-634-2238
- Josh Robinson**
VICE PRESIDENT
Robinson Nursery Inc.
P.O. Box 100
Amity, OR 97101
josh@robinsonnursery.com
877-855-8733
FAX 503-835-3004
- Todd Nelson**
TREASURER
Bountiful Farms Nursery Inc.
17280 Boones Ferry Rd. N.E.
Woodburn, OR 97071
info@bountifulfarms.com
503-981-7494
- Mike Hiller**
PAST PRESIDENT
KCK Farms LLC
11483 SE Amity-Dayton Hwy.
Dayton, OR 97114
mike@kckfarms.com
503-864-9422
FAX 503-864-4412
- Denece Messenger**
SECRETARY
Decorative Bark Products
P.O. Box 1198
Tualatin, OR 97062
denece messenger@comcast.net
503-510-4029
FAX 503-859-3764
- Wes Bailey**
MEMBER AT LARGE
Smith Gardens Inc.
23150 Boones Ferry Road N.E.
Aurora, OR 97002
wes.bailey@smithgardens.com
503-678-5373

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Tom Brewer**
ASSOCIATE MEMBER
HC Companies Inc. ProCal
tbrewer@hc-companies.com
503-686-8448
- Adam Farley**
CONTAINER GROWER
Countryside Nursery
afarley@countrysidenursery.com
503-678-0511
- Ron Kinney**
CONTAINER GROWER
Monrovia
rkinney@monrovia.com
503-868-7941
- Amanda Staehely**
CONTAINER GROWER
Columbia Nursery
amandastaehely@gmail.com
503-810-2598
- Jesse Nelson**
FIELD / BARE ROOT GROWER
Hans Nelson & Sons Nursery Inc.
jnelson@hansnelson.com
503-663-3348
- Chris Robinson**
FIELD / BARE ROOT GROWER
Robinson Nursery Inc.
chris@robinsonnursery.com
877-855-8733
- Jay Sanders**
FIELD / B&B GROWER
KG Farms Inc.
jsanders@kgfarmsinc.com
503-678-3245
- Lorne Blackman**
GREENHOUSE
Walla Walla Nursery Co. Inc.
lblackman@wallawallanursery.com
509-522-9855
- Ben Verhoeven**
GREENHOUSE
Peoria Gardens Inc.
benv@peoriagardens.com
541-753-8519
- Gary S. English**
RETAIL
Landsystems Nursery
gary@landsystems-nursery.com
541-382-7646

Guides along life's journey

**Throughout life, we run across
people who affect us in positive ways.**

Teachers, coaches and friends can all have an influence upon us that lasts a lifetime.

Within the nursery industry, mentors can be found just about anywhere. They can be bosses, co-workers, or even competitors down the road. They can also be family members working with you in your business.

Throughout my life, I have been fortunate to have my father and (much) older brother to serve as role models for how to be a businessman, an effective leader, and an advocate for our industry. They have helped to shape who I am today, and have influenced the lives of many around them.

My father, Jerry Sr., has always believed in “working until the job is done.” He has always set the example: Work hard, be honest and fair, and the rest will take care of itself.

He has a wealth of knowledge in the growing of our plants, and also in business. Being able to get advice on nursery work or being a father has been invaluable. He and my mother started our business from the ground up. It is a constant joy to see them every day around the nursery and learn from their guidance.

My brother Jerry's youngest daughter, Joanna, also grew up on the nursery. Her aspirations are taking her to a different place — down a path to political advocacy. She credits her dad for inspiring her to work in politics.

When Joanna was young, my brother served as president of the Oregon Association of Nurseries and was very involved in the OAN Government Relations Committee. He saw the need to get our business' point of view out to our elected leaders, and impressed this upon her. The biggest lesson is that calm, reasonable communication is more effective than the opposite.

Joanna saw the benefit of what political advocacy can do for a group of businesses, especially a group like the OAN, which is made up of family-run operations.

One of the best examples was when Tom Vilsack, who served as Secretary of Agriculture in the Obama Administration, came to Oregon and toured our nursery. He wanted to talk about the impact of Sudden Oak Death regulations and how they were affecting Oregon nurseries.

That tour and meeting took the real-world impacts of the proposed federal regulatory approach to the pathogen and made them real. It made a difference in the outcome. The issue of plant health was still addressed, but not in a way that hurt us.

It wasn't about Democrats, Republicans or any party affiliation. It was about working together and solving problems.

Jerry has not only been a great older brother and business partner but also a mentor to me. He influenced me to become an active member of the OAN and I have followed in his footsteps to become the president.

As I watch my kids grow, I often think about how I can surround them with good examples and role models in their lives. They have a strong grandfather and uncle to start, and I hope a dad as well. Whether they choose to work in the nursery industry or find their own path, I hope that I can be a mentor that helps them along their life's journey.

Happy Father's Day to all the dads out there.

Thank you to all the mentors who help our industry grow and thrive. ☺



**Jim Simnitt
OAN PRESIDENT**

