

**2020-2021
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Kyle Fessler

**Working for
future generations**

**When I look back on this past year,
countless emotions come to mind.**

There is one in particular that I keep circling back to, and that is gratitude.

For those of us in the nursery industry, we have much to be thankful for. While many sectors were hit hard by the pandemic, ours experienced rejuvenation unlike most of us had ever seen. There was more effort put forth behind the scenes to keep our doors open than many of us will ever know, and we should all be grateful to be in the position we are today.

I'm also grateful to all the Oregon Association of Nurseries staff and member volunteers that helped guide me through this challenging year. Past President Jim Simnitt set the tone in 2020, taking on countless challenges the association faced with poise and confidence.

Long before Jim held the post, there was a long line of industry leaders that set us up for success. Those of you familiar with the OAN office know of the long wall of past Presidential portraits that line the hall leading back to the Dick Joyce Conference Room. There are plenty of familiar faces along that wall, especially for the current crop of second- and third-generation OAN volunteer leaders, whose parents led the OAN decades ago. Those that served before us had the foresight to build reserves when times were good, and their commitment to a sustainable future of the association undoubtedly helped carry us through this difficult time.

**For those of us in the
nursery industry, we have
much to be thankful for.**

I see the same commitment to future generations on our board and committees today. Led by our incoming president, Josh Robinson of Robinson Nursery, we have a fantastic group of volunteers that show up when called upon and put forth their full effort toward the cause. At a time of constant chaos in our daily lives, they have made the commitment to fight the necessary battles on our behalf, and to continue to lay the groundwork for our industry to succeed in the future.

Without a doubt, the nursery industry in Oregon is a family affair. Many of our operations are multi-generational, and have plans to continue the family legacies going forward. I'm extremely grateful to my own family, especially my wife, Mollie, who juggles five kids like it's a walk in the park. They have allowed me the time away from them and the operation to serve the membership.

There's always difficulty dedicating time away from our farms and families. My time away was absolutely well spent, and I would encourage anyone to get more involved in their association in any way they can. The skills, knowledge, and relationships I've gained will undoubtedly pay dividends in our own operation for years to come.

God willing, we've also contributed to building on to that solid foundation for our own children and future nursery generations to come. ☺