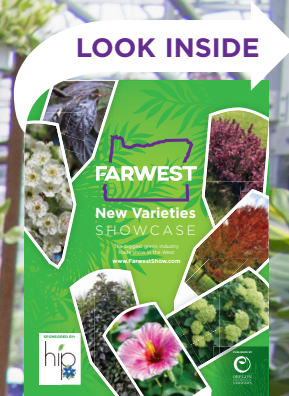


Digger

JULY 2022



Houseplants and hard goods

Retailers find success by diversifying their products

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Growing business relationships

PAGE 21

A spruce for any landscape

PAGE 25

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On the cover: Al's Garden & Home in Woodburn displays houseplants of all shapes and sizes. PHOTO BY EMILY LINDBLOM **On this page:** Left: Macrame, popular in the 1970s, has made a comeback in the houseplants industry. PHOTO BY EMILY LINDBLOM Right: *Picea pungens* 'Spring Ghost' is a unique variety available at Peace of Mind Nursery. PHOTO COURTESY OF PEACE OF MIND NURSERY



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Where the lessons are

Life moves too fast.

My eighth grader just finished the school year and, frankly, I am replaying the 10,000+ times people told me, "Life only moves faster the older you get."

For everyone that ever told me that, and heard my adamant reply that "I live in the moment" and "It won't apply to me" ... I admit my wrong and accept my bowl of crow. Bittersweet.

With that said, I never thought I would be so proud to be a father to Kaden. What he has accomplished is mind-blowing. Not only is he dunking in basketball, but he is doing the same thing in life.

His school year ended with the kiddos going on various field trips and it got me thinking, how much did you love field trips as a kid? I, for one, will tell you that it was something I looked forward to from the moment they were announced at school. They were what kept me focused and doing what needed to be done to get to the prize.

I will never forget the granddaddy of them all. When I attended a small school in Newberg, C.S. Lewis Academy, the light at the end of the middle school tunnel was a weeklong field trip to Washington, D.C. When the day arrived, it was everything I imagined it would be. Seeing the White House in person, the Capitol building, the Lincoln Memorial, Smithsonian museums, the Washington Monument, along with many others — those are things I will never forget.

If you are like me and field trips are the incentive that keep you doing what you don't want to do, but have to do, look no further than the Farwest Show tours on August 23. That is a field trip you do not want to miss!

The OAN will guide you through some gems of Nursery Country. The tours will highlight inventive garden centers as well as innovations in nursery production. I highly encourage you to sign up. Space is limited and spots are filling up, so do it now!

For those that don't know me, I can be summed up as "half kid, half adult" — or at least that's what my family tells me — so my love of field trips will never die.

At our nursery, we have an annual two-day meeting with our leadership team to determine our "guiding compass" as a business. A running initiative that has come out of this process, is a target to take our production staff on at least five tours (field trips) of other nurseries each year.

This is one of the most beneficial things our company does for our people. The benefits of touring other nurseries are limitless. We learn how other companies innovate and overcome the struggles we are currently facing. It offers our staff networking opportunities to connect with other leaders. It also gives us the opportunity to see the safety measures other companies have in place. The experience is incredibly powerful.

An a-ha moment happened when one of our team members shared that it was the first time they saw how a tree was finished, from a liner to a landscape-ready tree. The "why" we do what we do is a powerful tool for people carrying out the day-to-day work on a tree. Knowing you should limb a tree to a certain height or knowing how to make it perfectly straight are all good, but once you know why it is done, it is much more impactful.

This month's call to action: call up a nursery and schedule a tour with them. Inquire with your staff, top to bottom, as to who would be interested in going. I guarantee that you will be so glad you did. If you go in with intention and a focus on improvement, you'll be surprised by the outcomes. ☺



Josh Robinson



Calendar

Get the word out about your event! Email details to calendar@oan.org by the 10th day of the month to be included in the next issue of *Digger*.

JULY 13-16

CULTIVATE'22

Presented by AmericanHort, Cultivate offers educational and networking opportunities and exhibits featuring technology, new products, services and plant varieties. Cultivate'22 will take place at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio. For more information, visit www.cultivate22.org.

JULY 21-25

APLD 2022 INTERNATIONAL DESIGN CONFERENCE

The Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD) offers a range of garden tours, sessions with CEU credits, and networking opportunities at their APLD International Design Conference, held in Chicago, Illinois. More details will be released as they become available. For more details, visit www.apld.org.

AUGUST 1-5

PERENNIAL PLANT SYMPOSIUM

Presented by the Perennial Plant Association and held in conjunction with All-America Selections and National Garden Bureau, the 2022 National Symposium will be at the Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square, 25 South Queen Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. This event is the largest educational and trade show program devoted solely to herbaceous perennials in North America. Visit perennialplant.org for more information.

AUGUST 9-11

THE GARDEN CENTER SHOW

The first Garden Center Show for independent garden centers will be held at the Wisconsin Center, 400 W. Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The trade show and networking event includes an education program sponsored by Garden Centers of America (GCA). Exhibitors and attendees will be able to meet face-to-face and network with leaders in the industry. For more information, visit www.gardencentersshow.com.

AUGUST 10-12

NURSERY/LANDSCAPE EXPO

San Antonio, Texas will host this year's showcase of the latest nursery and landscape products. Gain a new perspective by meeting face-to-face with industry experts and participating in dozens of education sessions and notable keynote presentations. For more information, go to www.nurserylandscapeexpo.com.

AUGUST 18

CNGA 2021 BUYERS EXPO

The Colorado Nursery and Greenhouse Association (CNGA) is hosting an outdoor Buyers Expo on Adams County Fairgrounds



JULY 28

OAN DAY AT THE OREGON GARDEN

Enjoy a private after-hours stroll through the Oregon Garden and join us for some BBQ food at OAN Day at the Oregon Garden. All OAN members and their families are invited to drop in between 4:30-7 p.m. Thank you for being a part of our association, and we hope you can make time to stop in and see your fellow members in Silverton this summer. Please RSVP on www.oan.org by July 15 for food service.

9755 Henderson Road, Brighton, Colorado. The Expo is designed for buyers and specifiers who are interested in purchasing or sourcing plant material. This includes retail nurseries, garden centers, landscape contractors, municipal parks and recreation departments, landscape architects, property management companies and other relevant industry buyers. Go to www.coloradonga.org to register.

AUGUST 24-26

FARWEST SHOW

The biggest green industry trade show in the West will take place at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Portland, Oregon. The show, produced by the OAN, attracts exhibitors and attendees from across the country and the world. For more information, log on to www.farwestshow.com.

SEPTEMBER 12-14

ISA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The International Society of Arboriculture

(ISA) will host its annual conference and trade show in the Malmö, Sweden. Join industry leaders from around the world and learn about the latest developments in equipment, technology and research. For more information, log on to www.isa-arbor.com.

SEPTEMBER 14-15

GROW WEST COAST

The BC Landscape & Nursery Association's CanWest Horticulture Expo has been rebranded as the Grow West Coast show. Western Canada's premier horticulture show will be presented as an outdoor market trade show experience at the Surrey Civic Plaza, 13450 University Drive, Surrey, British Columbia. Landscape professionals, municipalities, garden centers, suppliers and wholesale nursery and greenhouse growers from across the region will be exhibiting, following provincial and health guidelines. To register, go to www.growwestcoast.com. ©



Northwest News

OAN members and chapters are encouraged to send in relevant news items, such as new hires, new products, acquisitions, honors received and past or upcoming events. Email news@oan.org.



J. Frank Schmidt acquires Northwest Shade Tree

J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. (JFS) added a sixth farm to its corporate portfolio by purchasing 350-acre B&B operation **Northwest Shade Tree LLC**, according to a release from the company. The specimen caliper shade, flowering, and ornamental landscape tree grower will continue producing and selling under its well-known Northwest Shade Tree brand. JFS's management team will oversee the sales and production.

CEO Ben Rough praised the deal because the Brooks, Oregon-based operation comes with continuous great soil and water rights conditions, and it will bring JFS's growing grounds to more than 3,000 acres.

"This purchase will allow us to provide the depth of product needed to better fulfill customer needs while supporting our land rotation goals that we take very seriously," Rough said. "The addition of the Northwest Shade Trees team of superb tree growers will complement the great team we already have at JFS. We're excited for the overall increase of product inventories this acquisition will provide and are positioned to maintain the high level of customer service and quality production expected of our nursery."

Read the full release on tinyurl.com/ystwmluh.



A tiny wasp attacks invasive spotted wing drosophila. PHOTO BY DR. KENT DAANE, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

PARASITIC WASP TO BE RELEASED FOR FRUIT FLY CONTROL

The USDA has given **Oregon State University** (OSU) researchers permission to release a parasitic wasp (*Ganapis brasiliensis*) to control infestations of **spotted wing drosophila** (SWD) on cherries, peaches, figs, blueberries, strawberries raspberries, blackberries and winegrapes. The application process and research by Vaughn Walton's OSU Agricultural Experiment Station for the permit took more than 10 years. The wasp kills the pest by laying eggs inside the insect and when the wasp hatches, the larva consumes its prey.

The fruit flies cause at least \$500 million in damage to U.S. crops each year, especially for blueberry growers. Comprehensive integrated pest management (IPM) programs have been effective, but pesticides are still necessary at a cost of nearly \$100 million a year nationwide. A grower

could potentially save \$150 an acre by using less pesticides. In the end, introducing the parasitic wasp will control about 65% of the fruit fly populations, so good sanitation, proper pruning, drip irrigation, and weed cloth may still be necessary IPM practices.

"This will have a huge impact, Walton said. "Spotted wing drosophila is very difficult to control. It's got a very, very high reproduction rate with many generations per year. Because of that, when using pesticides, they have to be applied constantly, sometimes two or three times a week. Growers are really interested and are excited about a biological control that will work along with cultural management tools to decrease SWD and not cost them any money. It's a natural resource available to them. We think this is going to change things."

Read the story at tinyurl.com/2caa8der. >>

More COVID-19 coverage online

Further updates on how the COVID-19 virus is impacting the greenhouse and nursery industry are online at www.diggermagazine.com/category/coronavirus. We are reporting on the most current information as of press time, but please check online for the most up-to-date information.



Northwest News

Robinson Nursery Inc. joined in the fun at Duffers Golf Classic, and won first place. Scan the QR code to see more photos on Facebook.

PHOTO BY BILL GOLOSKI

GREG BELL ANNOUNCED AS FARWEST KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Nationally-renowned transformation consultant and trainer Greg Bell will be the keynote speaker at the 2022 Farwest Show in Portland, Oregon.



“Greg is an electrifying speaker who connects with people and inspires them,” said Heather Cyrus, events and education manager for the Oregon Association of Nurseries, which produces the show. “He will provide unique ideas and lasting perspective that nursery industry professionals can take back to their companies to drive personal, professional and organizational improvement.”

The three-day Farwest trade show and conference takes place Wednesday, August 24 through Friday, August 26 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon. It will welcome and unify a broad swath of green industry professionals, including nursery and greenhouse growers, lawn and garden center retailers, landscaping professionals and designers, suppliers, service providers, students, researchers and many others.

Bell's keynote presentation will open the show at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, August 24. He will discuss how individuals and organizations can unleash their potential by adopting a high-performance mindset, and focusing their attention on their core values and the things that matter most.

Bell is a Certified Speaking Professional, which is the highest earned designation from the National Speakers Association and the International Federation of Professional Speakers. Only 10% of speakers have earned this designation. He holds degrees in political science and law from the University of Oregon, and has served as a consultant and trainer for nearly 500 organizations around the country. Visit www.farwestshow.com for more information.

DUFFERS RAISES \$32,000 FOR INDUSTRY ADVOCACY

More than 130 players hit the Stone Creek Golf Club on Thursday, June 9



for the 2022 Duffers Classic golf tournament. The annual event raised more than \$32,000 for the Oregon Nurseries' Political Action Committee (ONPAC), which supports nursery friendly candidates for elective office. By so doing, the industry hopes to achieve positive outcomes on several issues, including labor supplies, water supplies, pests and disease threats, industry research, employer costs, taxation, and workplace regulation.

Thank you to our presenting sponsors, **Brooks Tree Farm, Bountiful Farms, Jordan Ramis P.C., and Woodburn Nurseries and Azaleas Inc.**

The banquet was sponsored by **Jordan Ramis P.C. Anderson Pots, Columbia Bank, Left Coast Logistics, and Rosewoods Transportation Inc.** sponsored the carts. Key hole sponsors included **KG Farms Inc., Monrovia, Robinson Nursery Inc., and Smith Gardens Inc.;** and **American National Property & Casualty Co., and Leonard Adams Insurance Inc.** sponsored Par 3 holes. Thank you to **Brentano's Tree Farm, Dayton Bag & Burlap, Jordan Ramis PC, Simnitt Nursery, The Oregon Garden, Wilbur-Ellis Company** for sponsoring additional holes. **Powell's Nursery Inc., Rose City Transportation, and The Hunter Sparrow Company** sponsored beverages, **HC Companies** sponsored the Long Drive and Womens & Mens KP; and **Anderson Pots** was a gift sponsor. Thank you to the **Hunter Sparrow Company** for providing the PGA Professional Shot.

OSHA LAUNCHES FREE HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION COURSE

Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has generated new, free resources for employers and workers to comply with the heat rule. Adopted in 2021, the rules that took effect June 15 and require shade and cool water, cool-down breaks, prevention plan and training to keep employees safe during hot temperatures at work.

The heat illness prevention online course explores the common signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses, what risk factors are involved, when to access shade and water, how the heat index is measured, and other topics. The course is available in English and Spanish.

A five-page fact sheet about the key requirements of the heat rule is available in English. There is also a two-page fact sheet about the heat rule's three A, B, and C rest break schedule options.

To access the materials, log on to osha.oregon.gov or tinyurl.com/yzrphvrf

“These new resources reflect our ongoing commitment to helping employers achieve compliance with the heat rule as they move forward with their operations,” Renee Stapleton, OSHA acting administrator, said.

Oregon OSHA adopted heat and wildfire smoke rules in May. Both rules encompass initial protective measures for workers who rely on employer-provided housing, including as part of farm operations. The wildfire smoke rule will take effect July 1. Resources to help understand and comply with the wildfire smoke rule are coming.

WASHINGTON ADOPTS EMERGENCY HEAT RULE

Washington farmworkers who spend at least 15 minutes outside in an hour must be provided with shade, breaks and water, according to a new rule that took effect June 15, the *Capital Press* (Salem, Oregon) agricultural newspaper reported.

Air-purifying respirators must also be provided during hazardous air quality conditions. The Washington Department of Labor and Industries adopted similar rules on an emergency basis last year before making them permanent this year.

Farms already operate under heat-safety regulations and most employees won't be working outside when air quality standards are so poor, according to Washington Farm Bureau safety directors. When temperatures are at least 89 degrees, workers must get 10-minute paid

breaks every two hours. If cool water and shade aren't available, an air-conditioned trailer or misting station can be used.

Farmers must also monitor the air quality index if wildfire smoke is present. If levels reach 69 out of 500, employers are "encouraged" to provide workers with air-purifying respirators — ones that could cost up to \$100 each — or an N95 mask. At "hazardous" levels over 101, workers must be provided with respirators, as they provide more protection than N95 masks.

The full story is available online at tinyurl.com/mw3k6j7t.

BOUNTIFUL HAZELNUT HARVEST DESPITE ICE DAMAGE

Oregon hazelnut growers provided 99% of the crop grown in the U.S, even though the February 2021 ice storm dam-

aged trees across the Willamette Valley, the Oregon Family Farm Association reported. Where many established farmers suffered, sales totals for the sector remained high because many seed crop farmers who transitioned to hazelnuts had their first harvests. The new producers offset the loss of the mature trees.

Some trees were completely removed due to damage, and other tree canopy branches broke away under the weight of ice. As a result, more sunlight was allowed to shine onto the surviving trees of the orchards which led to an increase in nut yield.

Newer varieties also proved to be more resilient to ice and diseases. Farmers who lost their trees and had to replant orchards will need to wait for future seasons.

Federal tree assistance program funding was difficult for growers to come by, mostly because they needed to prove they lost >>




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15% of their trees. Some trees survived, if only by one sucker remaining. More details available at tinyurl.com/yc47t32c.

USDA CHANGES CROPS RESEARCH STRUCTURE

For administrative purposes only, the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Horticultural Crops Research Unit has been split into two units (PDF), according to a release from the agency. Given the growth of the unit over the past three years, it's necessary to split them into two groups to manage the staff better. The Horticultural Crops Disease and Pest Management Research Unit (HCDPMRU) will be led by research leader Inga Zasada and the Horticultural Crops Production and Genetic Improvement Research Unit (HCPGIRU) will be led by acting research leader David Bryla.

Three new scientist positions in blueberry breeding, precision viticulture, and weed science, plus two bioinformatics and plant pathology support scientist positions were recently added to the unit. A separate remote worksite in Mount Vernon, and increased funding for the Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research (NCSFR) have also increased the unit's size.

CHERRY CROPS YIELD ANTICIPATED TO BE DOWN

Cool and windy spring weather has prevented bees from pollinating cherry trees, which means cherry crop size is down, the *Capital Press* (Salem, Oregon) reported. Cherry prices will likely be high given that the volume of cherries crops will be down about two-thirds of their average weight, according to data from Northwest Cherry Growers. About 29,200 tons are estimated to be produced in Oregon and 104,500 tons in Washington.

Harvesting began in early June in Richland, Washington. High prices will help growers, but they still face challenges with high labor costs and other inputs. Cherry-picking staff will need to be more careful about what they choose as they work

through the smaller crops this year — a problem automation can't solve. Apple and pear crops are not predicted to change as they bloom later than cherries. Read the full story on tinyurl.com/w57bc3d2.

Announcements MYCORRHIZAL APPLICATIONS OFFERS CHRISTMAS TREE PRG

Mycorrhizal Applications (MA) has developed plant growth regulator (PRG) products for Christmas tree growers, according to a release from the company.

The new ProCone® PGR is for pollen and seed cone (strobilus) production for tree improvement programs and seed orchards. It contains gibberellins GA4 + 7, and can be used on mature *Pinaceae* trees, seedlings, grafted or rooted propagules.

ConShape™ is a PGR that will help regulate leader growth. Buds will stop growing after a few days and retain their full number on the leader. It contains S-abcisic (S-ABA) and can be applied with an Easy Roller application tool available through distributors.

MycApply® mycorrhizal inoculant can also be used on Christmas tree farms. The Injector Ecto blend has five genera of ectomycorrhizal fungi that help tree roots absorb nutrients and thrive.

Growers can contact the MA sales team to determine the available dealers in their region, listed on <https://mycorrhizae.com>.

MARION AG SERVICES HIRES BILL PHILLIPS

Bill Phillips has been hired to fill a driving position at **Marion Ag Services**. He will be serving various areas across Oregon and Washington for the soil health, services, and nutrient provider.

After more than 38 years at the helm of **Phillips Soil Products**, Bill sold his business and is easing into the next phase of his life. He is working full-time but will have extended periods of time off.

He can be reached at 503-519-4667, or phillipswilliam357@gmail.com.



BIOWORKS HIRES PRODUCT MANAGER

Chris Rose has been hired as a product manager for **BioWorks**, according to a release from the company. He will help launch new biopesticide and plant nutrition products and services. Working out of the marketing department from Research and Development, he previously led product testing, development and commercialization.

"Chris is a great addition to the marketing team," said Joe Lara, director of marketing. "His R&D experience, leadership qualities and execution mindset will help to expand and drive the BioWorks product portfolio into existing and new markets for the benefit of our customers now, and into the future."

Rose may be reached at 585-857-0074 or crose@bioworksinc.com.



JORDAN RAMIS EARNS HIGH RANK IN LAW FIRM GUIDE

Jordan Ramis PC has ranked in the 2022 *Chambers and Partners USA Guide* for the twelfth year in a row, according to a release from the law firm. The guide is a highly respected directory of top-performing law firms and lawyers in the world.

The firm repeated its past success by ranking in the environmental law area. It is the second year that Jordan Ramis has been ranked in the real estate: zoning/land use practice areas.

Three individual Jordan Ramis attorneys have been named notable practitioners in their fields.

Steve Shropshire was listed for environment law in Oregon for his extensive experience with water rights, water conservation and issues related to wetland permitting. As a shareholder of the lawfirm, he has represented clients before state agencies as well as state and federal courts.

David Rabbino, a Jordan Ramis shareholder with more than 30 years of experience in Oregon environmental

law, coverage, and litigation was listed in environment. He represents clients in some of the largest Superfund sites across the country, as well as matters with state and county regulators.

James Howsley was listed for real estate: zoning/land use in Oregon. A shareholder with the law firm, he has represented companies, developers, and builders throughout the Pacific Northwest for land use and development projects. He advocates for large-scale master-planned developments, urban growth, and working with local governments on complex and creative financing tools to build the necessary infrastructure.

OAN regular and associate members receive up to 30 minutes per month of free legal consultation with Jordan Ramis PC through the Legal Access program. If your problem or issue requires more than

30 minutes of consultation, Jordan Ramis will estimate the cost and you can decide whether to pursue the matter further. Learn more at oan.org.



In Memoriam DON POND

A funeral Mass celebrating the life of Don Pond, former vice president for **Bailey Nurseries** and manager of its West Coast Division, was held on June 4 at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, 445 N Maple St., Yamhill, Oregon. A reception followed at VanDyke Farms, 15221 N.W. Westside Road, Yamhill.

As previously reported, Mr. Pond passed away on May 15, 2022 after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 74.



He was born September 28, 1947 to Marcus and Maria Pond, and grew up on a dairy farm in Minnesota. He graduated from Northfield (Minnesota) High School in 1965. He met Linda Spartz in high school and they were married September 14, 1968. In 1969, he graduated from the University of Minnesota with a bachelor of science degree in horticulture education. He went to work for Bailey Nurseries, then returned home to work on the family farm. He returned to Bailey in 1972 after realizing his true passion was in horticulture.

In 1977, Don was chosen to oversee Bailey's new farm in Yamhill, Oregon. For 35 years, he managed the company's West Coast Division. The division was later expanded to include other farms in Yamhill County, as well as a farm on Sauvie Island near Portland, and one in Sunnyside, Washington. »

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He served as a vice president of Bailey Nurseries and was on the board of directors.

In retirement Don enjoyed spending time with family. Don and Linda enjoyed trips to New Zealand, the Holy Land, Europe, Mexico and Hawaii.

Don is survived by his wife, Linda, at home; son Adam (Nicole) of Issaquah, Washington; son Alex (Kristin) of Yamhill, Oregon; son David (Julie) of Warren, Oregon; brother Robert (Brigitte) of Lakeville, Minnesota; and six grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Marcus and Maria Pond, and his sister, Betty (Rich) Lace.

In Memoriam NANCY SCHULTZ

The OAN is saddened to report the passing of Nancy Schultz, who co-owned **Stan's Ground Colors LLC**, a nursery in Molalla, Oregon, with her husband, Stan. She passed away May 7, 2022 at the age of 86.

She was born Nancy Jane Baldwin in 1935 in Falls River, Massachusetts, to her parents, Wanda and Ralph Baldwin. She grew up in Lamoni, Iowa, with her parents and sister, Karen Beaty. She attended Graceland College and married Bernie Parton after graduation. They had three children — Ken, Brenda and Brad.

Nancy later moved to Oregon to be near her parents and sister. There, she met and married Stan Schultz. She served as business manager at their nursery and was hardworking and meticulous. Nancy and Stan enjoyed running their business and taking trips to see family and friends. Nancy also worked for a spell in the office at the then-Oregon Association of Nurserymen, from the 1970s until 1985.

Nancy is survived by her husband, Stan; daughter Brenda Klee (husband Rick); son Brad Parton (wife Ginger); sister Karen Beaty (husband Jack); and many grandchildren, nieces and nephews. ©



Horticultural
Research Institute

1962 60th Anniversary 2022

Six decades of support

The Horticultural Research Institute continues to grow the industry

Article provided by the Horticultural Research Institute

BY SALLY BENSON

THINK BACK, IF YOU will, to 1962:

- John Glenn became the first human to orbit the Earth.
- President John F. Kennedy was dealing with the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- Rachel Carson published her landmark book, *Silent Spring*.

And in September 1962, a small group of forward-thinking nursery professionals established the Horticultural Research Institute to provide funds that would support industry-driven, targeted research.

Starting from a combined donation of \$1,300 in the early 1960s to having supported a total of \$9.5 million in research grants and scholarships by its 60th year, HRI continues to grow — and to grow the industry.

“It’s remarkable to imagine that 60 years ago, HRI was merely an idea,” said Alan Jones, current president of the Horticultural Research Institute and president of Manor View Farms in Monkton, Maryland. “Today, that idea has grown into an incredible organization singularly focused on the research needs of the green industry. Sixty years later, on the shoulders of those who started the work, HRI is a strong, thriving organization with hundreds of volunteers, thousands of donors, and millions of dollars invested in research.”

The roots of the organization actually go back to the early 1950s, when the American Association of Nurserymen Board of Directors proposed a program to solicit financial contributions to support industry research. That early attempt laid the foundation, but it wasn’t until a few years later that the AAN Board formally established HRI as an organization separate from, but related to, AAN.

Beginning in those early days in the 1960s, through AAN’s change to the American Nursery and Landscape Association, and then AmericanHort, the Horticultural Research Institute has been committed to prioritizing and funding research that addresses specific problems and challenges identified by industry professionals.

Where do those funds come from? The money is contributed by industry stakeholders — growers, landscapers, garden center retailers, and other green industry professionals — through endowments they’ve established with HRI.

Harvey Cotten chairs HRI’s Ad-Hoc Development Committee. “This is a grassroots organization,” he said. “All the money has come from industry; it has been individuals or companies who have seen the wisdom in trying to solve our own problems.”

All funds are invested, and so the money continues to accrue interest over the years; the fund draws dividends, which then can be used to fund further research.

“I’ve often said that you’re not giving to HRI, this is not a charitable contribution in the sense that we make a contribution to our church or even to feed the homeless,” Cotten said. “This is actually an investment that is going to pay you back in dividends, i.e. problem solving, so that it isn’t just a gift. And this research is what will make one profitable in one’s own business.”

Dale Deppe, president of Spring Meadow Nursery, is a member of HRI’s Investment Committee. “HRI does things that we can’t do for ourselves,” he said. “You’re better together than you are as an individual nursery or greenhouse person. Because you can’t do the research, you can’t fund it at the level that HRI does.”

It’s an investment in finding research solutions to your specific challenge. But it’s also an investment in the future of the industry.

A guide for future funding

Looking ahead, HRI has identified four Strategic Focus Areas that serve as a guide for further prioritizing funding of research programs. To consider and identify the broad spectrum of interests within the greater green industry, HRI convened a large panel of stakeholders, each representing unique businesses and industry segments.

“We came together with 50 different stakeholders, representing the whole industry and every segment of it to talk about what we see going into the future,” Cotton said. “What are the research priorities that we need to look at, and how would we then prioritize the type of research projects that we want addressed? And that’s where the four areas of strategic focus came about.”

The first area is “Quantifying Plant Benefits.” The ultimate target is the consumer — those who purchase plants and plant-related services — and the aim is help them to fully understand and appreciate plants’ value. But in order to do that, Cotten said, “We need to get our people, whether that’s the greenhouse side, the landscape side, or the retail side, the ammunition they need to show the benefits of plants as more than just being something pretty. Whether that’s ecosystem services, pollinator appeal, pollution, erosion, all of these things — including climate change.”

Research that highlights the quantitative value of plants — what, specifically, do plants do for me? what do plants do for the environment? — will provide green industry professionals the information that will help sell those plants, and help grow and sustain the industry.

The second area is “Creating Innovative Solutions.” A prime example of a continuing challenge, for all segments of the industry, is labor. “When we looked at ‘creating innovative solutions,’



labor continues to be our biggest problem,” Cotten says. “So how do we, instead of just saying, ‘fix labor,’ determine which innovative solutions will reduce the need for additional labor?”

Is mechanization the answer? Are efficiency studies called for? Funding the most appropriate targeted, specific, dedicated research will help to answer these questions and find innovative, useful, applicable solutions.

The third area is “Gathering Consumer Insights.” Growers excel at propagating, hybridizing, and, well, growing plants. Landscape professionals are expert at designing and installing built environments that showcase those plants. And garden center retailers are generally that all-important point of contact between the buyer and the producer.

“‘Gathering consumer insights’ truly was looking at the buying public and mar-

keting of our plants, which we had never done,” Cotton said. Listening to the end user, assessing the home gardener’s wants and needs, working with professional customers and clients to determine what they’re looking for: All this is necessary to provide the best, most valuable, most saleable goods and services.

The final Strategic Focus Area identified by HRI’s panel of industry professionals is “Producing Practical and Actionable Solutions.” Ideally, it’s the goal of all research funded by HRI grants. Research for the sake of research is laudable, admirable, necessary. But what professionals in the green industry need from HRI-funded research — the research into which they’ve invested their dollars — is information and strategies they can put to use to solve the problems they’ve identified.

“Producing practical and actionable solutions,” Cotten said, “is that easily

defined” category into which very specific challenges fall. It’s where producers get the answers for their unique problems.

“There’s crape myrtle bark scale; how do we solve it?” Cotton said. “Or there’s spotted lantern fly coming up, or boxwood tree moth. We wanted to have an area of focus that those types of problems would fit very nicely into.”

As the country appears to be emerging from the restrictive grip of a global pandemic, studies have determined that lockdowns, career changes, working at home, and other factors contributed to an extraordinary growth in the number of new gardeners: 16 to 18 million are estimated to have entered the market. Reaching out to them, educating them, maintaining them as good customers, producing the best quality and most desired plants — it’s all quite a challenge. But HRI has already provided funding support for research that will lead them, and the industry, into the future. ©

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Clean Water Act rulemaking review bears watching

2020 rules under Trump remain in effect as the EPA works to overhaul discharge permitting process

SECTION 401 of the Clean Water Act provides that a federal agency may not issue a permit or license to conduct any activity that could result in a discharge into waters of the United States unless a Section 401 water quality certification is issued, or unless certification is waived.

In 2020, in response to an executive order issued by then-president Donald Trump, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the Clean Water Act (CWA) 401 Certification Rule (2020 Rule), which established procedures designed to promote consistent implementation of CWA Section 401 and regulatory certainty in the federal licensing and permitting process.

In response to a challenge from states (including Oregon), tribes, and environmentalists, the 2020 rule was vacated and remanded by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. *In re Clean Water Act Rulemaking*, No. C 20-04636 WHA, 2021 WL 4924844 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 21, 2021). Oregon Gov. Kate Brown remarked of the 2020 Rule, “States and Tribes have relied on the Clean Water Act for almost 50 years to protect our waters and people, and EPA’s action is essential to restoring that historic authority. The [2020] rule was not only harmful to the environment, it was corrosive to state, federal, and tribal partnerships.”

As a result of the district court’s action vacating the 2020 Rule, the original 1971 water quality certification rules were to govern the CWA Section 401 water quality certification process until EPA enacted new rules. However, in an emergency order on April 6, 2022 the Supreme Court issued a stay of the district court’s order. As a result, the Clean Water Act 401 Certification process is again governed by the 2020 Rule.

The 1971 rules are both substantively

broader and procedurally simpler than the 2020 Rule. For example, the 2020 Rule:

- limits the definition of “water quality requirements” to only a few sections of the CWA
- requires that an applicant for a CWA permit request a pre-filing meeting with the certifying authority at least 30 days prior to submitting an application (which request the certifying authority was under no obligation to accept, or even respond to)

- states that the “reasonable period of time” for the certifying authority to act on a request for certification could be determined either categorically or on a case-by-case basis, but was not to exceed one year. EPA has clarified in a guidance document that the “reasonable period of time” begins after receipt of a certification request has been documented received by a certifying authority.

In contrast, the 1971 rules:

- contained no limitation on the definition of “water quality requirements”
- contained no requirement for requesting a pre-filing meeting
- stated that the “reasonable period of time” for the certifying authority to act “shall generally be considered to be 6 months, but in any event shall not exceed 1 year”

According to a “Questions and



Maureen S. Bayer

Combining her experience as an environmental attorney and an environmental consultant, Maureen S. Bayer uses her specialized background to work with clients facing environmental issues related to regulatory compliance, site contamination, and business transactions. She can be reached at 503-598-5529 or maureen.bayer@jordanramis.com.

Answers” document updated on April 22, 2022 following the U.S. Supreme Court’s reinstatement of the 2020 Rule, the EPA will continue the rulemaking process announced in May 2021 to overhaul the rule. EPA expects to propose a new CWA section 401 rule in the coming months. EPA is following the Administrative Procedure Act to develop the new rule, but no outreach or engagement opportunities or public comment periods have yet been announced. EPA has also stated that certification actions completed between the date that the District Court vacated the 2020 rule (October 21, 2021) and April 6, 2022 when the Supreme Court reinstated the rule will not be revisited.

Given the modern trend towards process being the final product, it is likely that the new rule will require pre-filing meetings, allow determination of “reasonable time” on a case-by-case basis, and include other hoops through which applicants must jump if they hope to have a chance to move their projects forward.

We recommend that parties who anticipate needing a 401 water quality certification keep a close eye on these developments and engage with the appropriate team of professionals to navigate the upcoming rulemaking process and its subsequent implementation. ©



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Tailored to today's customers

Retail expert Anne Obarski explains how to fine tune your business for success

BY HEATHER CYRUS

THE SEMINARS AT FARWEST this year will feature industry experts from across the globe sharing knowledge with attendees on a wide range of topics. We are thrilled to have Anne Obarski, a long-time favorite professional speaker, join us this year to share her wisdom from more than 30 years as a retail strategist and coach.

Anne has been a professional member of the National Speakers Association since 1996 and has served and chaired the

Ethics Committee at the national level. She has been president of the NSA Pittsburgh Chapter and on the board of the NSA St. Louis and Ohio chapters over the past 18 years. Anne works with small to mid-sized businesses and professional associations to offer DISC assessment tools for better hiring and managing results.

We spoke with Anne recently to provide a sneak-peek into her three Farwest seminars for 2022 and beyond.

Anne, tell me a little about yourself and your background.

A few past roles have led me to where I am today. I was a sportswear buyer for a million-dollar department for the May Co. Department Stores (now Macy's), a college business instructor, then a retail consultant, which led me to my speaking career. These experiences have helped me to bring real-life experiences and advice to the thousands of audience members and Fortune 500s that have heard me speak for three decades now.

I always say that making a positive, lasting impression on every customer has never been more important in today's world. Serving customers can be a joy ... and then again, sometimes it's not! I'm here to help you lean toward the "joy" side.

As founder of Merchandise Concepts, my Retail Snoops™ program consists of extensive research regarding all aspects of customer service. My team has gathered priceless research mystery shopping more than 2000 U.S. stores and businesses.

There is a new generation of plant lovers to embrace. What should businesses be doing to ensure they foster the relationship of this younger generation to become life-long consumers in the industry?

This group demands efficiency in purchasing. Products must be online and available as soon as possible in a store. It's

important to provide true success education so that young consumers can be successful in whatever new area they are trying. If its succulents, or creating a food-to-table garden for their family, time of involvement through to the success of the process is critical. Offering online lessons or in-store cooking and planting classes will set you apart from the competition.

What are you most excited about heading into the future?

One of the trends that will be at the forefront is the "friction free" environment where one adapts technology to make all touchpoints in a business more efficient. Customers don't want to hear you are out of stock, a shipment is late, or you don't carry it online. Technology will be a key area to pick up the pace for all of us.

What keeps you up at night?

I don't like to spend time on pricing, but this is an area of concern for all of us. We are living in inflation and people are more careful about how they are spending money. I would hate to see the green industry pull back on its pricing strategies to discover there is nothing left at the bottom line. I suggest pricing competitively, and price for the value the customer is getting.

Make sure you have trained your employees on the selling skills that will remove any doubt in the customer's minds

about their potential purchase. As a customer, I just want to make sure I am using my money wisely and will get a return on my investment.

Pricing also goes along with inventory control, another industry worry. Knowing what is selling, from whom, what the turnover is, reorder possibilities, and performance ratings on every single vendor will help to run a well-oiled machine. You want to avoid the trap of, "a little of this and a little of that." Be ruthless in carrying high-performance inventory that sells well at a good markup.

What kind of tips can the audience expect to learn when you present the "Be an Undercover Boss" seminar (8:30-9:30 a.m., August 24) at Farwest?

I like to ask folks, "If you became a frontline employee for your business, what do you think you might find that could be changed or improved?"

Everyone loves the "Undercover Boss" television show and there are several reasons. Some like that the boss can catch employees doing things wrong, some people love that the boss is finding out just how hard people work, and lastly, we all like to see people rewarded at the end.

This session has a very important quiz that will allow managers to grade themselves in areas that employees



Anne Obarski is one of three dozen amazing speakers offered at Farwest 2022. Be sure to sign up for an education pass when registering for Farwest at www.FarwestShow.com/register.

think are important for their success working for a store.

At Farwest, you will be presenting the “Be an A.C.E.” seminar (12:30-1:30 p.m on August 24.) Can you tell us about one of the steps you will be sharing with the audience?

This session allows you to see your entire business through the eyes of your customer. From driving into the parking lot through their entire store journey; what your customer sees or is not seeing is critical for the growth of a business.

One of the most beneficial aspects of this seminar-workshop is the quiz. This is something a business owner of any industry can use. The quiz is divided into sections of the business that allows for goal implementation. Employees fill out the quiz, allowing for management to drill down on the top

one to three areas to put energy into. It is a great way to get everyone involved and keep those eyes open to what the customers are experiencing every day.

You will be presenting the “Be On the Floor: A Merchandising GPS for Your Garden Center” seminar (8:30-9:30 a.m., August 25). Can you give us a sneak peek into this session?

As customers return to physical stores, it's the eye-catching displays that grab their attention and drive revenue. Everyone got comfortable buying online, but now you have them on your stage again.

This session has a strategic focus on what the customer sees and experiences in the store. Powerful and impactful merchandising doesn't just happen, it is an art form that will stop customers in their journey in your store and hopefully encourage them to

look, touch, and buy.

I use a lot of pictures from garden centers across the country in this presentation to show examples of what to do correctly, both outside and inside a garden center to make it a must-visit location.

With life slowly returning to normal, what advice do you have for business owners moving forward?

Labor shortage issues are an ongoing problem. Businesses must work harder to attract, train, and keep good employees, as well as always be on the lookout for new employees. Statistics show that one out of three employees is looking for a new job, they just haven't told their employer yet. This is still a challenge and one that causes concern as garden centers don't have a huge budget for employees whose positions can be long hours and require physical labor. ☺



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Dealing with a known quantity

Wholesale nurseries find personal service and relationships are still key for making the sale

BY MITCH LIES

MANY NURSERIES NO LONGER input orders manually, in some cases saving hundreds of work hours monthly. Smartphones have become indispensable as nurseries snap photos of plants and shoot them across the country in a matter of seconds.

And in response to COVID-19 restrictions over the past two years, nurseries relied on advanced technological communications to maintain relationships.

Nursery executives say that technology has changed the way they do business. Still, when it comes to working with wholesalers, good old fashioned personal relationships trump everything. They always have and probably always will.


"Relationships are paramount," said Vinny Grasso, West Coast nursery manager for **Eason Horticultural Resources**, which is headquartered in Ft. Wright, Kentucky. "Technology helps, but the bonding between the buyer and the seller is everything. People buy from who they like. That is a principle that is probably a thousand years old."

"Digital communication has enhanced our ability to execute the day-to-day work that we do," said Ken McVicker, sales manager for **Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas Inc.** in Woodburn, Oregon. "But growing our business together really does fundamentally come back to our relationships with our customers."

Lars Nilsen, executive vice president of sales and marketing for **Smith Gardens** in Bellingham, Washington, said he has been working with many of the same buyers for years in servicing the garden centers at Home Depot, Lowe's Home Improvement, Walmart, Fred Meyer and Costco in the Northwest and Alaska. Knowing your buyer is critical in helping a business improve performance, he said.

"When you have the same buyer for eight, 10, 15 years, you get to know each other," Nilsen said. "They know our strengths. We know their focus areas and likes and dislikes, and what they pay attention to. And so, that kind of relationship becomes more of a partnership."

Treda McCaw, sales associate for **Kraemer's Nurseries Inc.**, said customer service at the Mount Angel, Oregon, company is emphasized in every position and in every activity an employee performs, no matter if the job holder does or doesn't interact with the public.

"It is the person who opens the door and meets the driver. It is somebody pulling decent plants and putting the right tags on the plant, or it is somebody communicating that maybe something doesn't look good and we really shouldn't be shipping it right now," McCaw said. "Every position we have needs to be considered customer service, because our business doesn't stop when we ship to the garden center. The garden center has to sell it. All of these things we need to keep in mind, even as we are writing the order." 

Managing wholesale sales relationships

Previous page: Kyle Fessler gives a tour of the Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas Inc. operation. PHOTO BY BILL GOLOSKI **This page:** Vinny Grasso of Eason Horticultural Resources attributes his success to managing good relationships with customers.

PHOTO COURTESY OF EASON HORTICULTURAL SERVICES

Technology brings changes

Many of the changes technology has brought to the industry have served to improve customer relations, executives said,

“Technology helps, but the bonding between the buyer and the seller is everything. People buy from who they like. That is a principle that is probably a thousand years old.”

— Vinny Grasso, Eason Horticultural Resources

in part because of improved efficiencies.

“Early on, before technology changed some of what we do, it was a lot of telephone calls and getting orders by FAX and even by letter,” McVicker said. “Fast forward to today, and the orders go straight into our computer system, right into our

software. So, we can key in the order, just upload it into our system, maybe make some modifications and send it right back electronically.

“For our industry that is a pretty significant change, and it benefits both our businesses,” he said.

The advent of the smartphone also is a significant change from days past, nursery executives said, and a change that helps both ends of the spectrum.

“Phone cameras are awesome,” McCaw said. “I can snap a photo and send it directly to the customer or to the sales rep. That part of technology is really nice, because it is instant.”



Especially during COVID, technology has helped companies maintain solid customer relations in lieu of meeting face-to-face, executives said.

“If this had happened 10 years ago,” Nilsen said of COVID disruptions, “that would have been an issue. But since Zoom, GoToMeeting and Microsoft Teams have blossomed, that certainly helped us stay in touch.”

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tions was that it prohibited nursery companies from walking stores with buyers. That is customarily a critical part of customer relations, executives said.

McVicker said Woodburn Nursery &

“Digital communication has enhanced our ability to execute the day-to-day work that we do. But growing our business together really does fundamentally come back to our relationships with our customers.”

— Ken McVicker, Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas Inc.

Azaleas typically travels to two or three of its principal markets each year, a routine it was forced to abandon the last two years. “We try to be proactive about getting out and seeing them where they conduct their business, so we have a better sense of their customer-base expectations,” he said. “It helps us to be in the marketplace and hear from our customers on their challenges, so we can help them meet their challenges and improve our products to help them reduce their challenges and grow their business.

“We look at our customers as our storefront, and if we can help them turn product at their storefront, it helps us turn product.”

Nilsen of Smith Gardens agreed that walking stores should be a critical part of a nursery's business protocol, both from a relationship standpoint and to see how a store's operations are proceeding.

“The main benefit of walking stores is to see how we are executing,” Nilsen said. “Is the quality up to snuff? Is the

merchandising done correctly? Are the perennials where they are supposed to be? Are the annuals where they are supposed to be? Are the more expensive items, or special items, up front and center? Have

we done proper culling? The reality of our business is that sometimes the plants suffer or die. Those plants need to make room for fresh product. The test is: Would you buy it for your mom? If the answer is ‘No,’ then it should get culled or go to clearance.

“And it is about evaluating a plant's performance. Maybe a plant doesn't look good this year,

so let's do something else next year. So, you talk about ideas,” he said. “And sometimes we get critical feedback during those walk-throughs, and it is important.”

McVicker noted that while Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas didn't get out to its markets the last two years, he was glad to see customers come to them last spring and summer.

“One of the things about our industry is we don't sell widgets in boxes on shelves,” McVicker said. “We sell live goods that are different from one grower to the next, and the marketplace is variable. And so, I think that intimate connection — that customer service — is still very, very important to grow our business with our wholesalers and our retailers.”

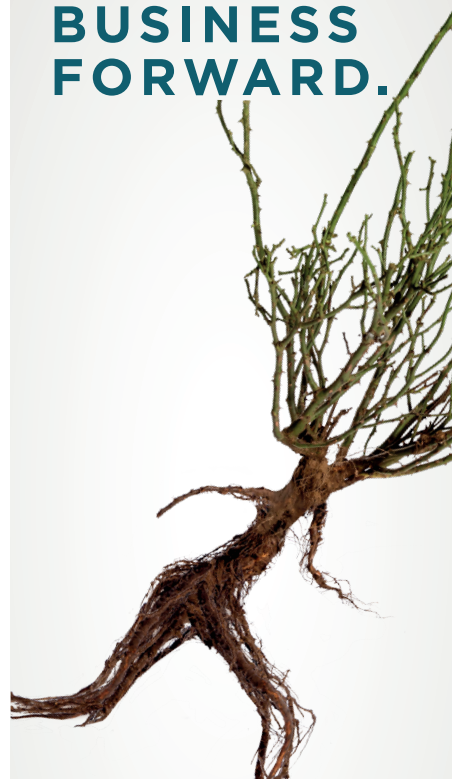
Skyrocketing demand

Among challenges nurseries have faced in customer service over the past couple of years has been meeting customer needs >>

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Managing wholesale sales relationships

in the face of rising demand.

McVicker said the Woodburn nursery has dealt with the demand increase by ensuring customers get at least what they got the year before, and then meeting the increases when and where it could.

“If there is an increase in a given product line, then we try to meet that demand,” he said, “but the astronomical demand that we’ve seen the last two years was not forecast four or five years ago when we did production planning, so we have not been able to meet everybody’s demand.

“Our crops are anywhere from three to five, six years in the making before they get to the marketplace, so it takes a while to ramp that up and get that deployed into the market,” he said. “We apologize that we can’t do more, let them know we are doing the best we can, and sit down with them and forecast what their needs are and adjust our production to meet those needs the best we can.”

Asked if the nursery has lost customers, McVicker said: “I don’t think so, because we’ve done a good job of supplying at least what we did the year before to them. But, I think customers have probably had to search deeper to find additional product.”

Nilsen said Smith Gardens regularly plants extra to meet customer demand, primarily to be prepared for shortages that can crop up in the case of a late frost or a particularly aggressive plant disease. Between the extra supplies built into its business model and, in some cases, substituting product from other nurseries, the company has been able to fill orders the last two years.

“What we do is to plan to make sure that our customers’ sales grow year after year, that their margin maintains or grows, and that shrink is held to a minimum,” he said. “As long as we are checking off those boxes, we feel that we are in good shape with the buyer.” ☺

Mitch Lies is a freelance writer covering agricultural issues based in Salem Oregon. He can be reached at mitchlies@comcast.net.



A spruce for any landscape

Versatility and deep selection have made the genus a top seller for Oregon growers

BY DEBBIE TEASHON

WITH ABOUT 35 SPECIES, a plethora of cultivars, and all its uses that shape our world, it's not surprising that trees in the *Picea* genus are a popular landscape plant and top sellers over other conifers. What's more, Oregon sells 35% of the spruce trees sold nationally.

There are many stories about spruce trees being an essential resource in American history. Measured ounce per ounce against high-tensile steel strength, spruce lumber is stronger.

In fact, the straight grain lumber from spruce trees took the Wright Brothers into the air at Kitty Hawk on that famous December day in 1903. The brothers' plane utilized wing-warping for lateral control that literally twisted the wooden beams.

The lightweight wood is durable and capable of flexing. Although not used for planes anymore, the Northwest native Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) is still the go-to lumber for ship masts and spars for custom wooden ships.

What about spruce for beer? Europeans learned from Canadian indigenous people that some conifers helped prevent a vitamin C deficiency that caused scurvy. Historically, the British Royal Navy added the needles to their shipped-brewed beer to prevent the disease on long voyages. The French also used spruce over other conifers because it had the highest vitamin C content. Spruce beer made from

new-growth needles is brewed today for a refreshing cola taste without the sweetener.

In all shapes, sizes and colors

Setting history and the beer aside, there are good reasons why Spruce trees are prevalent in landscapes today. The market carries a wide assortment of unique and exciting *Picea* species and cultivars to fit any landscape, nearly any place in the United States.

Need a conifer that fits a small lot? There's spruce for that. Have homeowners' association (HOA) height-restriction woes? Spruce has the homeowner covered. Want colorful needle foliage? Spruce will paint the landscape in a rainbow of hues.

Looking for an unusual conifer only a collector could love? The genus gives you that too. And don't forget the weepers, creepers, and even some twisters.

The *Picea* group is a big seller because it has so much variability, especially in climates that don't have as many options as the Northwest.

"I think it comes down to [hardiness] in a lot more extreme cold climates," said Roby Babcock, direc- ➤

Spruce for all places



Picea abies 'Pusch'



Picea abies 'Pusch'



Picea abies 'Pusch'

tor of marketing at Iseli Nursery in Boring, Oregon. "It's not to say there isn't variability within other groups of conifers — but there's quite a wide range in the *Picea* group for those climates. Spruce can take cold and heat, and comes in a wide variety of heights and widths, colors and textures, and provides many opportunities for different landscape applications."

Dave Grotz, owner of

Peace of Mind Nursery Inc. in Silverton, Oregon, appreciates the genus because all colors are represented. Good examples are *Picea* 'Mission Blue', one of his favorite blue spruces, and 'Skylands', which he likes for its golden hue in an upright form.

"Sometimes plants fall under the category of being a chameleon," Grotz said. "In that I mean, it changes color with the season. For example, *Picea abies* 'Argenteospicata' [silvertip Norway spruce] has new gold growth in spring. As it flushes out, the new growth is gold, over the older green, and is

really pretty."

The skinny, 3-inch long, pink cones develop on the upper portion of the tree.

The silvertip Norway spruce began as a seedling selection back in 1800 in Germany. It's almost identical to the species, except for the bright flush of color in spring.

"Another chameleon is *Picea abies*

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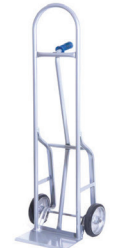


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Picea abies 'Cruenta'

'Cruenta', which now is in its heyday," Grotz said. "All the new growth is red. I call this 'Christmas in April.' We sold a bunch of them this year."

Grotz advises bringing the pyramidal conifer out for customers to view no later than the end of March, so when it breaks bud, all the new red growth flushes out — an excellent time to sell them. After the red fades back to green, the show is over.

"Some spruces are maintenance free, but others benefit from pruning," he said. "This is one that would be a better specimen type plant and show more red foliage by ample pruning. It will back-bud more and grow out more branches, which on 'Cruenta' you definitely want to do. The more full it is, the more red it is."

Grotz warns that information on



Picea abies 'Cruenta'

the web is not always reliable, especially regarding the size. "It's a fast-growing spruce," he said.

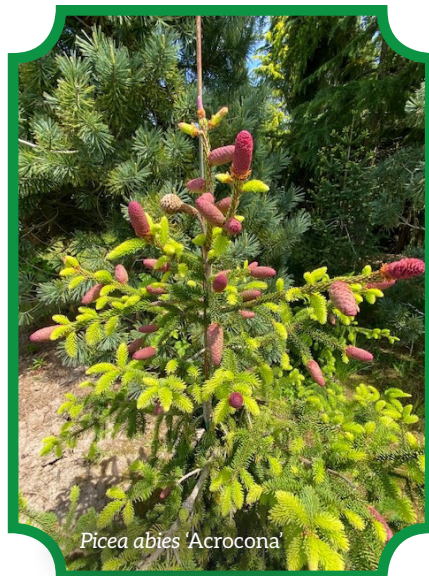
Babcock appreciates the color variety of spruces as well. "People really like the color, particularly with *Picea pungens*," he said. "The blue is a really popular color. It stands out."

Picea abies 'Pusch', a witch's broom from *P.a. 'Acrocona'*, produces outstanding bright red cones over its short branches every spring and remain decorative even after the cones age to brown. A young globose 'Pusch' is slow growing at two to four inches a year, and with age, the small spruce grows more broad and upright.

Spruces for small lots

With the trend towards smaller lot sizes in new home construction, many homeowners look for smaller conifers that won't overwhelm the lot.

Weeping white spruce (*Picea glau-* ➤



Picea abies 'Acrocona'



Picea abies 'Acrocona'

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Picea orientalis 'Atrovirens'



Picea omorika 'Pendula'



Picea omorika
'Berliners Weeper'

ca 'Pendula') is **Iseli Nursery's** second most popular seller, and they call it a real showstopper.

"We have a specimen on the property that's about 40 years old; it's quite stunning," Babcock said. "The weeping white spruce is popular, especially for smaller urban lots. It creates a lot of impact without taking up much space."

Iseli's specimen is about 40-feet tall with a small footprint of about 4-feet wide.

"One of the things about this spruce tree is, it's important for many northern states," Babcock said. "They don't have as many options as the West Coast, with the milder climate, in regards to different choices in height, width, color, and texture." Three dwarf spruces, which grow at a slow pace, are popular sellers at Iseli Nursery:

The nursery considers *Picea abies* 'Tomp' a superior alternative to Alberta spruce.

Picea glauca 'Jean's Dilly' has short, thin needles and was

named after Jean Iseli. And measures 2.5 feet tall and 16 inches wide — a dwarf mutation of a dwarf Alberta spruce (*Picea glauca* 'Conica').

The pyramidal *P. glauca*, Rainbow's End®, is a color mutation on *P. glauca* var. *albertiana* 'Conica'. A ten-year-old specimen reaches 3 feet tall by 2 feet wide. The new growth is light green. "[It has] a second flush of nice lemon-yellow color in midsummer," Babcock said.

Jay Sanders, sales manager at **KG Farms** in Woodburn, Oregon, considers *Picea pungens* 'Candlelight', another dwarf Alberta spruce, one of his favorites. "The flush is yellow and flashy in spring," he said.

The pyramidal *Picea pungens* 'Baby Blue Eyes' is a KG Farms best seller.

"From a grower's perspective, it's an easy plant to grow," Sanders said. "It doesn't have issues with disease, and doesn't need a lot of trimming as compared to other blue spruce. We have to manicure others after their flush, this one grows fairly straight, it's full, and it doesn't need extra help."

Originally from Holden Wholesale Growers in Silverton, Oregon, the seedling was patented (PP5457, 1985) under the

name 'Baby Blueeyes', yet it is sold in the trade as 'Baby Blue Eyes'. The tree had a growth rate of 6–8 inches a year. At 21 years old, it reached 10-feet tall.

"Everything that is columnar is really popular right now," said Mikaela Eaton, sales manager at **Serendipity Nursery** in Canby, Oregon. "They are the most sought-after trees to fit into small landscapes and narrow spaces. They can get tall, but pretty compact width-wise. But they all have that same characteristic — they're upright and columnar. With all the houses built closer together, everyone still wants privacy. To plant an evergreen in the yard, in a new home, on a small suburban lot, you'll need something that doesn't get big, width-wise."

"'Cupressina' [*Picea abies* 'Cupressina'] has a neat upright habit," Eaton continued. "And all the Norway



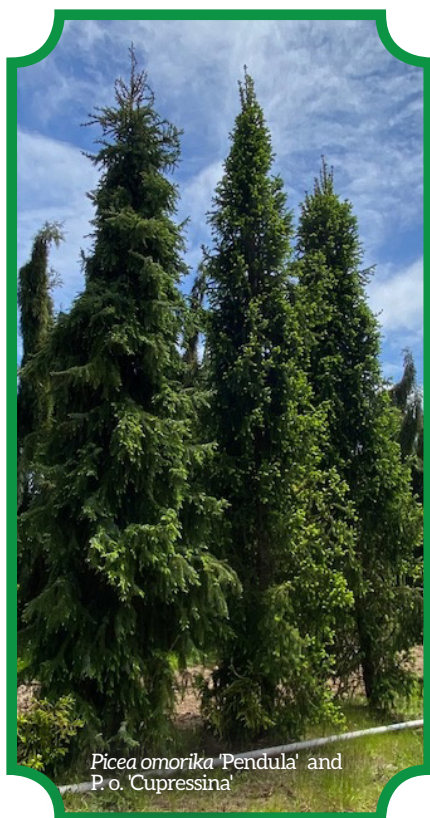
Picea abies viregata
'Snake Spruce'



Picea abies viregata
'Snake Spruce'



Picea abies viregata
'Snake Spruce'



Picea omorika 'Pendula' and
P. o. 'Cupressina'

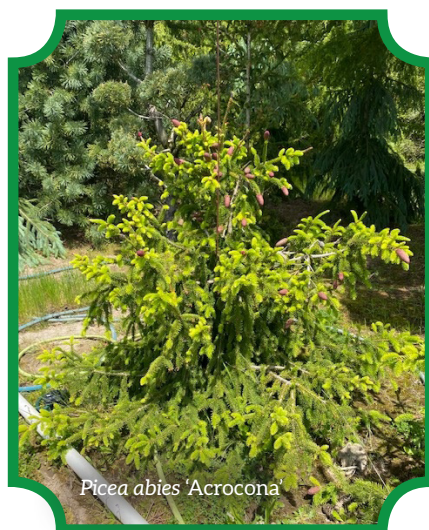
spruces have this vibrant, new growth in the spring. Weeping white spruce (*Picea glauca* 'Pendula') is another one that falls into that category."

For taller spruce, Eaton recommended *Picea omorika* (Serbian spruce), which matures at 165 feet, but has a small footprint of only 3 feet wide. The epithet *omorika* means "spruce" in the Serbian language. The slightly pendent branches curl up at the ends.

For miniature spruces, Iseli Nursery notes that the slow-growing, globe-shaped *Picea abies* 'Blue Planet' has some of the tiniest needles on the planet. Frequently used for the miniature railroad, trough,



Picea engelmannii 'Bushs Lace'



Picea abies 'Acrocona'

and rock gardens, the miniature conifer with a slight blue cast grows one or two inches per year.

The unusuals

"I really like spruce because of the overall representation of form," Grotz said.

The unusual snake-branched Norway spruce (*Picea abies* 'Virgata') has an odd form; the branches are snake-like.

"I have some that are now 25-feet tall," Grotz said. "It's a cool, collector's plant — like the Grinch's Christmas tree."

There isn't a lot of foliage on the tree, which Grotz refers to as anemic. Yet that is its look.

"You would not trim it, as the >>



Picea engelmannii 'Compacta'



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more you prune, the fuller it gets, defeating the purpose of it being a snake. You have to have a different landscape paradigm to appreciate it.”

Picea abies ‘Virgata’ is similar to *P. abies* ‘Cranstonii’ and often mixed up in the trade. *P. a.* ‘Virgata’ branches are flat and horizontal, while *P. a.* ‘Cranstonii’ branching is upward facing. Grotz gets many comments on the plant when he displays them. He remembers one person saying, “Hey, that looks like saguaro cactus.”

“I like it,” Grotz said. “But it’s not for everybody. It’s not something [that] a garden center will want 50, but this is one of those you put a couple on dis-

play. Someone will certainly come along and say, ‘Wow, these are really cool,’ and then buy them for their landscape.”

Grotz carries a high-end collector plant, *Picea engelmannii* ‘Snake,’ which is highly anemic.

“It doesn’t back-bud prolifically, if at all,” he said. “This is the most rare genetic code we have in the entire nursery. If you prune this plant, the branch dies, so it’s difficult to graft.”

Drought tolerance

With a need for more plants with less appetite for moist soil, the *Picea* genus is adaptable to many drought conditions.

Eaton said, “A lot of my customers live in the high desert of Colorado, or



Picea omorika ‘Berliners Weeper’

Idaho and Montana. They might get some moisture in winter, but in the summer it’s drought for these places. Spruce is an easy, low maintenance conifer that doesn’t require a lot of water.” ☺

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Al's has a variety of trailing foliage hanging baskets.

PHOTO BY [unreadable] OM



A natural pairing

Retailers find success pairing houseplants with a new breed of hard goods

BY EMILY LINDBLOM

JUDY ALLERUZZO HAS WITNESSED many different trends during her 35 years at **Al's Garden & Home** in Woodburn, where she is the houseplants and perennials buyer.

In the past six to seven years, succulents have been the go-to plants that reignited the houseplant craze for the Millennial generation. Alleruzzo said while succulents are still popular, now the focus has shifted toward variegated foliage and hard goods items like moss poles and 1970s-style macrame hangers.

A self-described plant geek, Alleruzzo said she started bringing in the more eye-catching and colorful foliage. They took off with customers, especially those who discovered the plants on social media platforms like Instagram.

"It became a big swell of interest I think," she said.

Al's has a variety of hard goods to help make plants more successful, from bug spray and moss poles to aesthetic pottery and self-watering pots. Alleruzzo particularly likes the ceramic self-watering planter called the Jett pot by Accent Decor. It uses an exposed rope at the base of the potting soil to carry water

from the saucer below, ensuring the plants get just the amount of water they need.

Alleruzzo also recommends organic soils and fertilizers from Espoma and organic, natural and synthetic options of pest control from Bonide.

Chelsey Greene, general manager of **Cascade Tropicals** in Snohomish, Washington, joined the wholesale grower in 2019 after a six-year career in the fishing industry of Alaska.

"I was looking for something equally fast-paced and a fun production environment and that's how I ended up here," Greene said. "I had no experience in the houseplant industry but as soon as I started here I realized it's a similar environment where things move in and out really quickly, and it's been amazing so far."

Cascade Tropicals supplies retail stores and online sellers with houseplants, succulents, seasonals, Hawaiian plants and rare plants.

Greene said Cascade Tropicals prioritizes having high-quality plants on display in its greenhouse.

"We make sure the plants look beautiful when they go out >>



because they're basically a piece of furniture in someone's house," Greene said. "We need to make sure every leaf is beautiful."

Greene said she stays on top of seasonal changes and plants for different holidays.

While the go-to plants like pothos always sell well, Cascade Tropicals also caters to those looking for more expensive collector plants like pink princess philodendrons. The wholesaler also offers indoor plants that can go outside during the summer, like ferns, cactus and citrus plants.

Alleruzzo also promotes putting houseplants outside in the summer.

"If you're interested in doing something different, try putting houseplants in outdoor containers," Alleruzzo said. "Try to bring them back inside in the fall, or choose an annual and let it go with the season and try something else next year."

Keeping up with trends

"Trends change quickly in the house environment," Green said.

Greene said it's important to stay on top of market trends, as what was popular

last year might be different this year.

While future trends are hard to predict, Greene says she tries to stay close to the market and get new cuttings in so Cascade Tropicals can start growing them for the next season. The wholesaler also brings in new plants from growers across North America and Hawaii.

Kelley Kenyon is a fourth-generation family member involved with **Dennis' 7 Dees** and the current general manager of retail divisions. Her father is one of the current owners.

All the Dennis' 7 Dees locations across Oregon have expanded their indoor plant presence, but the Bridgeport Village location in particular specializes in houseplants and accessories.

Kenyon said the market is highly competitive right now, and she strives to keep up with the demand for popular items, like air plants and colorful variegated plants.

"Pink foliage and striking patterns are continuing to be big trends," Kenyon said, adding that resilient plants that are

easy to care for are also popular.

She said customers have been looking for versions of products like watering cans and misters that are more aesthetic than purely utilitarian.

"It's different from a watering can in a shed, it's something that looks nice on a shelf next to a plant collection," Kenyon said. Consumers also favor pottery and decor items made by local and small makers instead of mass-produced items.

"There are tons of local makers in our community," she added.

Moss pole

Philodendrons have remained go-to houseplants over the decades, but the posts used to support them have changed in popularity. While bamboo sticks can hold up lighter plants like orchids, more durable moss-covered poles are the new supports that customers are turning to for philodendrons and other heavier plants.

"The roots can grow right into the moss," Alleruzzo said.

Lucas Picciolo, founder and CEO of



Croton Petra
PHOTOS COURTESY OF EVL



Bird nest fern



Kalanchoe

An air plant in a hanging globe is on display at Al's Garden & Home in Woodburn. PHOTO BY EMILY LINDBLOM



Mossify in Toronto, Canada, created a bendable version of the moss pole.

"The bendable moss pole really was an innovative idea, so we're proud to say we're the first on the market and the innovators of that," Picciolo said.

This moss-covered support can bend into different shapes so plants will grow around it however the customer wants. Picciolo believes it's a great way for the customer to bring creativity to their indoor plant collections.

Mossify also sells misters to keep the moss moist, as well as raw moss to add to potting soil or to decorate pottery.

Picciolo has always loved plants and remembers admiring the beauty of moss when he was growing up.

As a former construction worker, Picciolo had been working on a construction site when he was inspired to reuse the large amount of excess wood that went to waste.

"I really wanted to do something with that wood," Picciolo said. "A couple years down the line I would collect the wood and carve names and images in >>

Rumohra adiantiformis 'Variegata'



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it and put moss inside of it.”

He would sell these moss-filled carvings and plant a tree for every order to offset the wood consumption. Thus was the beginning of Mossify. Though he doesn't collect and carve wood anymore, he grew the company and still plants one tree for every order. Now, Mossify sells to more than 400 garden centers across North America and more than 5,000 homes.

“We're excited to grow along with the industry as a whole,” Picciolo said. “The general population is getting more into plants, which is good for the whole industry. It's super exciting.”

Picciolo plans to display Mossify's products at the upcoming Farwest Show August 24 through 26 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland. It will be his first Farwest Show so he said he's

looking forward to meeting other retailers in the garden and nursery industry.

“It's really important to meet everyone in person and support businesses in North America,” Picciolo said. “It's important for consumers and businesses to try to stay local as much as possible.”

Social media

Kenyon said Dennis' 7 Dees' brick and mortar stores are navigating the competition from online sellers and those who sell houseplants through social media platforms.

She believes excellent customer service and merchandising are the best ways to provide value that a consumer won't be able to get online.

The beauty of the plants themselves gives people a reason to shop in person.

“It inspires people to find ways to live among indoor plants,” she said.

Alleruzzo has been using social media tools to create a buzz about the new plants and hard goods she gets in store.

“Every Thursday or Friday we'll post the houseplant of the week and what's cool about it to lure people to the store,” Alleruzzo said.

“I watch different Instagram accounts and see what's going on,” she added.

Al's also has an assortment of houseplants available through e-commerce so shoppers can make their purchases online and sit in their car for curbside pick up.

Alleruzzo also co-hosts the Garden Time TV show each week, featuring about seven segments that are around five minutes long about all sorts of plants, containers and textures that are hot in the garden industry.



Snake plant, Starpower Ocean
PHOTOS COURTESY OF EVL



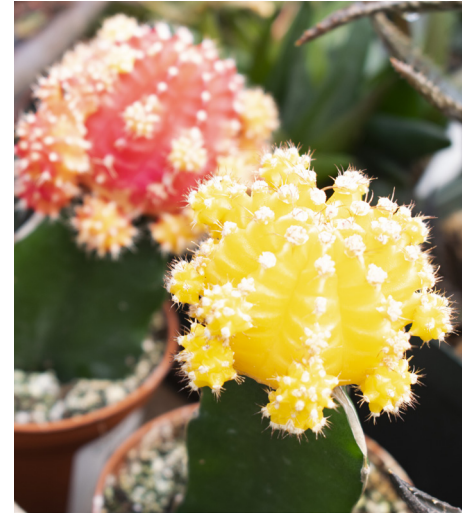
Echeveria Red Sky



Cyclamen



Al's Garden & Home in Woodburn displays houseplants of all shapes and sizes. Moon cacti add a pop of color. PHOTOS BY EMILY LINDBLOM



Pandemic trends

Kenyon said while the indoor plant boom of the beginning of the pandemic has settled, there is still a lot of demand.

During the first part of the coronavirus pandemic era, when many people were

staying at home, the houseplant trend grew even more.

Greene said Cascade Tropicals was also seeing a stark increase in demand.

“Over the last two years we were barely able to keep plants in stock.

Everything we brought in would go right out,” Greene said, adding the pandemic brought an increase of customers wanting to sell plants online.

“A lot of people switched to online and saw a good market there so customers



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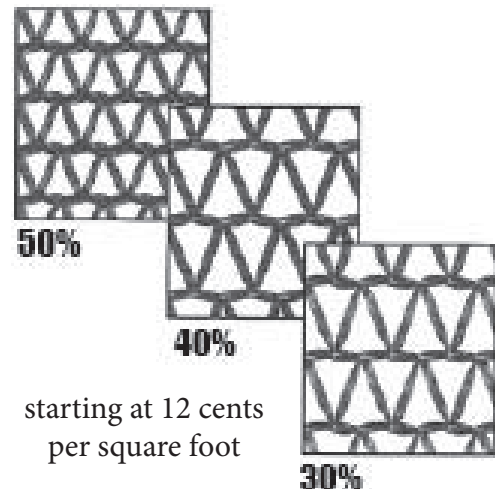
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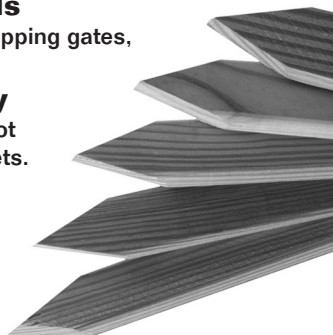
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Retailers see changing trends in houseplants

Orchids are on display at Al's Garden & Home in Woodburn. PHOTO BY EMILY LINDBLOM



are continuing to do that," she said.

Alleruzzo believes the industry is still catching up to the demand, and supply chain shortages are still affecting the availability of hard goods.

Now that people are able to go back to work in person and travel, the desire for indoor plants has changed but still remains strong.

"It's a different feeling after people come out of that horrendous time," Alleruzzo said. "Plant breeders helped because there are more interesting plants on the market to discover."

Greene also thinks 2022 has come with some changes to the past couple years.

"It's a little bit different from last year, but we're still excited about the movement and still trying to provide all the plants we can to garden centers," Greene said. "I don't think the interest in houseplants is going to go away, we just need to make sure we have the right plants." ☺

Emily Lindblom is an Oregon-based freelance journalist covering business, environmental and agricultural news. She has a background in community reporting and a master's degree in multimedia journalism. Visit her website at emilylindblom.com or reach her at emily@emilylindblom.com.

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EMPLOYMENT

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE FOR WHOLESALE NURSERY

Highland Meadow Nursery, an established wholesale nursery in Molalla, currently has an opportunity for an individual to assist in our "Customer Service" needs. The primary duties of this position are to provide ongoing, accurate information that could be beneficial to a specific group of customers. The ideal candidate needs to be self-motivated and detail-oriented, have excellent organizational and communication skills, and commit to learning and participating in a team environment.

Other critical aspects of this position will be utilizing computers for communication & spreadsheets along with essential horticulture experience. Spanish would be a plus.

Please send your resume with reference and salary history to:

Highland Meadow Nursery
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Or email to

dstaley@highlandmeadownursery.com

CONIFER KINGDOM IS HIRING!

The position: Order Processing Manager – We're looking for an organized candidate to pull and assemble plant orders. We grow 2000 varieties of Japanese Maples, Conifers and companion plants. During the slow season position will change to writing blogs, updating plant listings, and potentially other office work. The Ideal Candidate: Passionate about plants! Horticulture background (BS in Horticulture is a plus). Strong interpersonal and relationship skills. Qualifications: • Ability to lift, carry, or push 50 pounds. This is a mostly outdoor job, and you will be exposed to all the weather elements. • Ideally bilingual (Spanish and English) Job Details: Salary \$40,000-55,000 per year / Full-Time / Located in Silverton, Oregon. Please forward your resume and cover letter to: Brent Markus brent@raretreenursery.com C: 847-347-7463

EMPLOYMENT

GROWER - NURSERY MANAGER - RUBY NURSERY

We are located in Carlton, Oregon. A small nursery specialized in growing and selling Japanese maple. We are looking for a Nursery manager. This position offers full-time salary & benefits while also allowing flexibility for your schedule. Will supervise a small crew and take care of daily office administration. We have an experienced crew in the field so if you have the office skills and some basic plant knowledge lets discuss the opportunity. Salary depends on experience. Please send me an email and we can set up a time to discuss. Thanks simonburr.mtvs@gmail.com

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

A well established and respected wholesale bare root nursery in the Portland, OR metro area is seeking a Production Coordinator (PC) to work with our existing production farm and propagation managers. This would be a career position for the right candidate. Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Coordinate the planning, buying (seed & seedlings), planting and growing of our nursery stock between our farms and propagation department.
- Coordinate the harvest between farm managers and harvest crew leaders.
- Help facilitate the pesticide program for farm managers including purchasing.

Candidate should be self-starting, driven, willing to learn and have a minimum of five years of hands on experience in nursery production as a crew leader or manager. Horticulture education is preferred, but not required if experience is sufficient. Computer skills of common office programs are a must. Salary will be competitive and based on experience. Healthcare insurance, vacation, 401k and company vehicle included. Email resume to diggerjobs@oan.org

EMPLOYMENT

ASSISTANT FARM MANAGER

Moana Nursery in Canby, Oregon, is looking for a full-time Assistant Nursery Manager who will work directly with the General Manager. They will work in all areas of the 193-acre wholesale nursery, which has both container yard and field production. We have a parent company in Reno, Nevada, with three retail stores and a commercial/residential landscape division.

Duties: • Production planning, inventory • Herbicide applications in container yard and fields • Customer orders • Fleet maintenance decisions • Budgeting of annual expenses • Shipping • Supply purchasing.

Requirements: • A strong foundation in common sense • A strong knowledge of the ornamental nursery business • A strong knowledge of plant production, growing, propagation • Experience with irrigation systems, overhead impact sprinklers and drip irrigation • Experience with wide range of agriculture/farm equipment operation. • Computer experience • Bilingual is preferred.

Salary and benefits: • \$55,000-\$70,000/year (with bonuses) • Benefits: 401(k), 401(k) matching • Health/Dental/Vision insurance, Paid time off, Professional development assistance, Relocation assistance.

To apply: Email resume and answers to these questions: Are you willing to work outside in all weather conditions throughout the year? What is your education? How long have you been in the nursery business? (5 years preferred) What language(s) do you speak? What licenses or certifications do you have? (driver's license required; chemical applicator's license preferred) Please visit our website at www.moananursery.com

EMPLOYMENT

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR NURSERY MANAGER

Incredible opportunity for an experienced entrepreneurial individual as a Production Manager/Head Grower to oversee, organize and operate this unique and interesting operation. Operations and growing experience required. Nursery located in a beautiful area of Western Washington county, Oregon. Full time position with great pay, vacation & benefits and growth opportunities for the right individual(s). For more information email resume and cover letter to diggerjobs@oan.org with Blind Box B in the subject line.

PLANT HEALTH AND SHOP MAINTENANCE EMPLOYMENT

Ekstrom Nursery in Gresham, Oregon is looking for an experienced employee for a position in Plant Health and Shop Maintenance. We have 200 acres of container, field and bare root ornamental plant production.

Responsibilities and Qualifications

- 1) Possess a strong mechanical aptitude to perform light tractor maintenance and servicing
- 2) Oversee/implement plant health related to overall spray program; herbicide, fungicide & pesticide.
- 3) Must have or acquire Oregon Certified Pesticide Applicator License or ability to acquire within 6 months of hire.
- 4) Maintain and operate spray equipment.
- 5) Bilingual (English and Spanish) communication skills preferred, but not required.
- 6) Valid driver's license.
- 7) Basic computer skills helpful.
- 8) Assist with loading & shipping trucks – seasonal.
- 9) Passionate about plant care and work creatively toward building farm efficiencies.

Compensation: The position is DOE includes benefits package. Please send resumes to ekstrom.nsy@gmail.com

NurseryGuide.com

EMPLOYMENT

ASSISTANT FARM MANAGER

Ekstrom Nursery in Gresham, Oregon is looking for a career oriented individual to work in multiple areas. We are looking for an experienced individual who has a strong work ethic, is disciplined, motivated for personal and professional growth and committed to the vision of our company. We have 200 acres of container, field and bare root ornamental plants. Customer base includes retail, re-wholesale and growers. The person will work closely with the owners in all aspects of container, B&B and bare root production. This is a career opportunity for a person who is interested in diverse plant production and nursery business.

Responsibilities and Qualifications

- 1) Experience in ornamental nursery production and propagation related to field, container and bare root.
- 2) Oversee all aspects of our container production.
- 3) Assist in crew management of field production practices and techniques.
- 4) Assist with supervising and scheduling daily and weekly jobs.
- 5) Must be self-motivated on projects or to work with a group or team.
- 6) Possesses strong communication skills, interpersonal skills and be a person of good character.
- 7) Computer knowledge, skills and abilities, and bilingual (English and Spanish) language desired,
- 8) Strong work ethic, positive attitude.
- 9) Valid driver's license.
- 10) Ability to work with wide variety of agricultural equipment, such as tractors and implements.
- 11) Have leadership skills with ability to make decisions, train and motivate employees.

Compensation: Salaried position is DOE and includes benefits package. Please send resumes to ekstrom.nsy@gmail.com

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EMPLOYMENT

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT & INVENTORY COORDINATOR

Patterson Nursery Sales, Inc. Eagle Creek, OR., an employee owned company (ESOP), is seeking a self-motivated skilled individual to assist in maintaining plant inventories thru all production cycles. Primary duties include, but not limited to, facilitating the harvest of market ready plants and assisting in the coordination of staging for shipment.

- This individual must have the ability to work in a team environment capable of coordinating multiple tasks simultaneously in a fast-paced setting.
 - Must be able to work under inclement weather conditions (hot, cold, and rain)
 - Willingness to learn new jobs and skills.
 - Spanish/English preferred (but not required).
 - Computer skills preferred (but not required)
 - Basic reading, writing and math skills.
 - Three plus years of horticultural educational and/or work-related experience is preferred.
 - Must be able to work the following schedule:
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INSIDE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

TSW Nursery Sales Inc. is seeking a plant-knowledgeable inside sales representative with 3-5 years of sales experience. The perfect candidate must be proficient in MS Office Suite and Quickbooks software, provide excellent customer service, have strong verbal and written communication skills, manage their time, and be organized. Salary commensurate with experience.

Please mail or email cover letter and resume to:

TSW Nursery Sales, Inc.
Attn: Human Resources
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EMPLOYMENT

PRODUCTION MANAGER, PRT

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EMPLOYMENT

GENERAL MANAGER

Cascadian Nurseries is looking for the right person to manage the day to day operations of this mid-size nursery and work with staff to take the nursery into the next generation. This person will continue to build relationships with landscape associations, customers and suppliers. More company information can be found at www.cascadiannurseries.com.

Duties: • Run the day to day operations of the nursery. Supplement current team as necessary to provide a complete and sufficient workforce to achieve company goals. Develop team to establish a first-class, effective organization. • Evaluate the nurseries competitive situation, strengths and financial returns. In concert with management team, create and implement a strategy that results in a strong competitive position and appropriate returns. • Be the face of the organization to the customer and business communities. Create and sustain a brand position of high quality, strong customer service, equitable business practices and relationships. • Ensure strong business development practices to maintain the company's position as a provider of superior top quality products. • Oversee all company staff and ensure strong operations, practices and internal controls. Establish and maintain excellent company communications among all employees. • Strong planning and organizational skills required. • Manage the nurseries inventory, quality, and product mix to meet customer's needs.

Qualifications: • Passionate about the nursery/landscape industry. Willing to take the business to the next generation, such as implementing new technology. • B.A. required, with emphasis in business administration and/or horticulture, greenhouse, or nursery management preferred.

Experience: Three to five years managerial experience at a horticulture business. Overall seven to ten years related experience or equivalent combination of education and experience required. Demonstrated progression in management of horticulture company preferred.

Computer Skills: Experience with Microsoft Office preferred. Able to manage company website and internet applications. We use Sage 100 for our accounting, inventory, and sales.

Apply: Please send resume to Cascadian Nurseries, 8900 NW Dick Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97124 or email to jim@cascadiannurseries.com.

NurseryGuide.com

EMPLOYMENT

IN-HOUSE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Patterson Nursery Sales, Inc. located in Eagle Creek, Oregon is searching for an experienced In-House Sales Representative. We are unique in that we are both a Grower as well as a full-service brokerage of Ornamental Nursery Stock. Our mission is to supply the finest plant material available through exceptional service. We ship throughout the USA and Canada. A successful candidate will maintain existing customer accounts as well as develop new accounts. In conjunction with those primary duties, he or she will also maintain, develop, and cultivate strong vendor relationships. Candidate needs to be extremely self motivated, quality driven, and possess a high work ethic. Must be a team player with extensive industry experience. Vehicle provided for to and from work as well as significant local travel visiting our suppliers and touring customers. Minimal overnight or out of area travel requirements. Excellent benefit package, competitive compensation based on DOE. If we interest you, please apply! All applicants remain confidential. Please send resume to Jason@PattersonNurserySales.com



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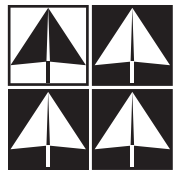
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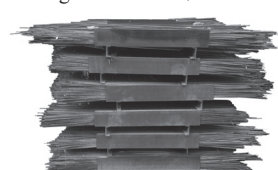
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GROWING KNOWLEDGE

Series content is coordinated by Dr. Jay Pscheidt, professor of botany and plant pathology at Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon.



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Fig. 1 Spruce container field (a), and damaged shoot tip (b) [next page]. PHOTOS COURTESY OF OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

A beneficial breath of fresh air

Testing the use of wintergreen oil to attract beneficials that kill nursery pests

BY JANA LEE, VICTORIA SKILLMAN AND KATERINA VELASCO GRAHAM

CAN MINTY ODORS REALLY enhance pest control? When pests feed on a plant, the plant releases odors, one of them being methyl salicylate (MeSA), also known as oil of wintergreen. When MeSA is applied on plants, a wide range of parasitic wasps, ladybugs, green lacewings, and predatory bugs have been attracted into the crop field.

MeSA is available as slow-release lures to be hung next to the plant canopy (Predalure, AgBio). MeSA is also a common analgesic and flavoring used in medicinal rubs, mouthwash and mint candy.

While numerous studies have been done in food crops, few have examined MeSA in ornamental production. Also, most

studies have shown natural enemies becoming more abundant in fields with MeSA application, but have not always demonstrated subsequent pest reduction or plant protection.

A two-year study was conducted in spruce container yards, red maple production fields, and nursery stock block plots to examine whether MeSA lures would draw in natural enemies, reduce pest pressure, and affect plant appearance. Plots with MeSA lures were compared to control plots with 4–5 replicated plots set up in new sites each year. Small plots contained one or three lures depending on size (rate of 76 lures/acre), and spaced at least 100–200 meters apart.

The spruce wooly aphid feeds on the shoot tips causing



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wax deposits and twisted growth which need to be pruned off (Fig. 1b). Lures were placed in May just as aphids started colonizing fields.

Each week, spruce tips were visually examined for aphids and mummies. Mummies are aphids that develop a paper bag appearance which indicates that it was attacked by a parasitic wasp. Clear sticky traps, and yellow pan traps were also used to sample insects. Random spruce were also visually ranked as being damaged or

not on the shoot tips. Sampling was within 1 m and 5–7 m away from lures, and positions of traps were changed weekly.

In the first year of the study, 50% more *Pseudopraon* wasps (attack pest aphid), and 125% more mummified aphids were observed in spruce plots with MeSA lures than control plots (Fig. 1c). Likewise, aphid abundance was 19% lower overall, and damaged spruce were 27% less frequent in MeSA plots. This trend was not observed in the second year at different sites. Reasons for this are unknown and could be due to trees being larger in the second year, or differences in management.

Red maples are attacked by spider mites, lygus bugs, aphids and thrips, and can affect leaf appearance or growth of the meristem. Lures were hung on plants in July, and sampling was done with weekly leaf inspection, sticky cards and pan traps (Fig. 2a).

Various parasitic wasps, ladybugs and rove beetles were more abundant in MeSA than control plots during one or both years. Interestingly, 54% and 32% fewer pest thrips were observed on sticky cards in MeSA plots in the first and second year, respectively (Fig. 2b), and 57% fewer aphids in the first year.

In the maple experiment, predatory

rove beetles were enhanced in the second year and may have contributed to thrips control. Ladybugs were enhanced the second year and not consistent with the aphid decrease in the first year. Yet, green lacewings and predatory mirids were marginally increased the first year, and may have contributed to aphid control.

Though it was not clear whether natural enemies mediated pest control, use of MeSA lures increased natural enemy abundance and was associated with a reduction of certain pests in maples.

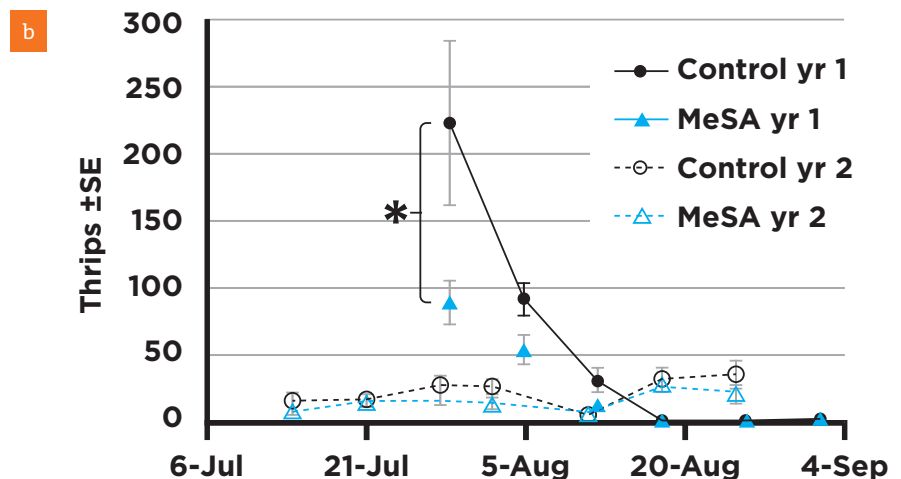
Maple growth as measured by diameter change near the base of the stem did not differ between seedlings grown near MeSA or in control plots. While this is not an advantage, it addresses the concern that MeSA may have a tradeoff with plant growth. MeSA volatiles can stimulate plants to invest more in defense, or have allelopathic effects as seen in rice.

The final field experiment with MeSA was set up in mature trees (*Malus*, *Tilia*, *Acer*) in stock blocks which are infrequently managed with insecticides, and ideal to draw in natural enemies. This experiment specifically studied whether MeSA application could enhance predation on the new invasive brown marmorated stink bug eggs. Vacuum samples, >>



Fig. 2. Red maple production field (a), and fewer thrips found per week on sticky cards in MeSA compared to control plots, GLMM treatment $p < 0.05$ (b).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY



Fresh breath of pest control

Fig. 3. Sentinel freeze-killed egg mass of brown marmorated stink bug to monitor predation (a), and green lacewing larva at the egg mass (b). PHOTOS COURTESY OF OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY



sticky cards and sentinel freeze-killed egg masses were used (Fig. 3a).

In the first year, more predatory thrips, green lacewing adults, and ladybugs were found near MeSA. There was no overall difference in predation on sentinel egg masses, except in August of the first year when 49% of eggs were predated in MeSA plots and 9% in control plots. Green lacewing larvae were observed to feed on the eggs (Fig. 3b).

No differences in natural enemy, pest abundance or predation were observed in the second year.

To summarize, use of MeSA can increase natural enemy abundance in a nurse field, and this is consistent with studies done in cotton, cranberry, hop fields, soybean, strawberry, and vineyards. A subsequent decrease in pest control can also follow, though it was not consistent each year and in all studies.

Current research among various groups are addressing what happens to natural enemies once they are drawn in. Are they more or less efficient in finding pests? Will providing floral nectar and pollen help supplement the natural enemies if few pests are available, an “attract and reward” approach? ©

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Pushing back on the unworkable

Worker safety is critical, and nursery and greenhouse operations make it a priority.

Our industry has learned a lot from the dynamic and harsh weather events of the past year. But Oregon agriculture has been put back on its heels by a new set of heat and smoke rules, created under pressure from labor and farmworker advocates. These rules seem to carry a presumption that employers are careless with workers' safety, when that's not the case. Growers have every interest in protecting their workers, not to mention that it's the right thing to do.

These latest rules, created by the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Oregon OSHA), create problems rather than solving them, while exposing regulators' unfamiliarity with ag.

What is rulemaking?

Oregon OSHA works for the governor. The agency is responsible for creating and enforcing the standards for which businesses must adhere to on a certain topic.

In administrative law, rulemaking is the process that executive and independent agencies use to create, or promulgate, regulations. In general, legislatures first set broad policy mandates by passing statutes, then agencies create more detailed regulations through rulemaking. To topline it, they take policy and grind it into a set of rules.

I have participated in numerous rule-making committees on behalf of our industry. It's almost always grueling, and often appalling to witness. Political agendas are out for all to see.

Currently, the OAN advocacy team is engaged in 45 different rulemaking processes, but not really by choice. If we aren't there, our voice disappears.

Our usual approach is threefold: 1) push for common sense, 2) make sure rules don't exceed the intent of the legislation, and 3) work diligently to curtail expansive administrative policies by state agencies.

Over the past decade, the OAN has earned some landmark legislative victories. We secured estate tax reform, won support

for water supply programs, and secured unanimous passage of a law preventing county assessors from taxing hoop houses to the tune of \$2,000 per structure.

But aside from the hoop house law, these wins didn't end up being wins. They became victims of the rulemaking process. The people who opposed our bills were able to harm the intent of the legislation by making it overly complex, and no longer helpful to our cause. No wonder I often say that rulemaking is where good bills go to die.

Why OSHA rules miss the mark

Oregon OSHA's new heat and smoke rules don't just miss the mark, they miss the boat. The "heat dome" weather event the state experienced last summer devastated operations, and our industry was tremendously saddened by the death of a worker at a nursery operation.

Climate models show we could have another hot summer. We need clear guidelines for agricultural producers. In fact, we welcome the opportunity to talk about the good practices employed to protect workers.

Unfortunately, Oregon OSHA set out trying to write the most aggressive heat and smoke rules in the country. The rules are completely unworkable, and the OAN and other industries have been pounding the table to shrugging shoulders.

To name a few examples, the trigger for heat illness prevention methods begins at 79 F, and operations could be cited when the heat index surpasses 80 F. Those apply indoors and out.

If an employer fails to provide adequate shade or access to water, especially as the temperature creeps above 90 F, the violation is quite serious.

OSHA does not have the authority to push wage rules, but let us not get too comfortable that the public relations factor does not put ag in a bad light. Many of the proponents of the restrictive rule pushed for employees to be sent home when 90 F is hit — with pay.

Proponents often cast aspersions that growers treat their employees with complete disregard for their health and safety. We



Jeff Stone
OAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

have pushed back hard on these narratives. Oregon ag workers are used to working hard, both inside and outside. Temperatures in our fine corner of the country rarely jump to a disastrous level overnight. Workers acclimate naturally.

What is OAN doing

Your OAN leadership is not standing around as this happens. We helped fund a lawsuit to put the OSHA rules on hold. We're not trying to absolve ourselves of the need to have a plan for heat events.

Rather, we want to reset the discussion, so that rules and enforcement action can be grounded in reality. We are pushing for more oversight by the state legislature. Nobody elected OSHA, and they are operating without much common-sense pushback by the executive branch. OSHA must not overstep its authority.

At the same time, we must educate legislators and the next governor, taking office in 2023, on what our grower community already does to protect workers.

To inform this discussion, I have asked many of our members what they do on hot days. The answers are not really surprising.

They start early and knock off before temperatures hit their peak. They talk to employees about the signs of heat exhaustion and encourage them to watch out for each other, so it can be prevented in real time. Some just send their crews home when it gets past 94 degrees.

But ag work is ag work. It is hard, it is physical, and our workers are good at it. My advice is to have a plan ready for the summer, use common sense like you normally do, and let us hope and pray that we do not see another 117 F day. ©

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