



Dear Members:

February 12, 2008

During a recent visit to the dentist I was asked that question that pops up all too often in conversations with well-intentioned, reasonably-educated, shamelessly-ignorant people: "So what do you do all winter?" Clearly, they picture us nursery folks sitting for weeks on end in a cozy room with slippers on feet propped up before a crackling fire, trotting across white-sand beaches pulling kites that dance merrily in balmy Bahamian breezes, or pattering around a quiet greenhouse listening to National Public Radio as we sow acorns in clay pots.

My first reaction was to spit out the gauze rolls jammed against my cheeks and try to describe the trade shows, spreadsheets, purchasing and production planning...the snow-plowing, frozen pipes, hardwood cuttings, spreadsheets and mousebait stations...the blown-off plastic, tractor maintenance, cash-flow statements, tax audits...and did I mention spreadsheets? I have strong feelings about this. If I don't watch it, I tend to get on a rant. Sometimes my head spins round. But this time I just said, 'We keep pretty busy', which came out like some mumbling cartoon-dog on a bad connection, as he reached into the back of my mouth with a shiny pick-axe. I let it go. He didn't really want to know.

We have dual afternoon workshops coming up later this month. Lake-Extension and **Sungro Horticulture** will provide a grower-technical session on slow-release fertilizers. As fertilizer costs escalate, effective use and monitoring of these products are critical to all growers. Dr. Willie Faber from 'Sungro', a former OSU Extension-specialist, will discuss their impact in different medias.

A separate business-related session sponsored by **Lake1Stop** Agencies will address labor-related issues for agricultural employers. Various speakers will discuss compliance requirements for unemployment, workers compensation, immigration, H2A and minimum wage.

Our social hour and dinner meeting will immediately follow the workshops at the same location. Our evening program deals with the Workers Compensation system in Ohio. Chad Evans from the Cleveland office of **Compensation Consultants, Inc.**, will discuss our industry group-ratings program. John Wargowsky from **Ohio and Indiana Risk Management Initiative** will offer a forward-looking view of this system. Members are invited to describe their own experiences with the system and the group-ratings program.

These programs will offer critical, timely information to our entire membership...nurseries as well as associate members...growers, managers and owners. Please join us and bring your coworkers and staff for our last regular meeting of the "slow season"!

### February Workshops and Dinner Meeting

**When:** Wednesday February 27, 2008  
**Location:** Rider's Inn, 792 Mentor Ave., Painesville, Ohio 44077  
**Price:** Workshops – Free Dinner Program - \$35  
**RSVP:** Call Annette by Monday February 25 at (440) 241-7969 or [info@nglco.com](mailto:info@nglco.com)  
**Workshop 1 'Slow-release fertilizers'** 2 PM – 4:30 Sponsor: **Sungro Horticulture**  
**Workshop 2 'Ag Labor Update'** 2 PM – 5:30 Sponsor: **Lake1Stop agencies**  
**Social Hour** 5 PM – 6:15  
**Dinner** 6:15 -7:15  
**Meeting** 7:15 -7:30  
**Program 'Workers Compensation'** 7:30 -8:45

## Other Meetings

We are putting together a round-table discussion between engineers for the Vrooman Road bridge project and NGLCO members. This is a \$22 million project slated for 2010. If you would like to be part of this discussion, contact Annette or me.

Our Executive Board will hold a half-day planning session on Friday, February 22. If you have suggestions or comments about meeting topics, meeting locations, finances, board nominations, nursery maps, golf outing, casino night, field day, field day lunches, political outreach or other Association activities, please contact a board member or myself prior to the meeting! (pssst...this is *your* Association!)

Pesticide Recertification Training, (*last chance!*), Thursday March 6<sup>th</sup>, Perry Manchester West (for registration and directions contact Randy Zondag, OSU Extension Lake, 440-350-2584).

Keep Thursday afternoon March 13<sup>th</sup> open for Dr. Dave Shetlar, Bug Doc! Details TBA.

## Political Outreach

The *Great Lakes Watershed Compact* is moving forward in the Ohio Legislature. I recently attended a Farm Bureau meeting at which the *Compact* was debated by local representatives to the Ohio Legislature. While everyone agrees we should avoid diversion of local waters to other regions, State Senator Timothy Grendell leads a group insisting that the current draft concedes authority of the watershed to public entities.

The Lake County Economic Development Council will hold its annual Legislative Breakfast on Monday February 25, 7:30 to 9:30 AM, at LaMalfa Party Center on Heisley Road in Mentor. Enjoy your eggs over easy as you listen to Congressman Steve LaTourette, Sen. Tim Grendell, Rep. Lorraine Fende, Rep. Carol-Ann Schindel and Lake Commissioner Bob Aufuldish. (Cost \$18, reservations 440-352-3412).

## Member News

Roger Seith recently passed away. During his long nursery career Roger worked for Baumans, Klyns, Gilsons, Lake County Nursery and others. His smiling face and enthusiasm for plants will be missed.

Roger and Carolyn Globig recently sold North Coast Perennials to long-time manager, Mark Freshour. Great people all, we offer our best wishes!

## Out and About

The ONLA Centennial Gala Dinner during CENTS was a fun, well-planned evening commemorating 100 years of association activities. The sold-out event also marked the retirement of Bill Stalter, after 31 years at the helm, and introduction of Gay Williams as new Executive Director. Congratulations to Bill, Gay, plus all those who planned and sponsored the event!

My wife wasn't happy when I dragged her out on *Fat Tuesday* to Commissioner Dan Troy's *Mardi Gras* at LaMalfa Party Center. But she cheered up when we discovered all the great food, great music and ran into Randy Zondag, Jim Zampini and others.

Dr. Charles Hall, Ag Economist and speaker at our November State-of-the-Industry Workshop, has a great new website called: [Making Cents of Green Industry Economics](http://ellisonchair.blogspot.com). Google this title or go to: <http://ellisonchair.blogspot.com>

Don't forget to mark your calendar for our NGLCO summer events: Golf Outing, Friday June 20<sup>th</sup>; Annual Meeting and Casino Night, Monday August 11<sup>th</sup>; and Nursery Field Day, Tuesday August 12<sup>th</sup>!

Personally, as we head into the Spring, I think we're all lucky to be in this great, hard-working industry...and I'm glad it's light enough to work now after 6 PM!

Sincerely,  
Mark Gilson, President