

# Nursery Growers of Lake County Ohio, Inc.

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Executive Secretary: Annette Howard



Dear Members,

June 6, 2008

Last month in this very space I proposed that 'Spring is the season we live for'. In my defense, April had been a pleasant month, quite accommodating, with respectable sales, and I was deluded into believing that this happy situation might continue. Instead, we got a May in which growing-degree-days actually retreated (at least it seemed that way) and sales, despite a robust Memorial Day Weekend, shambled along behind those of a year ago, both in our garden center, our wholesale nursery and, anecdotally, a number of other member nurseries. All this brings me to a new revelation, shared by many: Spring Sucks!

Thankfully it's June here in equatorial Northeastern Ohio and we have ample opportunities for merriment and diversion!

## **NGLCO Golf Outing**

Friday June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008      Rain or Shine!  
11AM Registration & Lunch    12 Noon Shotgun Start    4 PM Steak Dinner

### **Powderhorn Country Club**

3991 Bates Road Madison, Ohio 44057 [Powderhorngolf.com](http://Powderhorngolf.com)

See enclosed flyer for details!



## **NGLCO Annual Summer Meeting and Casino Night**

Monday August 11, 2008 5 PM Social Hour 6 PM Dinner 7:40 Gambling!  
Perry Community Center  
2800 Perry Park Road, Perry, Ohio 44081 (at the Lake)  
See enclosed flyer for details!

## **41<sup>st</sup> Annual NGLCO Summer Field Day**

Tuesday August 12, 2008 9 AM to 4 PM  
Host: Herman Losely & Son Nursery  
3410 Shepard Road, Perry, Ohio 44081  
Map on Losely's website: [www.losely.com](http://www.losely.com)  
Contact NGLCO for details: [www.nglco.com](http://www.nglco.com) [info@nglco.com](mailto:info@nglco.com)

## **Nominating Committee**

If you think someone in your company or someone you know in the industry would make a good officer or Executive Board Member for NGLCO, please send their name in to Annette Howard, Executive Secretary, (440) 241-7969, FAX (440) 259-3364, [info@nglco.com](mailto:info@nglco.com). Our Nominating Committee will be making their selections soon!

## Member News

Carole Wheeler, salesperson for C.M.Brown Nursery, was back at her desk for a while last week, despite undergoing aggressive chemotherapy for lung cancer! Carole's friends with 4-H have arranged a **Benefit Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction** on her behalf for Sunday, June 29, 4PM to 8PM at the Perry Community Center, 2800 Perry Park Road, Perry, Ohio 44081. For \$8 presale tickets contact OSU Extension-Lake, 99 East Erie Street, Painesville, OH 44077, (440) 350-2266; or you can pay \$10 at-the-door.

## Political Outreach

On May 8, I attended a National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB) meeting on the 'Paid Sick Leave' ballot initiative that would mandate 7 paid sick-days for Ohio workers at businesses with 25 or more employees. This was characterized as 'anti-employer populist law' that would impact many small businesses in Ohio. Ohio doesn't need this. Nurseries don't need this. Please help defeat this November ballot initiative!

Stringent immigration enforcement legislation was recently proposed at the State and National levels. I sent letters on behalf of NGLCO recognizing the need for 'political cover' during this election season but urging legislators not to pursue draconian enforcement measures in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform.

We have written letters to legislators and spoken directly to Congressman Steve LaTourette regarding the need for expansion of the 'H2B Cap' that affects the landscape industry.

In addition, we sent letters, along with Nancy Hendricks and other members, to the Governor, Lt. Governor, and all members of the Workers Compensation Committee, regarding rate adjustments and problems with the current system. ONLA is currently partnering with manufacturing groups to find ways to improve this unworkable system.

## Out and About

Fuel costs are the latest conundrum for our industry. Will \$4 and \$5 gas get homeowners in the mood for stay-cations and weekends at home? If so, will this translate into more spending on their landscapes and outdoor-living-space? Will \$5 diesel cause retailers to buy more from local suppliers? If so, will this benefit our growers in Northeastern Ohio? Most of us are passing on the increase in fuel costs. But can we pass on the increases in fertilizer, pots, tree-baskets, freight-in and heating?

NGLCO recently joined *Lake County Economic Development Council*, a group which has worked behind-the-scenes for many years to create and promote entities such as *Lake County Visitors Bureau*. I recently attended a meeting of *Team NEO*, a regional economic group, at which the agribusiness committee of LCEDC won the 'retaining jobs' award for their work with Cleveland Foundation and the resulting survey of the local grape growers industry. We are hoping to secure a Cleveland Foundation \$25,000 grant to do a similar formal survey of the nursery industry sometime in 2008 or 2009.

Roemer Nursery in Madison continues to encounter water-problems, apparently related to a Walmart across the street. Owner, Gied Stroombeek, 83 years old, doesn't need this but is determined to fight on. At a recent County Commissioners meeting, along with VP Lisa Ungers and myself, Gied expressed his astonishment that this could happen, after 50 years of clean water, and that it could be allowed to continue! The Commissioners and State Senator Tim Grendell have expressed their support, but we have no solution in sight.

The new president of The Ohio State University, Dr. Gordon Gee, will be visiting this month with Extension personnel from Lake and Ashtabula Counties at Klyn Nurseries, in Perry. Dr. Gee is a tremendously qualified leader for OSU, which perhaps explains why he is the highest-paid University President in the country (at \$1 million per year). Thanks to Nancy and Bill Hendricks for hosting this event.

Associate member, Tim Bonar, Farm Credit Services, is having a gang-buster year writing loans for corn and soy-bean farmers who want to buy more land! I'm promoting burning bush, prunus cistena, crabapples and pachysandra as the next 'clean-fuel-substitutes'. Help me out!

Sincerely,

Mark Gilson, President

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