



Dear Members and Friends,

October 1, 2007

Can nurseries survive after the sewers and sidewalks go in?

What became of all those growers who once thrived along Mentor Avenue, among the rolling fields of Kirtland, along the north side of Jackson Street in Painesville? A few remain. Others moved eastward and continue their operations today. But many exist only in the old photographs and newspapers and catalogs and the recollections of our senior members.

Today we see 'for sale' signs in Perry and Madison on land that has produced shrubs and liners and trees for a hundred years or more. As the utility services move inexorably eastward, developers carve up the remaining cabbage fields and orchards, replacing them with large homes and new residents unaware of the story and the legacy that perished as heavy equipment pounded and reshaped the fragile soil.

Is this process inevitable? Are the related challenges for nursery owners ultimately offset by the benefits?

Will a local nursery industry remain in eighty years? Fifty years? Thirty years?

The legislative forum we proposed for our next dinner meeting has been difficult to put together, due to the tight legislative calendar in Washington and Columbus. Instead, we will provide a focused discussion with the leaders who shape our County and our future. This discussion impacts not just growers, and not just Lake County businesses, but anyone affected by the changing face of Ohio agriculture. Please join us!

October Dinner Meeting

Title: **An Evening with the Commissioners: *Do Nurseries Fit in the County's Future?***

Date: Tuesday October 9, 2007

Place: Hellriegel's Inn, 1840 Mentor Avenue, Painesville, Ohio 44077

Time: Social Hour 5 PM Dinner 6PM Meeting 7:10 PM Program 7:30 PM

Price: \$29 at-the-door

Menu: Prime rib, chicken or orange roughy; full-course with coffee and dessert; cash bar

RSVP: Please RSVP by Friday October 6th (unless specified, menu selection will be Prime Rib)

Contact: Phone (440) 241-7969 info@nglco.com

Executive Secretary Position

We have several well-qualified applicants and the Executive Board will make a decision soon.

Political Outreach

We are currently setting up individual tours and round-tables with some of our elected leaders and regulatory partners. Ohio Director of Agriculture Director Boggs and State Representative Carol-Ann Schindell will be joining us this month. In addition, several of our members are visiting Senator Voinovich in Washington this week. Please call with your comments and suggestions. We need a strong coordinated effort to make our voices heard!

New Member

Please welcome our newest member:

Concept Plastics Limited

Dilip Kulkarni, Director Sales & Marketing

6575 Kestrel Road, Mississauga, Ontario Canada L5T 1 PG

Phone (905) 670-2124 FAX (905) 670-3403 mohongee@hotmai.com

Concept Plastics has produced injection-molded products for the nursery industry for twenty-seven years.

Natural Gas Buying Group

We are studying the feasibility of a natural gas buying-group within our Association. This group could potentially offer lower rates to nurseries, greenhouses, residences and other member businesses. If interested, please FAX your usage history to NGLCO (440) 259-3364 as soon as possible.

Other Meetings

November Dinner Meeting

Title: **State-of-the-Industry** with Dr. Charles Hall, Texas A&M University.

Date: Tuesday November 13, 2007 Workshop 2PM Dinner 6 PM

Location and Cost: To-Be-Announced

Helping us to understand the conundrum that has faced many local nurseries in recent years, Dr. Hall will discuss industry economic impacts, maturing demand considerations, strategic positioning for growers given a maturing industry, differentiation alternatives in the marketplace, opportunities in contracting, networks, and other alliances, and pricing considerations relative to accurate production cost accounting. Be there!

Fall Research Recap Meeting, tentatively set for the last week of November.

December Holiday Dinner Meeting, tentatively set for the first week of December.

February Labor-Issues workshop and Dinner Meeting, tentatively set for late-February.

Further details about all these meetings will be available soon and posted to www.nglco.com.

Membership Dues

If you are one of the few remaining hold-outs, please settle up by the end of this month so we do not have to remove your name from the membership listing!

Out and About

Carla Lee and I stopped by Losely Nursery last week to discuss next year's Field Day, and we were greeted by Ed Losely in his work clothes! It was great to talk with Ed and see him back in action. Bryan Champion showed us around the site for Field Day 2008, which includes a large new shade house. It was exciting to begin the ground work for next year.

I attended a 'stake-holders meeting' with the new Ohio Director of Tourism, Amir Eylon, at the Geneva State Lodge a couple weeks ago. This meeting was put together by the local wine producers. The Director commented at one point that "people like to do business where they like to play". We have promoted Lake County and Northeastern Ohio as a *vacation destination* in our recent Association marketing in an effort to bring more wholesale buyers into our area and encourage them to stay longer. We have already received financial support from Lake County Visitor's Bureau and there may be state funds available as well. We look forward to continued partnering with wine producers, visitors bureaus, Lake Metroparks, The Holden Arboretum, and other groups to boost regional awareness about this colorful corner of Ohio.

The new Lake Hospital medical center in Concord will be taking shape over the next year and a half. Carla Lee, James Beardslee and I met with the planning team a couple weeks ago (this was our second meeting) and discussed NGLCO involvement. So far, we have agreed in principle upon four things: review of the plant list by Association members, member donations of some plant material, permanent recognition of donations and exclusive use, wherever possible, of locally grown plants!

North Perry hosted a public meeting this week regarding the Townline Road Shoreline Project. With construction beginning next summer, this project will add three breakwalls, two permanent beaches and a modern boat-docking facility in a state-of-the-art low-impact design. This will be the first project emanating from the Lake County Lakeshore Development Plan, which was previewed at our November meeting last year.

I have dropped off the new Association map/brochures at a couple places so far. Feel free to stop by and pick them up at MacKenzie's Nursery Supply, Sunleaf Nursery or Gilson Gardens.

Several members have discussed their views with me regarding the proposed changes to the Association constitution: changing the name to 'Lake County Nursery Association: *an association of growers and suppliers from Ohio's northeastern lakeshore region*' and increasing active member counties from 'Lake and contiguous counties' to 'Lake, Cuyahoga and contiguous counties' (an increase from four to eight counties). These are serious proposals with strong sentiments on both sides. I have discussed them with Association members and leaders throughout the past year. I would like to bring them to a vote by early-December. Please discuss these proposals with other members and contact me with your views and suggestions...on these or any other matters.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,
Mark Gilson, President
mark@gilsongardens.biz