GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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In Memoriam: George Lucht

Chris Beytes

George Lucht, long a fixture in Minnesota horticulture as patriarch at Malmborg's Garden Center & Greenhouse in the Twin Cities area, passed away October 7 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 82.

George worked for the Malmborg family for many years before purchasing the business in 1972, keeping the Malmborg name, but adding his own "Geraniums by George" tagline. He expanded the business in 1976 when he purchased the current growing range in Rogers, and developed greenhouses and a retail store on the site. They operate a second retail location in Blaine.

George's son Troy owns the company and serves as President. Daughter Keri handles many varied aspects of the business, including inventory, planning and customer service. Van Cooley, George's son-in-law, leads sales and marketing, drive-in retail and fundraising. George's grandchildren are learning more about the business as they spend available time working in the greenhouse and retail stores.

George was very involved in the greenhouse industry, including serving in roles at Minnesota Commercial Flower Growers, helping establish the Widmer research fund at the University of Minnesota, serving as President of the Professional Plant Growers Association, active in the Society of American Florists, serving on the board for FloraStar, and a long-time supporter of the American Floral Endowment.

As his memorial states, George "epitomized the character of the industry with his collaborative spirit and benevolence when disaster would occur for others. His belief in promoting plants and flowers was of paramount importance to him. His insights and optimistic attitude will be missed by all, and cherished by many who were able to work alongside him." **GT**