GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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# On The Move

*Jennifer Zurko*

**AMERICAN FLORAL ENDOWMENT**

Gracie Alvarez, formerly the American Floral Endowment's (AFE) Social Media intern, has joined the AFE team as Communications Coordinator. She brings with her some industry experience through her time at Tiger Garden, the University of Missouri's student-operated, full-service floral shop.

Miranda Hosseini, an experienced business development and fundraising professional with extensive expertise in donor relations and program development, will lead AFE's fundraising efforts as Manager of Development & Donor Engagement. Miranda will focus on expanding AFE's efforts by promoting awareness of its vital programs and the positive impact they provide.

**BALL SEED**

Andrew Britten has been hired for the role of Ball Seed Technical Sales Manager, Tropical & Foliage. Andrew joins Ball Seed having 25 years of growing, sales and sales management experience, with the majority of that time spent in tropicals and foliage divisions. In his new role, Andrew will advise growers and work with the Ball Seed sales and supply teams, visit growers to provide technical expertise, create cultural sheets and educational collateral for Ball employees and customers, and travel with sales reps.

**EASON HORTICULTURAL RESOURCES**

Eason Horticultural Resources (EHR) announced the addition of Christopher Mashburn to its national sales team as a sales representative in Florida. Christopher has spent his entire career in several facets of the green industry, including working for landscape contractors and re-wholesale operations. He's also proudly served in the United States Army.

**EVERDE GROWERS**

Everde Growers announced several key changes in its sales management team. The restructure comes four months after the strategic acquisition of La Verne Nursery.

Meredith McLeod was promoted to Vice President of Sales, Independent and Landscape, in which he'll oversee national landscape and independent garden center customer sales channels. Meredith began his career with TreeTown USA in 2007, and over the past 15 years, has been instrumental in the development of the sales team and many of the inventory and planning processes that Everde Growers uses today. He's worked in virtually every facet of the sales department, first solidifying business in the Texas region with National Accounts and most recently

as Sales Director of the South Central region.

Andy Bristow was named as Director of Sales, South Central region. Andy worked for Bonnie Plants for over 27 years, beginning his career in 1995 as a Regional Sales Representative, working his way up to National Sales Manager, and most recently serving as their Regional Operations Manager.

Rick Stiles, Director of Landscape Sales, Southwest region, retired as of October 1 after a 33-year career with Everde Growers and formerly Village Nurseries. Rick began his career in 1989 in the sales department at Village Nurseries' Puente location in Brea, California. He played an integral role during the acquisition of Village Nurseries by TreeTown USA in 2017, growing business during the company's rebrand to Everde Growers while maintaining core local business.

Following Rick's retirement, Spike Mitchell was assigned as Director of Landscape Sales, Southwest region. Spike is based in Southern California and was formerly Director of Sales at La Verne Nursery (now Everde Growers' Piru, California farm).

Lorena Garcia was assigned as National Program Coordinator. Lorena, previously a Program Manager for La Verne Nursery, will be responsible for developing and documenting best practices and protocols for all aspects of select national programs. Her first area of focus will be Everde Growers' edibles programs, after which she will focus on holiday programs and the company's proprietary brands, such as Patio Tropics and Boldscape.

The Northwest and Southwest independent garden center sales regions were combined under the leadership of Pat Hughes. Pat is an experienced sales leader with over 30 years of experience in his career working for Hines Growers, ColorSpot and Everde Growers. He's well-versed in the independent garden center business and an expert user of Everde Growers' sales software systems.

Rachal Franek was assigned the role of National Inside Sales Manager, in which she'll oversee the entire Inside Sales team across the country. Rachal previously managed the Inside Sales team in the South Central region. She began her career 28 years ago as a customer service representative for Hines Nurseries, moved up to Customer Service Manager and worked in the distribution department before joining TreeTown USA as an Inside Sales Representative in 2006.

**JIFFY**

Freeman Agnew has joined the Jiffy North America sales team as territory account manager for the Southeast area of the U.S.—Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina and South Carolina. Freeman has a solid background in horticulture and plug production, with previous experience working at a large wholesale grower of vegetables and annuals. He's a 2010 graduate of Auburn University with a degree in Ornamental Horticulture.

Chris Wacker is the territory account manager for North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri. He's an experienced greenhouse and propagation manager, and a 2009 graduate of the University of Wisconsin with a degree in Horticulture.

Josh DeVries is Jiffy's new territory account manager servicing Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada. Prior to joining Jiffy, Josh was a senior sales account manager for Sheridan Nurseries in Ontario. Josh attended Hillsong College in Sydney, Australia.

**MCHUTCHISON/VAUGHN'S HORTICULTURE**

McHutchison and Vaughan's Horticulture announced its new sales management team expansion that will be led by the hiring of Erick Harris as national sales manager. Erick comes to McHutchison and Vaughan's with 30 years of

professional expertise, previously as a regional sales manager and ColorLink sales manager for Ball Seed Company. Prior to that, he gained valuable experience as a national account manager for W.W. Grainger and an account manager for Philip Morris USA/Altria. In his new role, Erick will oversee three regional sales managers with the recent promotions of Mark Feier, Eric Nyberg and Avery Steinlage.

Having served in multiple roles since joining McHutchison in 2014, Mark Feier was most recently nursery manager before his promotion to regional sales manager. With previous oversight of nursery operations including logistics, he'll continue to support nursery vendors in the western region.

Eric Nyberg has more than 25 years of horticultural field sales experience, with nearly 15 years as a young plant broker. He started work as one of four original salespersons for Vaughan's in 2013. Eric was a key accounts sales representative for three years prior to his promotion to regional sales manager.

Growing up around the horticultural industry, Avery Steinlage has over a decade of formal brokerage experience, joining McHutchison and Vaughan's this past summer and will continue to service selected key accounts, along with responsibilities as regional sales manager.

**MONROVIA**

Monrovia announced that Ted McDonald has joined the company as Vice President of Sales. A nursery industry veteran, Ted brings a wealth of sales, operations and leadership experience to Monrovia, most recently working with BioWorks Inc. As Vice President of Sales, Ted will manage the entire Monrovia sales team serving retailers across the country, including independent garden centers and Lowe's. Previously, he's been the VP of Sales and Marketing for BioWorks and Sales Manager for Bailey. His work at other nurseries included responsibilities for inventory management of packaged hardgoods and logistics.

**MYCORRHIZAL APPLICATIONS**

Mycorrhizal Applications recently launched a new, updated, modernized website at mycorrhizae.com. New website features include a redesigned homepage, which is modern, streamlined and more immersive; a searchable database of mycorrhizal plant associations so growers can quickly and easily determine which mycorrhizal fungi products will work for the crops that they're growing; and an expanded distributor map with Canadian, international and U.S. agriculture distributors.

**OASIS GROWER SOLUTIONS**

Oasis Grower Solutions has launched its new website at oasisgrowersolutions.com. From crop and usage recommendations to product specifications and downloadable product data, site navigation is intuitive and streamlined to help growers make informed decisions for their farms. The website is also broken into three simple categories: Propagation, Hydroponics and Post Harvest. Within these categories, visitors will find the full line of Oasis brand products in their various sizes and configurations—all of which is available to order on the site. Over time, the site will expand to provide even more product information for growers, including product usage instructions, protocol videos and instructional videos.

**PANAMERICAN SEED**

Jerry Gorchels, Regional Account Manager for PanAmerican Seed, is retiring from the horticultural industry after 50 years. Jerry has been with Ball Horticultural Company since 1987, at PanAmerican Seed about 70% of that time, starting as a grower at its Elburn facility, then taking on several different roles to end up as a Regional Account Manager. He's enjoyed a great career working alongside his peers and upper management, and has developed great relationships and long-lasting friendships with many of the customers in his region. During his time there, Jerry has said that it's been a pleasure to continue to learn, grow and be able to share his knowledge with others.

While Jerry will be greatly missed, Dylan Sedmak has joined PanAmerican Seed as the Regional Account Manager for the Midwest Region. Dylan comes from Scotts Miracle-Gro where he was the Research & Development Senior Specialist, Live Goods. Dylan has a B.S. in Sustainable Plant Systems: Horticulture Science Cum Laude from The Ohio State University College of Food, Agriculture & Environmental Science and an A.A.S. Greenhouse Production from The Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute. He has a vast knowledge and experience in trial evaluation and growing, as well as research. He's been the recipient of numerous awards, including the Consumer Innovation of the Year Award for Brilliant Blooms at Lowe's.

Henric Van der Krogt has joined PanAmerican Seed (PAS) as Business and Portfolio Manager of Cut Flowers. Henric comes to PAS with diverse experience in cut flowers, including breeding and selection, product management, cultivation, production, sales and business operations. In his new role, Henric will have a strategic objective to help set the direction for the PAS cut flower breeding and product portfolio. Henric will help define R&D and commercial portfolio goals and work cross-functionally to achieve desired targets. He will also work to communicate with and support key PAS customers and global distribution partners. Henric is located in the Netherlands and will be working out of PanAmerican Seed's Venhuizen office.

John Sorrell is coming out of retirement to return to work for PanAmerican Seed as Product Manager of cut flowers. John has a wealth of experience in floriculture, working for Northrup King (S&G/Syngenta), Waller Flower Seed Co., Ball Seed and PanAmerican Seed. While with PAS, John served for many years as Product Group Director and Facility Manager—Santa Paula.

**SAKATA SEED AMERICA**

Sakata Seed America has hired Kristopher (Kris) Carlsson to the position of Senior Manager, Research and Development and Product Development for Ornamentals NAFTA. Kris comes to Sakata with extensive technical production, marketing, sales, team building and management experience in the North American ornamentals market, serving most recently as Portfolio Manager: Patio for PanAmerican Seed. He's also held senior management roles at Ball FloraPlant. **GT**