

A New CEO, A Retirement and a Passing



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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

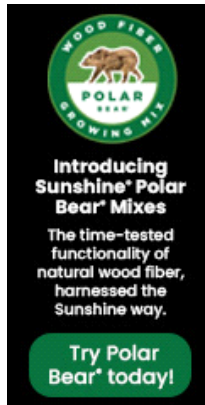
Dümmer's new CEO
Jim Nau retires
In memoriam: Leroy DeVries
Perennials in HydraFiber
You weigh in on GMO flowers
AIB awards, auction
Finally ...



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Dümmer Orange getting new CEO



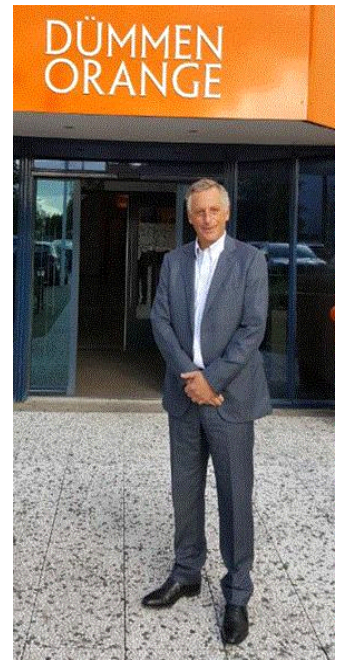
With CEO Biense Visser retiring January 1 after six years with the company, Dümmen Orange will need a new leader, and they've already found him: Hugo Noordhoek Hegt. Hugo formally joins the company November 1, allowing him time to learn his way around the company, its global operations and, most importantly says Dümmen Orange, its clients.

For his part, Biense will continue to support the company as a member of its Supervisory Board.

Hugo, 58, is a Dutch native with a master's degree in Law from Leiden University. He gained experience in running a multinational business through 17 years with paint and coatings manufacturer Akzo Nobel, including stints in China, Singapore and the U.S. He also has start-up experience with a pair of companies called Fintech Foundry and X-Infex B.V.

What does Dümmen Orange see in him? "Strategic agility, business acumen, vision and leadership," says Jean-Baptiste Wautier, chairman of Dümmen Orange's Supervisory Board.

It will be interesting to see how a paint and coatings guy adapts to the world of living, breathing products that beautify the world in a more natural way. He did say in the press release, "I'm honored and grateful to the board for the opportunity to lead this exceptional company of creative, dedicated and talented professionals. We produce innovative, relevant and beautiful products every day, which impact the world far beyond where we live. This is a terrific opportunity that any leader would welcome."



Sun Parasol
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Industry icon Jim Nau retires

On that same topic, staff reporter Allison Westbrook was on hand for an important cake-and-punch event at Ball last week, and I asked her to take notes while I snapped pictures. Here's her write-up:

Thursday, October 3, saw a jam-packed celebration for the retirement of Jim Nau, most recently the Cultural Advisor and Horticultural Historian at Ball Horticultural Company. Current and former Ball employees and



industry friends joined in the celebration to share stories and anecdotes about working with Jim in his 37 years at Ball. Jim started his career at Ball in 1982, fresh out of Iowa State University.



Those gathered heard stories from Jim's coworkers and industry friends, including Anna Ball, Jack DeVroomen, Diane Blazek, Anne Leventry, Lisa Lacy, Tim Duffin, Jamie Kitz and Jeanne Svob, among others.

Anna shared a story of the beginnings of Wave petunia, saying, "If I had to name one person responsible for Waves, it would be Jim." She recounted how he pulled her out to the trial gardens and showed her the carpet-like purple petunias, which he knew were going to be game-changers. "He knows flowers, is observant and has the guts to come to my office and make me come look [at something]," said Anna, to laughter from the crowd.



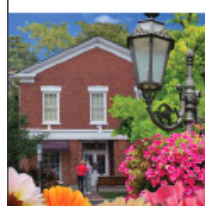
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Jim is a fixture in the industry and has received many awards and accolades for his work, such as the Perennial Plant Association's Garden Media Award. He's a long-time judge and past president of All-America Selections, and has also authored several books, including the Ball Culture Guide and the Ball Perennial Manual, and edited the 18th and 19th editions of the Ball RedBook.



Jim enjoys a laugh (and a gag gift) with Jeanne Svob and Jayson Force.

In his 37 years at Ball, Jim has impacted many facets of the company, but most importantly, the people. Lisa Lacy, Global Product Manager for PanAmerican Seed, recounted working with Jim and learning from him when she was a new employee at Ball.

"To me, you are Ball, you are horticulture," she told Jim. And from the standing ovation, it was clear the crowd felt the same.



In memoriam: Leroy DeVries

I'm saddened to report the untimely passing of one of our industry friends and colleagues, Leroy DeVries, long-time business partner at Masterpiece Flower Company. He was just 57. I heard of his passing from Tim Stiles, who said in an email that Leroy had battled lung cancer for three years. Wrote Tim, "Because of his work, he leaves us a better company and a better greenhouse industry."



Leroy doing what he loved to do—grow plants.

Horticulture was Leroy's plan from the beginning. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, with a degree in horticulture, and he spent the last 36 years using this knowledge and pursuing his passion. He worked at Henry Mast Greenhouses and Masterpiece Flower Company.

Leroy was Production Manager at Henry Mast Greenhouses for 33 years, traveling the world, meeting with breeders and plantmen and seeking out new and improved varieties. He served on the Home Depot grower council for several years, developing new programs and selecting and trialing new plant varieties. Said Tim, "Leroy really enjoyed both the science and the marketing of plants."

Tim also related this story about Tim's passion for college sports.

"Being a native of Wisconsin and an alumnus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Leroy was an ardent Badger fan. However, second to that, he was also an MSU Spartan fan. Our company works closely with MSU research and extension staff and Leroy was always involved with every research project. However, when it came to college sports, we had plenty of healthy bantering when the two teams met!"

Leroy was strongly devoted to his Christian faith, his family and his work, Tim added. "Leroy and his wife, Sandy, raised their three children in their home in front of our greenhouses. Leroy's sons Brad and Nick work at Henry Mast Greenhouses and his daughter Abigail also formerly worked at the greenhouse. He will be missed by his family and his work associates."

Leroy's funeral is Saturday, October 12 at the First Byron (Michigan) Christian Reformed Church.

Rudbeckia 'Treasure Trove'
New to Proven Winners
Perennials for 2025-2026!



Growing perennials in HydraFiber: a free webinar!

I've done quite a few wood fiber webinars with the fine folks from HydraFiber, but this will be the first one that mentions growing perennials in wood fiber. That's why we brought in perennial expert Paul Pilon as our guest expert for:

The "A to Z" of Growing Perennials in HydraFiber

It's slated for **Thursday, October 17**, at 1 p.m. Eastern/Noon Central.

Sign up at www.growertalks.com/webinars

You know Paul as a long-time columnist and editor of our popular *Perennial Pulse* e-newsletter. Oddly enough, he also happens to have a horticultural consultancy called Perennial Solutions Consulting, and he visits a lot of growers around the world, and sees many production systems and growing mixes.

In this free *GrowerTalks* webinar, Paul will share his observations of various perennial crops grown in HydraFiber and the feedback he's received from growers across the country. You'll also want to tune in for his "keys to success," including:

- Uniform blending
- Filling guidelines, including initial moisture content
- pH management and how to determine how much lime is needed
- Managing moisture in production
- Long-term vs. short-term crops
- Overwintering in HydraFiber

Joining Paul will be HydraFiber team member Daniel Norden, who will share recent Auburn University research on perennials and shrubs, plus results from several grower perennials trials.

As always, I'll be your host and emcee, so you know it will be fast-paced, informative and fun.

See you there!



You weigh in on GMO flowers

A couple weeks ago, I wrote about the request by Danziger to get the USDA to deregulate petunias containing the corn gene that makes them express the color orange. I also wrote that Proven Winners, which had to remove from market the most popular petunia caught up in the episode, Raspberry Blast, was not planning on reintroducing the variety even if USDA said it was okay. I asked you to opine on the topic. Here's what you had to say:

"I don't understand the GMO issue with petunias and other non-edible plants. Since they are non-edible, there is no problem with them getting into the food stream. Why is this even an issue with orange petunias? The public needs to understand this. However, some companies may decide this is an issue they want to avoid getting into the crosshairs of the public. They have to make their own decisions on what's best for their corporate brand."—*Stephen Raven, Hole's Greenhouses & Gardens, Alberta, Canada*

"With the ability to discern the truth of anything presented as facts at an all-time low, and the government depopulating (or moving) the staff in various agencies that might be at odds with the political demands made on them, the public's distrust of any agency like the USDA is at an all-time high. So I think Proven Winners is smart not to enter the fray. Plenty of petunias can wow the public in the future. I think waiting until it gets more sorted out is the right thing to do. Just the opinion of a garden writer ..."—*Mary-Kate Mackey*

"I do not know why people are so afraid of GMOs. Particularly in flowers. Since people do not eat them, it is crazy not to use the technology to increase the color palette. The GMO debate has gotten way out of hand. Most people who oppose it have no clue as to why they do not like it. The no-GMO people think it will somehow

harm them or the environment, while they embrace new hybrid technology in other areas of their lives as good. Technology is how we got to where we are today—we would have no internet, laptop computers, cell phones or electric vehicles without the combining of different technologies—a type of GMO-ing in the modern world.”—

Terry Miller

“There is nothing wrong with GMOs. It’s time more [industry] people correct the public when fear and social media try to influence everyone. I would welcome Raspberry Blast Petunias back with open arms!—*Martha (no last name given)*



America in Bloom presents annual awards

The annual America in Bloom National Awards Program just concluded in St. Charles, Illinois, one town over from the *Acres Online* world headquarters. Twenty-five communities earned one, two or—in the case of Hawthorn Woods, Illinois—three awards for community beautification and much more.

All participants were evaluated on seven criteria: overall impression, community vitality, environmental efforts, heritage celebration, urban forestry, landscaped areas and flowers. Additionally, they were judged on their community involvement across municipal, residential and commercial sectors.



The following awards were given: Population Category winners, Outstanding Achievement Awards, Special Awards, Community Champion, and YouTube Video Award.

Population Category winners are:

Town	Population Category
Washtucna, WA	Under 900
Owen, WI	900 – 1,200
Lewisburg, WV	1,200 – 4,000
Brewton, AL	4,000 – 6,000
Hawthorn Woods, IL	6,000 – 10,000
Estes Valley, CO	10,000 – 12,000
Washington, MO	12,000 – 14,000
Warrenville, IL	14,000 – 17,000
Tavares, FL	17,000 – 22,000
Calabasas, CA	22,000 – 30,000
Holland, MI	30,000 – 45,000

Outstanding Achievement Award winners are:

Town	Award
St. Michaels, MD	Community Vitality
Castle Rock, WA	Flowers
Logan, OH	Landscaped Areas
Greendale, IN	Urban Forestry
Hawthorn Woods, IL	Environmental Efforts
Madison, MS	Overall Impression
San Luis Obispo, CA	Celebrating Heritage
Winter Park, FL	Community Involvement

Special Award winners are:

Town	Award
Tavares, FL	Cooldest Place for Kids
Lewisburg, WV	Eye-Popping Pots – Best Use of Containers in the Landscape
Ridgeland, MS	Tree-mendous Trees – Most Beautiful Canopy of Trees
Newtown Square, PA	Water Warriors – Best Example of Protecting Water Resources
Holland, MI	Life of the Party – Best Community Celebration
Wadsworth, OH	#CatchingCommunitySpirit – Best Use of Social Media
Hawthorn Woods, IL	Cultivating Inspiration – Community Mentoring Award
Tavares, FL	Innovation in Action – Most Impressive New Project or Program
West Chicago, IL	Bee Happy – Best Pollinator Garden Program
Logan, OH	America in Bloom/All-America Selections Showcase Garden

Dwight Lund Community Champion Award: Doug Versaw, Mansfield, OH







YouTube Video Award: Castle Rock, WA

For a full list of results, go to www.Americainbloom.org.

AIB Auction ends Saturday

The convention is over, but it's not over, if you get my drift. You can still bid in AIB's online auction until 9 p.m. Eastern on Saturday, October 12, to help support American in Bloom while picking up some champagne swag at a Pabst price.

There are more than 30 items, including unique flowers, plants, herbs, trees, supplies and trips to fabulous AIB community destinations like Blowing Rock, North Carolina, and Morro Bay, California.

 <p>Getaway to Blowing Rock, North Carolina - Crown of the Blue Ridge</p> <table> <tr><td>Value</td><td>\$800 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Leading Bid</td><td>\$600 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Time Left</td><td>2d 3h</td></tr> <tr><td>Buy Now</td><td>\$800 USD</td></tr> </table>	Value	\$800 USD	Leading Bid	\$600 USD	Time Left	2d 3h	Buy Now	\$800 USD	 <p>\$500 Ball Seed Gift Certificate</p> <table> <tr><td>Value</td><td>\$500 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Leading Bid</td><td>\$250 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Time Left</td><td>2d 3h</td></tr> <tr><td>Buy Now</td><td>\$500 USD</td></tr> </table>	Value	\$500 USD	Leading Bid	\$250 USD	Time Left	2d 3h	Buy Now	\$500 USD	 <p>Visit Morro Bay, California - The Jewel of California's Central Coast</p> <table> <tr><td>Value</td><td>\$750 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Leading Bid</td><td>\$375 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Time Left</td><td>2d 3h</td></tr> <tr><td>Buy Now</td><td>\$750 USD</td></tr> </table>	Value	\$750 USD	Leading Bid	\$375 USD	Time Left	2d 3h	Buy Now	\$750 USD
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 <p>Bold Colorful Caladiums - For Baskets, Containers, or Flower Beds</p> <table> <tr><td>Value</td><td>\$500 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Leading Bid</td><td>\$250 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Time Left</td><td>2d 3h</td></tr> <tr><td>Buy Now</td><td>\$500 USD</td></tr> </table>	Value	\$500 USD	Leading Bid	\$250 USD	Time Left	2d 3h	Buy Now	\$500 USD	 <p>Getaway for Two to Greenwood, South Carolina and the South Carolina Fest...</p> <table> <tr><td>Value</td><td>\$800 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Leading Bid</td><td>\$550 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Time Left</td><td>2d 3h</td></tr> <tr><td>Buy Now</td><td>\$800 USD</td></tr> </table>	Value	\$800 USD	Leading Bid	\$550 USD	Time Left	2d 3h	Buy Now	\$800 USD	 <p>Plant a Beautiful and Fragrant Lavender Garden</p> <table> <tr><td>Value</td><td>\$400 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Leading Bid</td><td>\$200 USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Time Left</td><td>2d 3h</td></tr> <tr><td>Buy Now</td><td>\$400 USD</td></tr> </table>	Value	\$400 USD	Leading Bid	\$200 USD	Time Left	2d 3h	Buy Now	\$400 USD
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All these handsome items are donated by AIB sponsors and friends, so your purchase fully supports AIB's mission of nationwide beautification through education and community involvement by encouraging the use of flowers, plants, trees and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements.

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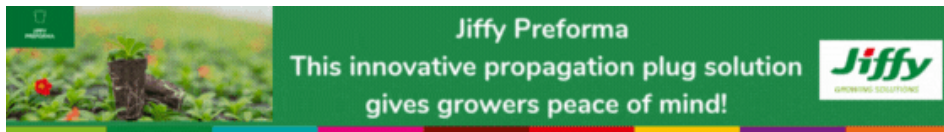
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Finally ...

Now this is a pretty flower video. It's an "English Country Wedding" story by David Austin Roses, promoting their roses for wedding work.



Inspiring!



See you next time,

Chi

Chris Beytes

Editor

GrowerTalks and Green Profit

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