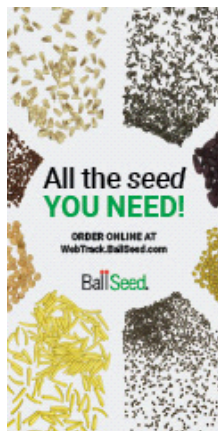
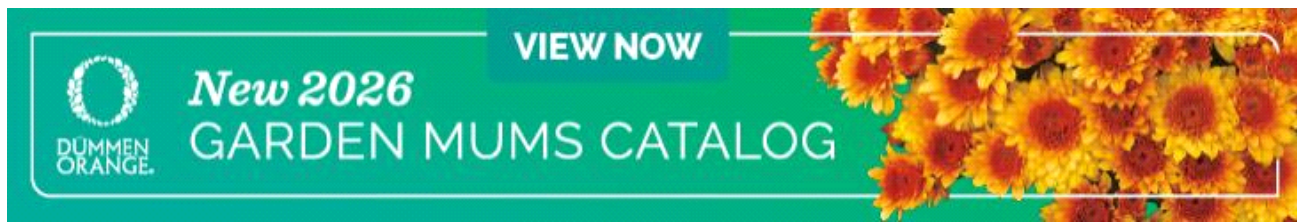


## RIP Jonathan Huntington; Plantpeddler's Trial; Kyra's Painted Points



### GrowerTalks' Acres Online

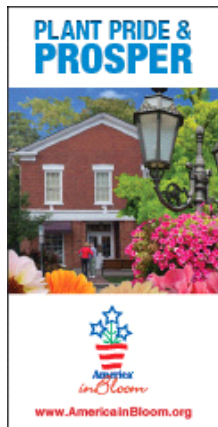
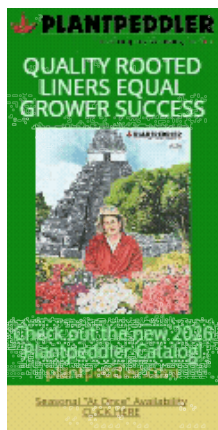
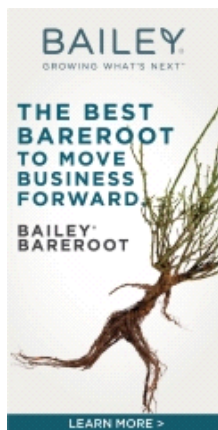
*News and Commentary from GrowerTalks Magazine*

#### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Online CAST planning  
Kurt Dramm honored  
RIP Jonathan Huntington  
Poinsettias at Plantpeddler  
Kyra's painted points  
Finally I ...  
Finally II ...



**Online CAST planning**



I know you're still dealing with poinsettias (and I've got some specimens to show you, below), but don't neglect your spring travel planning, especially if you're thinking about attending California Spring Trials, aka CAST. Scheduled for March 20-24, the event will come up fast and hotels will fill up fast.

Always at your service, we've got our dedicated CAST website, [www.californiatrials.com](http://www.californiatrials.com), up to date with all the stops and the contact information to go along with them. Plus, we offer hotel and dining recommendations. There will be 10 different stops—four in the central region and six in the north—with 17 participants up north and 19 in the central region.

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# California TRIALS

CALIFORNIA SPRING TRIALS 2024  
MARCH 20 – 24

The annual California Spring Trials event is all about what's new. And, as with every year, there will be plenty to see. If going to sunny California in mid-March isn't enough of an incentive for you to go to CAST, looking at lots of new plants should be.

This year, the trials are a little bit earlier (because Easter happens to be early)—being held March 20 - 24, 2024. The map and listing here should help you plan your trip. Please note that not all of the stops are open the entire time of the event, so pay attention when referring to the dates and times listed with the stops.

And if you can't make it, the Bobbleheads will be there! Chris Beytes, Bill Calkins, our excellent video producer Osvaldo Cuevas and I will be going to every stop to bring you all of the highlights—via our *Acres of Buzz* newsletter (subscribe below), our *GrowerTalks* YouTube channel and on social media. You can also find more information, including hotel and restaurant suggestions on this site.

[Watch the video coverage](#)

[Acres of Buzz e-newsletter  
In-depth Commentary](#)

[Follow the Bobbleheads  
on social media!](#)

There are only two updates for 2024 over 2023:

- Dümme Orange will yet again be at a winery, but this time it's Center of Effort Winery in Arroyo Grande.
- The Israeli companies (Cohen, Hishtil, Jaldety, Nir, Saad-Assaf and Kamel Plastic Pots) and Dutch vegetable breeder PRUDAC will be at the same leased greenhouse location in Watsonville, but it is now called Griggs Nursery (formerly Suncrest Nurseries).

Otherwise, as of this date, the trials are just as you remember them.



## Kurt Dramm inducted into Green Industry Hall of Fame

Congratulations to the Dramm family, who in November celebrated the recognition of their late patriarch, Kurt Dramm, who was posthumously honored with induction into the [Green Industry Hall of Fame](#). Kurt's daughter, Heidi Dramm Becker and son, Hans Dramm, accepted the award



on behalf of the family and company at a dinner ceremony in Yorba Linda, California.

Kurt passed away back in May at the age of 84 after a life dedicated to helping growers water better. Dramm expanded into fertilizers, pest management and water management. And, of course, you can't go into a garden center anywhere on the planet without spotting a retail display of Dramm's distinctive, colorful watering tools.



The mission of the Green Industry Hall of Fame, which is based in Ontario, California, is to honor and preserve the contributions of those exceptional individuals who've made a significant impact or positive influence that assures the future of our green industry in the lives of generations to come. Kurt certainly fulfilled that mission!

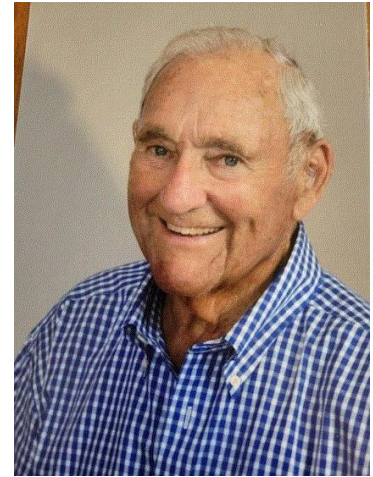
You can see all the other 2023 inductees along with those going all the way back to 2005 [HERE](#).



### **In memoriam: Jonathan “Papa Jon” Huntington**

Jonathan Huntington, founder of Pleasant View Gardens of Loudon, New Hampshire, passed away peacefully at home on Friday, December 8. He was 95.

Affectionately known as “Papa Jon,” the family patriarch was born in Connecticut in 1928. He earned a degree in dairy science at the University of New Hampshire. After marrying Eleanor Rippe in 1954, he started a successful career as a bread man for Pepperidge Farm. Farming was always in his blood, so he often found himself working at Eleanor’s dad’s family farm stand, Rippe Farms in Westport, Connecticut. He eventually took over and ran the farm until 1976, when they decided to dig up their deep Connecticut roots and move with their two sons, Jeff and Henry, to Loudon, where they purchased Pleasant View Gardens, eventually building the business into the nationally known Proven Winners partner and young- and finished-plant supplier that it is today. The company celebrated its 47th anniversary on December 1. Even after his official retirement, Papa Jon remained active at Pleasant View for many years.



Like most of our industry’s greats, Papa Jon was loved in the horticulture industry and was involved in Bedding Plants International (BPI), and several regional and state associations, while making the annual trip to Columbus, Ohio, in July for the Ohio Floriculture Association Short Course, now called Cultivate. He was also involved with his church, civic boards and other organizations.



## Which poinsettias were cookin’ in Cresco?

The *GrowerTalks* crew didn’t make it up there this year (a lapse I have assured Mike Gooder and company that we will remedy!), but we still have the results from the annual Plantpeddler Poinsettia Variety Day, held November 30 in bucolic Cresco, Iowa.

**Plantpeddler** displayed more than 175 commercial and pre-release poinsettia varieties for evaluation and review from all the key breeders: Beekenkamp, Dümmer Orange, Express Seed, Lazzeri, Rinehart Poinsettias, Selecta One and Suntory Flowers. Industry folks came from 18 states to see the display, which was grown under natural-season, commercially sustainable production protocol using limited PGRs. As a true production trial, the tested varieties were grown within a block of benchmark commercial varieties with the same treatments and environmental conditions. It was a challenging year with higher-than-average temperatures and daylight.





"The Poinsettia Trial and Variety Day event emphasizes our commitment to the industry by showcasing genetics under northern U.S. growing conditions," said owner Mike Gooder. "It's important to do a poinsettia production trial as a way for the industry and our growers to see how varieties perform in North American, northern-climate greenhouse conditions."

Trial attendees voted for their favorites using a three-flag system for "Best Red" and "Best Non-Red" with a 3, 2, 1 point-scoring. Here are the results:

#### **Red Variety Top 10**

Kayla Red (Beekenkamp)  
 Ruby Red (Express Seed)  
 Ranch Red (Rinehart)  
 Christmas Eve (Selecta One)  
 Lyra Red (Express Seed)  
 Runway Red (Dümmen Orange)  
 Toro Red (Express Seed)  
 Exp. Red Ribbons (Dümmen Orange)  
 Tapestry (Dümmen Orange)  
 Carmen Red (Lazzeri)



Kayla Red from Beekenkamp, which was also the favorite red in 2021.



## Plantpeddler (continued)

### Non-Red Variety Top 10

Princettia Sparkling Rouge (Suntory), Early Polly's Pink (Dümmen Orange) – tie  
 Exp. Giulia (Lazzeri)  
 Superba New Glitter (Lazzeri)  
 Alpina White (Lazzeri)  
 Brilliant White (Selecta One)  
 Jack Frost (Rinehart)  
 Christmas Beauty Cinnamon (Selecta One)  
 Princettia Sparkling Rosé (Suntory)



**PLANTPEDDLER**

Princeton® Sparkling Rouge

Suntory

Pink/Jingle

Weeks: 7

Vigor: Low







**Princettia Sparling Rouge by Suntory (top) and Early Polly's Pink by Dümmer tied for the favorite non-red.**

Mark your calendars now for next year's Plantpeddler Poinsettia Variety Day trial event on Thursday, December 5, 2024. Plantpeddler's Variety Day trial event showcasing annuals is August 2, 2024.





Plantpeddler Poinsettia Variety Day 2023

Since we weren't there to produce one of our stellar videos, Mike had to resort to calling in the local pros to capture the event and they did a good job featuring all the breeders, and even A-Roo Company, which talked about dressing up your poinsettias. Watch the video [HERE](#).



## Painted poinsettias from K&W Greenery

It wouldn't be Christmas if I didn't feature some painted poinsettias from [K&W Greenery](#) in Janesville, Wisconsin. Owner Chris Williams has been doing an over-the-top job with them for years. Only this year, Chris isn't painting any!



No, it's his daughter, Kyra, who has taken over the brush ... er, spritz bottle duties and she's doing an impressive job. Like other greenhouse kids, Kyra has worked at the family business since she was 13, said Chris, starting out in the greenhouse production department. She's in that fun time of her life where she's deciding on a career path—college or commerce?—and is working at the garden center while also running her own photography business doing senior portraits, engagement photos and even pets. With her artistic flair, Chris has encouraged her to do some visual merchandising and banner design for the garden center.

And poinsettia painting! Here are a few of her creations:

















As for poinsettia sales at K&W? Chris reports they've been very good this year, with church and fundraiser orders both up.

"Painted poinsettia sales are about the same to this point, but we still have a couple weeks to go," he added.

 <p><b>Canna</b> <b>TROPICANNA</b></p>		<p><b>Adds an exotic touch to gardens &amp; containers</b> <b>Available in 3 colors</b> <a href="#">Click here for a short video &gt;&gt;</a></p>
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**Finally I ...**





Ernest and Zehava Danziger celebrate his 100th birthday with a kiss.

As we hear nothing but sobering news from the Middle East, I've got a happy celebration to tell you about: the 100th birthday of Ernest Danziger, founder of the breeding company that bears his name. Mr. Danziger reached the century mark on November 16, as the company he and his wife, Zehava, founded celebrated its 70th anniversary.

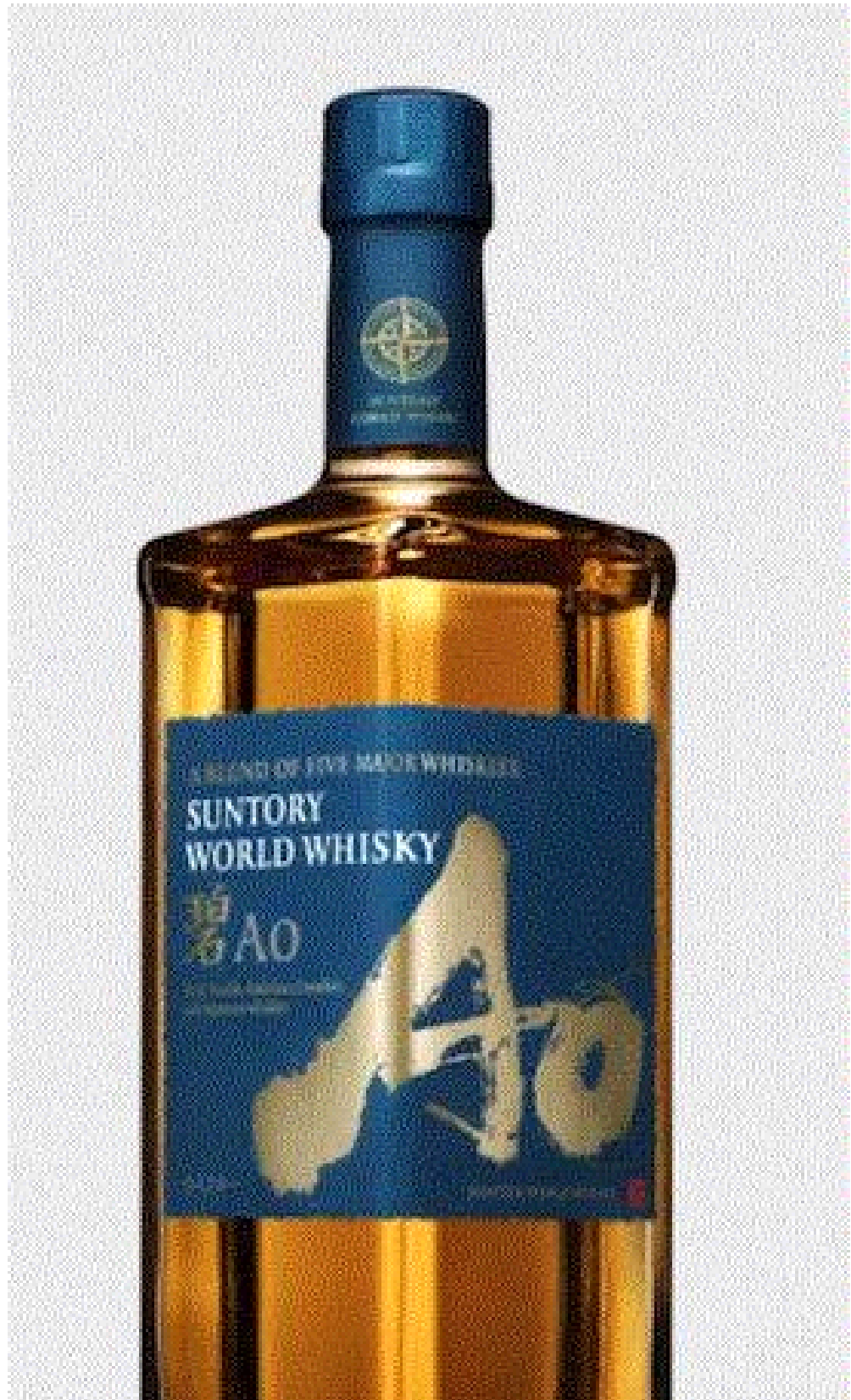
I'm told that Ernest is still active—he's apparently a great ping-pong player, which is a testament to his agility and resilience in both his personal and professional life.

"It is never as bad as it looks," he always reassures everyone, said his family, even in challenging times like the past month in Israel. "We've been through so many challenges together over the years, and we know we have a strong and resilient team, a great country and loyal partners that

have become our global friends, and this is all we need in order to overcome any obstacle.”

I haven't had the pleasure of meeting Ernest, but a year ago I wrote a story about him and Zehava and the founding of Danziger in 1953 in Israel, just a few years after it achieved statehood. It's a fascinating look at the pioneering spirit which animates so many in horticulture. Read it [HERE](#).

## Finally II ...







My friend Delilah Onofrey, former competing magazine editor and now marketing director for Suntory Flowers, emailed me a nice note about the 20th year of *Acres Online*, in which I noted that I call my newsletter *AO* for short. Delilah told me that Suntory produces a whisky (as they spell it) that they, too, call *Ao*, which blends whiskies from Suntory's distilleries in Ireland, Scotland, America, Canada and Japan—a true global whisky, much like *Acres Online* is a global newsletter!

I looked it up: *Ao* means “blue” in Japanese and represents the oceans that connect those five countries. And the bottle is five-sided, for the five different spirits.

Thanks, Delilah—I'll have to look for a bottle at my local adult beverage purveyor. I bet it would help me with the next 20 years of *AO*. Cheers and Kanpai!

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Feel free to email me at [beytes@growertalks.com](mailto:beytes@growertalks.com) if you have ideas, comments or questions.

See you next time,



**Chris Beytes**

Editor-in-Chief

*GrowerTalks and Green Profit*

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