

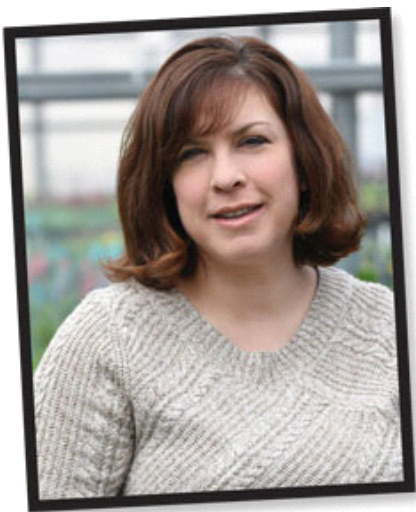
# GROWERTALKS

## Inside Look

9/1/2019

## John Terhesh 2020

*Jennifer Zurko*



**JENNIFER ZURKO**

If John Terhesh ran for office (and I lived in his district), I would vote for him.

If you're not familiar with who John is, he's the nice young man gracing our cover this month. As we've done for the last 15 years, the winner of our Young Grower Award is the subject of our September cover story and this year John—who's a head grower at Willoway Nurseries in Avon, Ohio—is our current winner.

As I sat across from John at our award dinner in Columbus at Cultivate and spoke with him over the phone after he won, I got to know a little bit about him. And I realized he's got all of the characteristics for the ideal employee and leader.

And then I got to thinking: "Heck, he's got everything I want in an elected representative."

Hold on ... don't turn the page yet. I'm not going to go off on specific politicians, or the quagmire of hapless cluelessness that we're experiencing on Capitol Hill (although I'm sure most of us would agree with that). But it's because of the current polarizing (and fretful) times that makes me really ponder the ideal person I want representing my interests in Washington. And John has all of these.

1. He's analytical first, emotional second. When he has to be. Sometimes emotions dictate your actions, but it's always good to get all the facts and then act.
2. He's a natural-born problem solver. He WANTS to make things better and looks at different ways to find solutions to big problems.
3. He's not so arrogant to think he can do it all himself. He relies on his staff and other management to help him find ways to improve something.
4. He's friendly, approachable and easy to talk to. If you're an introvert, being in Congress or managing people would be extremely difficult.
5. He listens. As a fellow extrovert, I know how hard it is sometimes to just stop talking. Being a leader requires doing both.

6. He's not afraid to take risks and try new things. Like joining a curling club just because it sounded interesting and fun even though you know nothing about the sport. That takes having some chutzpah.

In my 43 years on this earth, I've realized that there are two instances when you can lose your sense of self, even with the best of intentions: when you become a supervisor or a politician. How many times have you thought: "Man, I used to work with/voted for that guy and he wasn't like that before. He's changed."

I don't think we'll ever have to worry about that happening to John. He's got both feet firmly planted on the ground while his mind is 6 feet, 3 inches above, constantly churning and thinking of new ideas.

John may not necessarily want his future career path to include the title of "Congressman," "Senator" or even "President" in front of his name, but if he ever did run for office, I would be happy to campaign for him. **GT**