

SHARING ACROSS BORDERS

By Keith Osborne

A unique IPPS Eastern Region Area Meeting was held in July. Ontario growers journeyed to Ohio to join the growers there for an exciting day of seminars and tours. The Ontario group enjoyed tours before and after the Ohio meeting day to fill out a full 3 days. This is a bit of their story.



Day 1

It all began early Tuesday, July 24th, with participants boarding the bus at the Royal Botanical Gardens at 6:30 am. Their first stop was Ray Weigands nursery, a mere 4 hours away. Growers were treated to a tour of the potting area, several equipment demos and a bus tour of the nursery. Special thanks to Weigands for providing a delicious lunch which we enjoyed enroute to the next stop, Corso Perennials. Attendees were led on a walking tour of the facility including several gutter connect ranges of different types, the potting area, and the newly constructed shipping area. The forklifts with plant handling attachments made it difficult to corral the attendees back on the bus. The final stop on day 1 was Willoway Nursery. First up was a tour of their propagation range then they split us into smaller groups to view the potting area, some new equipment, and the water treatment system before everyone once again boarded the bus for a tour of the container range. Our day ended with a buffet dinner at the Quail Hollow Resort in Painesville, Ohio.



Day 2

The official Ohio area meeting on July 25th brought together the Ontario growers with many locals and even some not so locals. The event drew attendance from Kentucky, Illinois, southern Ohio as well as Ontario. The roughly 80 attendees networked over breakfast before hearing some informative seminars. The first speaker was Heping Zhu who explained the merits of the Intelligent Sprayer and some intelligent spray facts. Next up was Hannah Mathers with an herbicide update of recent research, coincidentally being performed at Weigands Nursery, for products to kill the hardiest weeds. Continuing the theme, Dave Barcel explained how to understand spray coverage and some tricks to improve overall coverage. Switching gears a bit before break, Jim Altland updated the group about growing media research happening at ARS Wooster. After break, Steve Foltz provided a stirring presentation targeting pollinator plants used at Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens. His fast-paced photo presentation of plants attracting insects and butterflies was nothing short of inspiring. Last but not least, Chris Ranger reviewed the latest news regarding the ambrosia beetle.

The afternoon tour started at Brotzman Nursery for an inspiring walk among specimen beauties while listening to Tim Brotzman, an IPPS legend, enlighten the group with more than just plant knowledge. Over to Ridge Manor Nursery next where Angelo Petitti toured us through the potting and shipping areas while providing his vision of the future of the nursery industry. Everyone was keen to see a demo of a trimming machine. The second day ended at Klyn Nurseries where everyone enjoyed tours, equipment demos, a mini trade show and a BBQ. After dinner, Tom Demaline and Angelo Petitti spoke to the group with a State of the Industry address. While sobering at times, there were many silver linings that suggest nurseries have every opportunity to thrive in the future.



Steve Foltz spoke on pollinators.

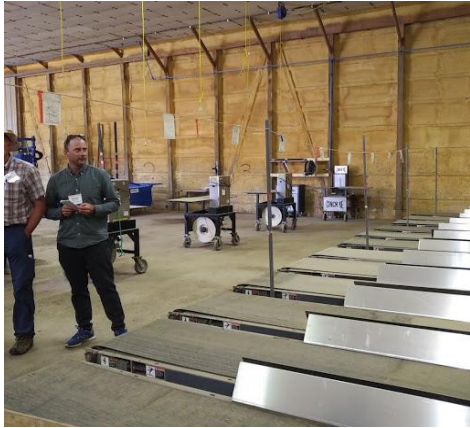


Tim Brotzman, left, addresses the group.

Day 3

It was back on the bus for the Ontario growers with a few more cars following behind for another day of tours. Our first stop was a private paradise aptly named “Mimi’s Garden” after the owner and head designer. Her enthusiasm for horticulture as a gardener was amazing. Even the most ardent production oriented growers could be seen happily snapping away photos. The next stop, Herman Losely & Son Nursery was sure to please the production side of all of us as we were given an excellent demo of their intelligent sprayer complete with Heping Zhu there to answer questions. A tour through the nursery was the icing on the cake. At Willowbend Nursery Angelo Petitti once again shared his love of technology and new, efficient equipment sharing how the future is bright when you grow top quality

plants. Following a brief tour of the liner fields full of shrubs and trees and one last look at a tree trimmer, we proceeded to our last tour stop near Erie, Pennsylvania: Fairview Evergreen Nurseries. There we saw the new potting area, container range and the field production. We ended at their propagation houses where a mix of old and new technologies are used. As it was the final stop, the growers lingered a bit longer taking in every bit of information.



Equipment demo at Willowbend



Wrap Up:

As always, we wish to thank our sponsors from both sides of the border. Their generosity allows events to be affordable and fun. Our speakers too bring forth information that we may not have time to learn from our usual sources so we thank them for taking the time and sharing. We need to also thank our associations: Landscape Ontario, Associated Green Industries and the Nursery Growers of Lake County Ohio for their help in planning, promoting, and running the event. Lastly, we thank the attendees who take the time out of very busy schedules to come to events.

A special thank you to Bill and Nancy Hendricks who were key players in organizing this year's joint Sharing Across Borders area meeting. They organized lunches; pulled together a dynamic speaker program and opened their doors to us all for a BBQ! My heartfelt thanks to Bill whom I regard as a mentor in many ways; I am proud to be his friend. He represents the very best of the IPPS motto:

To Seek and To Share



Thanks to meeting organizers Keith Osborne , left, & Bill Hendricks as well as our generous tour hosts and sponsors!