

## Home Nursery celebrates 100 years!

*A note from Ann Tosovsky,  
President of Home Nursery*

Greetings to ANLA alumni! I am very glad to hear about this newsletter and that people are staying connected. It's one of the many great things about this industry that we are not only colleagues, but also good friends. As many of you have been good friends with our family over the years, I am thrilled to get to tell you that we are celebrating our 100-year anniversary in 2021!

Just a small bit of history:

My grandfather, Ernest Tosovsky Sr., was an immigrant from Czechoslovakia and came to the United States in the early 1900s. His father died in a coal mining accident just a few days before he and his mother arrived to Edwardsville, Illinois. Thank goodness he was a very strong-willed and determined young man. As a teenager he started growing small fruits and vegetables, eventually working his way to fruit trees and shrubs, which eventually led to owning six retail stores. When my dad, Chuck, and Uncle Ernie came along they saw the potential in the wholesale business and eventually all the retail stores were closed. Now, long story short (*ha-ha-ha*) here we are today serving 13 states in the Midwest and in our third generation of ownership.

So how does a 100-year-old company celebrate its 100-year anniversary??? All year long, of course! We've got a lot of activities being planned as we speak. The

celebration will look a little different because of our current social distancing mandates, but we will celebrate nonetheless. We will be recognizing our customers and thanking them for the amazing relationships we have. Of course, we have to give extra special credit and attention to our staff. We've got monthly activities, events, and surprises planned for them, and then we will end the year with a special Thank You event. We will be launching our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary video on Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup> on social media, so be sure to check it out on our Facebook page.

[https://www.facebook.com/home\\_nurseryinc](https://www.facebook.com/home_nurseryinc)

My grandfather, uncle, and father truly valued the importance of service. My grandfather was the District Governor of Rotary, and my uncle and father were presidents of our local Rotary Club (as was I). They were deeply involved in

*We made it! It's 2021, and it looks like we've managed to put 2020 in the rear-view mirror. Goodbye to all that, and on to better things!*

*So let's hear your news! Tips, photos, stories ... we want to hear from you! If you've got info you'd like to share, please send it along to [sallydbenson@gmail.com](mailto:sallydbenson@gmail.com).*

community service as well as service to the industry. So, to honor and continue that tradition we will be working on service projects throughout the year in our community, and working on ways to give back to our industry.

I am very excited about the year ahead of us and to celebrate 100 years of dedication and hard work my family (as well as many others) gave to get us here today. I'm sure there are lots of interesting stories and if anyone wants to share, I would love to hear them! It's truly a blessing to be a part of such an amazing family and family business. I couldn't feel more blessed!



## Moving On ...

Studebaker Nurseries owners Bill and Dan Studebaker will retire this year, bringing to a close the family's ownership of more than 50 years. They assure customers that a near-full range of product will be available through the end of July; in August, the remaining inventory will be sold at auction.

But that's not the end; many of the Studebaker staff will join the newly formed Ohio Nursery Exchange, which was established by Henderson Turf (Franklin, Ohio) and comprises the strengths and assets of Henderson, Scarff's Nursery, and soon Studebaker. (Henderson acquired Scarff's in June 2020, having managed the company since February of that year.)

Studebaker Nurseries Inc. began as a family potato farm in New Carlisle, Ohio; by the late 1950s the first *Taxus* and *Euonymus* liners were planted. The 1,200-acre property supported field B&B as well as container production of woody ornamentals.



Plans for this summer's Cultivate are in full swing, so grab your masks and your hand sanitizer, and practice those six-feet-apart air-handshakes.

The dates are Saturday, July 10 through Tuesday, July 13; general registration opens on March 9. But pre-registration (need a hotel room?) is open from February 8 through 19.

Information about registration and hotel reservations—including safety measures—and more can be found at <https://www.cultivateevent.org/>.

## Catching up with Susie Usrey



*Ruth Bachman and Susie at lunch in Laguna Beach.*

Forty-eight years with Monrovia, and Susie Usrey is ... still working. She no longer goes to the office each day, but she's been connecting from her home for a few years now, staying in touch with customers and sales managers, and maintaining those valuable, close relationships.

Phone calls, volumes of email, and Zoom meetings keep her busy, but after decades of extensive travel for the company, serving as VP of customer relations, and managing sales staff, a few days a week is plenty.

At 78, Susie can look back on countless accomplishments, including years serving on the board of directors for the American Horticultural Society; she received the organization's prestigious Meritorious Service Award in 2015.

Still, she's determined to keep up with the customers and Monrovia staff she has known for so long. Many of those sales reps she hired and mentored have logged decades with Monrovia, too. "I do this to stay connected," she says, "to be useful." Lucky company, and lucky customers.

Home now is Laguna Beach, California, where she moved after the passing of her husband Bruce in 2015. She sold much of their property in Oregon, where she and Bruce lived for many years, and where they spearheaded the expansion of Monrovia into the Northwest. She has retained beach property there, which hosts family get-togethers. But in California now, she's still close to the action. It's good to be closer to her children, she says.

### *You know you want to.*

*Do you have news to share? Moves, retirements, new family members, new ventures? Please send info to Sally Benson at [sallydbenson@gmail.com](mailto:sallydbenson@gmail.com). Know someone who'd like to receive this? Send us their email address. Want to opt out? Just respond to this email with the message: "Unsubscribe."*