

Seasons

Winter 2021

Customer Newsletter - J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co.



Greetings

Eleven months into my role as CEO of this incredible company, I continue to be amazed at its dedication and commitment to growing the highest quality trees. As spring rolled into summer and the seasons raced by, it became apparent to me that growing great trees is a matter of pride for everyone on our team, from field worker to family owners.

Our commitment to quality-first is strengthened by the implementation of a five-year strategic plan, crafted by our senior management team and immediately put into action. Innovation, automation, efficiency and safety are high on the list of priorities in this document that incorporates and reflects our core values as stated in our mission statement, which you'll find inside our newsletter.

Thanks to Schmidt family leadership, our extraordinary employees, and the great customers we serve, we weathered what 2020 dealt us and became a better company along the way. As we celebrate our 75th year of growing great trees and "Growing New Ideas," we look forward to serving you better than ever in 2021 and beyond.

Ben Rough
Chief Executive Officer

There's nothing better than an in-person, walking-the-rows nursery tour, but we can say with confidence that our newly released virtual tour of JFS is the next best thing to being here. Kudos to our sales, marketing and production teams for adapting to current travel constraints by creating this and other

videos on our YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/jfstrees>. We hope you'll take the time to hop in the Suburban and ride along with Rich Bailey. He looks forward to sharing our farms, our trees, our people and production practices that go into growing the excellent trees we ship to you. <https://youtu.be/zqbBy5pDzb0>



JFS Tree TV



Tune in to JFS TreeTV for an insider look at our specialized growing techniques that result in top-notch trees. Our new series of brief videos brings the nursery to you, with the premier episodes sharing our methods for storing and protecting winter-dormant trees. Episodes are presented on our YouTube channel @jfstrees. Stay tuned for more!



On July 1, 2020 Frank III and Jan Barkley stepped away from their respective roles as President & CEO and Executive Vice President to assume advisory roles. During careers that span more than 40 years of service to the nursery and the green industry, they held various labor and production jobs on their way to filling our top leadership roles.

As Chair of our recently expanded Board of Directors, Frank continues to be involved in sales and production matters. Jan continues leading the family's philanthropic activities as Chair of the Frank & Evelyn Schmidt Family Foundation. Plan on seeing them at green industry events, and you can count on both to be on hand to greet customers and friends of the nursery. Just be sure to call ahead so they can fit your visit into their busy semi-retirement schedules!



The May 2020 retirement of Larry Biddle, the addition of three new team members, and the realignment of several territories brings our total to 12 sales representatives. Working closely with our inside sales staff, they provide personalized service to our customers across the continent, says Rich Bailey, Sales Manager.

"JFS is fortunate to have a fantastic group of knowledgeable and qualified sales reps on the road," he notes. "The addition of Pat Carey, Mike Neenan and Tim Parker to our team adds to our depth and reach across the country. Despite the challenges of 2020, we're very impressed with what they've accomplished, and really look forward to their service in the years to come."



Pat Carey brings a wealth of tree production knowledge to a new territory that includes Indiana, western Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi and Alabama. He has grown Schmidt trees for more than 30 years at Riverfarm Nursery of Goshen, Kentucky, a longtime JFS customer. Pat's career



path from nursery laborer to General Manager of the specimen B&B tree farm gives him a great appreciation and understanding of our customers' needs. He prides himself on being a true partner in the process from order booking to delivery. A self-confessed "tree geek", Pat is drawn to botanical gardens, park and college campuses in his quest to learn more about trees.

Tim Parker brings 35 years of horticultural experience to his territory that includes eastern Ohio,



West Virginia and western sections of New York and Pennsylvania. After serving in the US Army in Germany, Tim studied horticulture at Michigan State University. He leveraged a college internship into a 23-year career at a family-owned garden center in Michigan, where he eventually became its general manager and vice president. Tim worked several years as a regional account manager for a large wholesale grower in Ohio before partnering with his wife, Cindy, in establishing an independent sales company. They are delighted to include JFS among the premium growers they represent.



Larry Biddle retired May 30 after serving our Ohio and Indiana customers for nearly 30 years. A Michigan native, Larry joined JFS in 1991 and settled in Indiana. Over the years, he became a trusted advisor and a good friend to customers in his territory and beyond. Reflecting on his career, Larry told us that "I have been blessed to represent this company and to have made so many friends at the nursery and throughout my territory.

"I'm thankful to Frank, Jan and the entire Schmidt nursery family for the opportunity. Next to my family, J. Frank Schmidt has been the best experience of my life."

Although we miss having Larry on our tree team, we're happy that he and Kathi, his wife of 37 years, are enjoying a very active retirement, dividing their time between their home in Zionsville and their "farm" in SE Indiana. In addition to traveling, fishing, hunting and beginning to grow a few trees at the farm, they enjoy spending time with their three sons and their families. Calling her "the joy of my life," Larry delights in his granddaughter, Harper Grace.

Mike Neenan joined our team in April, and quickly began serving our customers in Utah and Arizona. A career horticulturist with a sales and sales management background, Mike's true passion is calling on and building relationships with independent garden centers and wholesale growers. A lifelong resident of Northern California, he recently relocated with his family



to Layton, Utah, where he is enjoying getting to know the many longtime JFS customers located nearby. Mike worked closely on the transition with Dave Dickey, who chose to reduce the geographic size of his territory in order to better serve his Colorado, New Mexico and West Texas customers.



Larry Biddle was introduced to our customers via this photo in our 1991 catalog. Thirty years later, he shares that same winning smile with granddaughter Harper.



A nationwide search for a Chief Executive Officer brought us back to Oregon, where we hired nursery industry veteran Ben Rough to lead us into the future. His first day on the job in March coincided with the announcement of Oregon's first COVID-19 restrictions, and at the peak of our shipping season. What a time to start a new job!

We're thankful that Ben rose to the challenge of leading our effort to operate within CDC guidelines while ensuring safe working conditions for all employees, and keeping shipping and spring planting on schedule. Ben credits our experienced management team with getting the job done on our way to achieving our best-selling season in the history of the company.



"Harvest was challenging," Ben recalled, "but despite all the uncertainties of 2020, we dug 10 percent more trees than in the previous year. This increased harvest was made possible by the skill, determination and cooperation of everyone on the JFS tree team. Our decision to harvest more trees is thanks to you, our customers, for your purchases and your faith in the future of the nursery business. Our confidence in market demand for trees, and our state-of-the-art cold storage facilities, result our having plenty of great product on hand for spring shipping and for your late season tree needs."



Gordy (left) and Sam (r), pause with Dr. Charlie Hall during a July 2019 field tour.

Ben's leadership of JFS is advised by a board of directors (comprised of six family-owner members and four independent advisory members. Board members include Sam Barkley and Gordy Webster, grandsons of the founders and longtime employees of the nursery.

Sam's career at the nursery began in 2008 when he was hired at our Barlow Farm in Canby to learn the fundamentals of our nursery production. He worked there for two years before he was assigned to assist Keith Warren, our New Plant Development Director, who is now retired. After working with Keith for five years, he transferred to our High Forest Farm, where he currently manages seedling and cutting propagation programs that supply all our farms.

Among Gordy's first tasks as a college intern during the summer of 1996 was building the handsome split-rail fence around the arboretum in preparation for our 50th anniversary. Ensuing years of managing bare root and container operations and serving as assistant production manager have prepared Gordy for his current part-time role of overseeing special projects across all farms.

Both are graduates of Oregon State University. They also earned Certificates in Applied Horticultural Business Management from Texas A&M University via the Executive Academy for Growth & Leadership (EAGL). The program was developed in part by Dr. Charlie Hall, holder of the Ellison Chair in International Floriculture at Texas A&M.

Mission Statement

Innovation and integrity guide our commitment to grow exceptional trees while providing outstanding service and support to our customers and the horticultural community.

Our team accomplishes this mission by leveraging decades of institutional knowledge and green industry partnerships while pursuing continuous improvement in all endeavors.

Our family-run company fosters an environment of fairness, respect and mutual success where our team can thrive as we lead the way in producing trees for a greener, healthier world.

Arboretums, horticultural research, scholarship and education gets a helping hand from us every year via the Frank & Evelyn Schmidt Family Foundation. Medical research, hospitals and health organizations also benefit from the \$325,000 distributed in 2020, as do horticultural education institutions and local community service groups.

Eight universities will benefit from approximately \$96,000 donated in support of horticultural research projects: State universities of Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Utah and the University of Georgia. Horticultural scholarships totaling \$36,000 were granted to State Universities of Iowa, Kansas, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon and Washington and to Clackamas and Chemeketa Community Colleges in Oregon. These local colleges also received \$14,900 in support of their horticultural training programs.



Frank & Evelyn **SCHMIDT** FAMILY FOUNDATION

Nineteen medical research and community health service organizations shared a total of \$100,000. The balance was distributed to a variety of community organizations.

The 501(c)(3) foundation was established in 1986 by nursery founders Frank and Evelyn Schmidt as a way to give thanks and to give back to

the horticultural and local communities that were key to their success. The tradition of giving continues today with second and third generation family members serving on the board that directs their annual charitable giving.



Kevin and Stephanie (Barkley) Lehl (right) and family, and Lance and Luke Schamberger (center) planted trees in Oregon City with Friends of Trees in 2016. The Foundation has supported the Oregon non-profit in its urban greening efforts for more than 30 years.



New tree development is a multi-decade effort, and in our case, a multi-generational one. Our quest to develop new and improved tree species and cultivars began in 1946, when Frank and Evelyn Schmidt married and founded our nursery. Frank had developed “an eye” for unusual trees while growing up in the nursery business and learned about plants from his father, J. Frank Schmidt, Sr., a leading Oregon nurseryman of his time.

Frank Jr.’s discerning eye for new and better trees resulted in the introduction of Red Sunset® Maple in 1966. A top-selling shade tree for more than 50 years, it is among the first of more than 100 unique tree cultivars introduced by JFS or co-introduced with those who entrusted their discoveries to us for trial, evaluation and introduction.

The success of Red Sunset® Maple led to the establishment of a tree development, evaluation, trial and introduction program that was led for three decades by Keith Warren, who retired in 2015. The program continues today under the direction of New Plant Development Manager Guy Meacham, who is assisted by Jim Donohoe. Guy headed our specialty

grafting department for many years and worked closely with Keith for several years prior to his retirement, and on a continuing advisory basis.

As you can imagine, keeping track of thousands of experimental trees scattered across all farms takes an incredible amount of recordkeeping and careful labeling and signage. One tracking method employs the painting of identification codes right on the trunks of the trees growing in our production rows and in various trial plots dedicated to long-range observation of a decade or more. Many gallons of latex exterior housepaint are used to clearly identify the experimental trees!

Guy explained the “three yellow stripes” found on the trunks of some of our trees in the current edition of our employee newsletter, “Growing Together.”

The three bright yellow stripes mean, “Caution! These trees are part of an experimental growing trial.” Guy also describes the teamwork, the attention to detail, and the long timeline involved in bringing a new tree to market (17 years for Redpointe® Maple!). For details, go to our home page at www.jfschmidt.com and click on the “Growing Together” icon.



Caution! Pay attention to those yellow stripes! Jim Donohoe (left) and Guy Meacham check check on the carefully labeled experimental trees stored in our cooler until it’s time for spring planting.

Sprites are a dauntless diminutive duo

Just as sprites magically appear in fairy tales, two of our newer cultivars are magically popping up in nurseries and garden centers, and in gardens and streetscapes across the continent. City Sprite® Zelkova made its debut in our 2009 catalog, and Sparkling Sprite® Crabapple was introduced in 2016. Both of these elfin versions of popular and widely planted species were developed, performance tested and introduced to the trade by our nursery.

Sparkling
Sprite®
CRABAPPLE

Malus 'JFS-KW207' PP 27954

A great tree for small gardens, courtyards and confined urban spaces, this unique ornamental crabapple develops a perfect, dense topiary-like head with little to no pruning. Eventually growing to about 16' tall x 8' wide, its compact form is perfectly suited for patio, terrace or container culture.

Pink buds open to fragrant, pink-tinged white flowers that smother its densely branched, rounded head. Summer foliage of this petite top-grafted tree is especially clean, bright green and disease resistant. Tiny yellow fruits appear among the leaves in late summer, followed by bright yellow autumn leaves. Frost-kissed persistent fruits sparkle along its bare branches, taking the show well into winter as they turn from golden yellow to orange. Hardiness is USDA Zone 4.



CITY
Sprite®
ZELKOVA

Zelkova serrata 'JFS-KW1' PP 20996

Appreciated by urban foresters and utility companies for its compact and mannerly growth habit, this sturdy little sprite is popping up on approved street tree lists in communities across the country since its introduction in 2009. Short internodes contribute to its compact, dense, and semi-dwarf form. Oval to vase-shaped, it grows to a height of approximately 24' and spread of about 18'.

A welcome addition to our UtiliTrees™ list, this diminutive city tree is a perfect fit for the narrow spaces between street and sidewalk and for modern residential lots that are too small to accommodate traditional large shade trees. Small, serrated, fine textured leaves are brighter green in summer than is typical of the species and turn to rich yellow in autumn. Hardiness is USDA Zone 5.



Much of the joy of being in the nursery business is the great friends we make along the way. That's why Jan Barkley was quick to say yes when her son, Sam Barkley, asked if she could run an errand for our High Forest propagation division. Jan's pickup of an order of tissue culture plantlets at Microplant Nurseries, Inc. in Gervais included a quick visit with her dear friend Gayle Suttle, founder and president of the pioneering micro-propagation facility.

We made our first purchase of micropropagated Red Sunset® Maples from Gayle and Microplant back in 1984. Jan noted that the business relationship, and the bond of friendship, have only grown stronger through the years.

"It was fun reminiscing over old times with Gayle and also looking into the future of retirement and traveling."



We are wholesale growers of shade, flowering and specialty ornamental trees sold to wholesale growers, garden centers and landscape distribution centers across the United States and

Canada. Founded in 1946 by the late J. Frank Schmidt Jr., we are a family run company dedicated to the success of our customers and the advancement of the horticultural community.

