



**Southern  
Nursery  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**SNA Announces 2015 Award Recipients**

**Atlanta, Ga., July 28, 2015** – The Southern Nursery Association (SNA) has announced the recipients of the 2015 SNA Awards. The awards were presented at the 117<sup>th</sup> Annual SNA Business Meeting on Thursday, July 23, 2015, at the Georgia International Convention Center, College Park, Ga., during SNA 2015.

The SNA Awards Program began in 1956, when the late John B. Wight, Sr., suggested to the officers of the Southern Nursery Association that an award be offered annually to the person of their selection who, in their opinion, had contributed most to the advancement of the industry in the South and to the welfare of the Southern Nursery Association. This first award, considered a lifetime achievement award, was named the **Slater Wight Memorial Award** in memory of the late J. Slater Wight, brother of the late John B. Wight, Sr. Nomination. Selection is made by the SNA Board of Directors.

This year's recipient of the **Slater Wight Memorial Award** is William J. "Bill" Boyd, Owner of Flower City Nursery, McMinnville, TN. Bill purchased the business from his father Joe Boyd in 1988. The business is truly his lifeblood. He began his career in horticulture at a very young age helping out at the nursery. He has been attending nursery meetings and conventions since he was about nine years old and has since devoted a large part of his life to nursery associations.

Boyd served on the Middle Tennessee Nursery Association board from 1979 – 1984 and as president in 1983. From 1985 – 1998 he served for the Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Association (TNLA). In 1991, TNLA honored him with the Young Nurseryman of the Year Award. This same year, the Southern Nursery Association (SNA) awarded him the David E. Laird, Jr. Memorial Award. He served on the SNA Trade Show Committee in 1994 and served on the SNA board from 2001 – 2007, serving as president in 2006. Once again he came to the call of duty and served on the SNA board to fill a vacant spot from 2008 – 2014. Bill is the only person to serve on the SNA board for thirteen years. Bill gives unselfishly in other ways to the association. He has moved the SNA office three times and continues to serve on the trade show move-in committee today.

Boyd has served on the McMinnville-Warren County Chamber of Commerce as a board member from 1994 – 2000. He has served on the Warren County Planning Commission and the Warren County Fair Board. He has also served on the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Advisory Committee.

Bill is a member of the First United Methodist Church and has served on several committees. He is currently on his fifth term as Chairman of the Trustees.

Established in 1974 by David E. Laird, Jr., in memory of his father, SNA Past President David E. Laird, Sr., this award is presented each year to recognize qualified young men and women for outstanding service in the field of environmental horticulture and to offer inspiration for others starting out in the field. The recipient must be 39 years of age or younger and must be a member of his/her state nursery association. Nominations are made by the State Associations within the SNA region with final selection by the SNA Board of Directors.

This year's recipient of the **David E. Laird, Sr. Memorial Award** is Jeff Allegood, Old Courthouse Nursery, Warsaw, NC. Jeff was born and raised in Greenville, NC and has loved being outside for work and play since he was a child. He got his first job working in the corn fields of eastern NC at 15 and he later did landscaping and retail nursery work in high school and during his early college years. He is a proud Wolfpack alumni and he received a BS in Forest Management from NCSU in 2000. He became interested in ornamental plant production towards the end of his time at NC State and has managed production at several container grown nurseries throughout Eastern NC.

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Allegood currently oversees operations and sales at Old Courthouse Nursery ([www.oldcourthousenurserync.com](http://www.oldcourthousenurserync.com)), a 40 acre container grown nursery in Warsaw, NC. The nursery does in house propagation to feed its production of 1 to 25 gallon material. Most of their material goes to B&B and container growers for lining out fields and potting up to larger containers. As the market started to show some signs of improving in 2012, Jeff and his team at Old Courthouse began aggressively building inventory to position for the upcoming demand from other growers that they predicted would exist on the back side of the downturn. The timing and product mix fell into place as their customers finally started planting and potting again and Old Courthouse has prospered through the recent plant shortages by having plant material when others didn't.

Jeff is an active member of the [North Carolina Nursery and Landscape Association](http://www.ncnla.org) (NCNLA) and received the NCNLA Bill Wilder Outstanding Young Nursery Professional award in 2013. He is currently the President of the Johnston County Nursery Marketing Association (JCNMA) which is a cooperative marketing group of 24 nurseries located in and around the Johnston County area in central and eastern NC. The group maintains a unified website ([www.jocoplants.com](http://www.jocoplants.com)) for all of its members with inventories, company descriptions and a JOCOPedia plant database. The JCNMA also puts on their own tradeshow, the JOCOPlants Show, in July of each year in Raleigh, NC, which Jeff helps to organize and manage.

When Jeff isn't working he enjoys spending time with his wife Katie, daughter Etta (2.5 years) and son Luke (4 months). Outside of work and family he spends his time on his hobbies of hunting, fishing and growing vegetables. His other favorite pastime is cooking and grilling the harvests from these hobbies for his friends and family (and for himself).

Jeff says he owes the biggest thanks to his parents for instilling a strong work ethic and always letting him find his own way to what he wanted to do. He also gives credit to the owners and employees at Old Courthouse Nursery and all of the people in the nursery industry that he has worked with that have taught him what he knows about growing and selling plants.

Established by the SNA Board in 1992, the **SNA Pinnacle Award** is given to the individual within the allied industry who, in the opinion of the SNA Board, has contributed most to the advancement of the industry in the south and to the welfare of the Southern Nursery Association. This award is limited to SNA members. Nomination and selection of recipients is made by the SNA Board of Directors.

This year's recipient of the SNA Pinnacle Award is Gene Brogdon of Nursery Supplies. Gene's family roots were in farming. He graduated from the University of Georgia with a BA in agricultural journalism. After serving 4 years in the US Navy as Quartermaster on the USS Buck, he did several tours of duty during Vietnam. After the navy he moved to the family farm and began a cattle operation. He worked as a vocational/agricultural teacher and served as the FFA Advisor.

Gene's career in the horticulture industry spans 34 years of working for Zarn, IEM, Lerio and Nursery Supplies. He has been known for building the largest and most elaborate trade show booths that required a year of planning. It took two trucks, two small trailers and two days to set up.

Gene has engaged himself in the industry and has served on the Georgia Green Industry Association board and president of sales and marketing division. He was awarded the GGIA Staff Award of Excellence in 2013 for his many years of service, hard work and willingness to lend a hand. Gene has always actively worked to improve products, improve services and legislation that impacts the horticulture industry – and he has also served his customers well too. His storytelling and likeable personality brings a smile to everyone who knows him. He was voted "the wittiest" in high school. Is there any question why Gene Brogdon has been one of the best sales people in our industry?

Gene retired from Nursery Supplies on July 1 but plans to stay active in the industry through the Georgia Green Industry Association and SNA.

In 1969, an Award of Merit was created to honor those individuals who have made outstanding contributions to ornamental horticultural research and, more specifically, to SNA. In 1972, the SNA Board of Directors resolved that the Award of Merit would be renamed the **Porter Henegar Memorial Award** for Horticultural Research in memory of the late Porter Henegar, Past Executive Secretary of SNA (1959 - 1972), to commemorate his years of tireless effort and service to the SNA. The recipient is selected annually by fellow research workers for his/her concern and work toward improving the nursery industry.

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The recipient of the 2015 **Porter Henegar Memorial Award** is Dr. Jim Robbins. For the past 17 years Dr. Robbins has been an extension specialist and Professor in commercial ornamentals at the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. His role is to support all Green Industry businesses including garden centers, wholesale growers, and landscapers. His research program focuses primarily on nursery production related issues (e.g. automation, growing media, fertilizer, weed control) and woody plant evaluation. A hallmark of his academic career has been to work on issues that are driven by a need from the industry.

Dr. Robbins has a very unique blend of academic and nursery industry experience that allows him to be identified as a leader in nursery crop research and extension. Prior to working for the University of Arkansas, he spent 9 years in the ornamental industry with two different companies: Briggs Plant Propagators and IMC Vigoro. Prior to that he was an Assistant Professor in the Horticulture Department at Kansas State University. His B.S. degree is in Ornamental Horticulture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Masters in Horticulture from the University of Georgia with Dr. Michael Dirr, and Ph.D is in Plant Physiology from the University of California-Davis.

**The Don Shadow Award of Excellence**, named for the first recipient, Don O. Shadow, Shadow Nursery, Winchester, TN, is presented to an individual, corporation or organization that has provided exemplary service, leadership and generosity in the development, promotion and use of new and improved landscape plants. Recipients must demonstrate a sincere commitment to and passion for expanding knowledge and use of new and improved plants for the landscape. Nominations are accepted from attendees of the Southern Plant Conference and SNA Members. Nominees may be carried forward from one year to the next. Selection is made by the SNA Board of Directors.

The 2015 recipient of the **Don Shadow Award of Excellence** is Ted Stephens of Nurseries Caroliniana, North Augusta, SC. Ted was born a plantsman. His sandbox served as his first propagation bed and he spent his allowance on plants and garden supplies. So there was no surprise when Ted received his BS and MS degrees in Ornamental Horticulture at Clemson University. From 1969-1972, he taught Horticulture in the Department of Golf Course and Landscape Operations at Lake City Community College, Lake City, Florida.

In 1973, he founded Nurseries Caroliniana, in North Augusta, SC, a retail garden center focusing on offering rare and unusual plant material to the gardening public. In 1990, a wholesale division was begun to offer plants to other nurseries throughout the Southeast.

Ted travels to Japan and other foreign countries on a regular basis to collect new plant selections for introduction to the American market. He is also introducing a number of his own selections which he has developed in selective breeding programs. Among these is Loropetalum 'Carolina Moonlight'™, which is a compact white flowering form of Chinese Fringe. Loropetalum 'Carolina Midnight'™; an upright deep burgundy foliage form with red flowers; Loropetalum 'Garnet Fire'™, Albizia julibrissin 'Merlot Majik'™, a deep burgundy colored leaf Mimosa; Ilex vomitoria 'Carolina Ruby'™ PP# 19266, a female, compact growing Yaupon Holly with one of the heaviest berry crops of any holly, and "Distylium myricoides 'Spring Frost' PPAF, a compact form with white spring new growth."

Ted has served as the president of the South Carolina Nursery & Landscape Association and has received its "Outstanding Contribution to the Nursery Industry" award. He currently serves on the advisory board for the SC Botanical Garden, Clemson, SC and The Center for Applied Nursery Research, Dearing, GA.

Nurseries Caroliniana has recently begun a mail order division, where many of their plants are shipped nationally and globally. They ship to other nurseries in Japan, Australia, New Zealand, France and England, where they wish to add new cultivars of southern natives as well as other new selections from Nurseries Caroliniana to their offerings.

The SNA Board of Directors also honors individuals that have served this association and the nursery industry in various capacities throughout the years and have made outstanding contributions during their active participation in the Southern Nursery Association with honorary membership awards. This year, six (Gene Brogdon, James Harwell, Louis Hillenmeyer, III, Sherry Morris, Jeff Miller and Ed Porter) deserving industry members received **SNA Honorary Member Awards**. Each recipient has made outstanding contributions to the association and the industry during their active participation in the Southern Nursery Association.

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**Gene Brogdon, Nursery Supplies, Dawsonville, GA**

This year's recipient of the SNA Pinnacle Award is Gene Brogdon of Nursery Supplies. Gene's family roots were in farming. He graduated from the University of Georgia with a BA in agricultural journalism. After serving 4 years in the US Navy as Quartermaster on the USS Buck, he did several tours of duty during Vietnam. After the navy he moved to the family farm and began a cattle operation. He worked as a vocational/agricultural teacher and served as the FFA Advisor.

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**James Harwell, Alabama Nursery & Landscape Association (ALNLA), Auburn, AL**

James attended Marion Military Academy, Marion, AL, and earned his BS in Ornamental Horticulture from Auburn University. He was the owner and operator of three garden centers, landscape services and greenhouse growing operations. He served as President of the Alabama Nursery & Landscape Association (2005-2006), President Alabama Agribusiness Council (2010-2011) and has served as Governor of American Nursery & Landscape Association.

He currently serves as Executive Director for the Alabama Nursery & Landscape Association, serves on the Alabama Green Industry Training Center Board of Directors, the Alabama Agribusiness Council Board of Directors, and numerous Department of Agriculture, Extension Service, and University committees.

He holds Certification for Alabama Landscape Design, Alabama Setting of Landscape Plants, Alabama Ornamental, Turf and Pest Certification, and is an ALNLA Certified Nurseryman. James has been recognized with an Honorary Member of Planet Auburn University Chapter (2013), Auburn University College of Agriculture Outstanding Alumni (2014), and Alabama Nursery & Landscape Association Lifetime Achievement Award (2015).

**Louis Hillenmeyer, III, Louie's Flower Power Shop, Lexington, KY**

Louis Hillenmeyer, III is a 5th generation nurseryman. He holds a BA in business from the University of Kentucky. He has served as the American Nursery & Landscape Association governor and on their education and long-range planning committees. He has served as education chair and president of the Southern Nursery Association, and was honored with SNA's Slater Wight Memorial Award in 1996. He has also served as president of the Kentucky Nurserymen's Association.

On the local level, Louis has served as Director of National City Bank, Christians in Community Service, Lafayette County Medical Association, the Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, and Kentucky Independent College Fund.

He currently serves on the Sidney B. Meadows Scholarship Endowment Fund Board of Directors and is a weekly radio talk show host. Louis has poured out his tremendous energy and talents to this industry for years and it is time that he is honored with an SNA Honorary Membership!

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**Sherry Morris, Fannin County Family Connection, Blue Ridge, GA**

Sherry attended Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, GA where she held honors. She received her BS in Marketing Education from the University of Georgia. Her early career began with the US Department of Agriculture, Georgia Statistics Service as a statistician until she went to work for Dr. Jake Tinga, Executive Director of the Georgia Nurserymen's Association in 1986. Upon Jake's retirement she took on the task of filling his very large shoes. Although she was very young and inexperienced in association management, Sherry proved to be up to the task of growing a shoebox organization into the vibrant and relevant association that the Georgia Green Industry is today. Through these past 29 years, Sherry has built her excellent reputation among her peers for taking on the biggest of challenges, giving 150 percent of herself and always succeeding in bringing out the best in others. Among her other talents, Sherry is also a Georgia Certified Plant Professional.

Since leaving GGIA she has fully engaged herself as the Executive Director of the Fannin County Family Connection, and is responsible for aggregating all social and charitable organizations within the county. She oversees three community gardens, a food pantry serving 150 families a week (17,125 year), a homeless shelter serving nearly 400 individuals annually. Once again, giving 150 percent to help others.

Sherry is the youngest industry member to be recognized with an SNA Honorary Membership.

**Jeff Miller, Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association (VNLA), Christianburg, VA**

Served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Virginia Greenhouse Growers Association from 1976 - 1988. He was hired as the Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association's (VNLA) Executive Director in 1985 where he has served the past 30 years. Prior to that he served on the VNLA board serving as president in 1983.

His first year as executive director, he worked with Wayne Sawyer to set up the first summer trade show. He is one of the original authors of the original VNLA Certification manual and one of the founders of the VNA Horticulture Research Foundation.

Jeff's association philosophy is that "individuals and companies can get a lot more accomplished effectively when they pool their resources and knowledge to work on common goals and issues" - and he has done just that throughout his career.

**Ed Porter, McMinnville, TN**

Porter began his career in the industry with a Bachelor of Science degree in Ornamental Horticulture from the University of Tennessee in 1958. He worked for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture as a field entomologist before assuming the role of office manager at Forest Nursery in McMinnville. In 1966, Porter joined Triangle Nursery and became owner in 1968. In 1995, he sold Triangle nursery and established Porter Farms.

Serving more than 50 years in the nursery industry, Porter was a leader championing the causes and issues that kept the nursery industry strong and growing. He has held numerous positions in ANLA, including holding the positions of past president, board member, Tennessee governor and lieutenant governor of ANLA. Porter also was a member and past president of ANLA's Wholesale Nursery Growers of America division. He also has served as the chairman of the Legislative Committee for the Southern Nursery Association, member and president of the Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association, and member and president of the Middle Tennessee Nursery association. In addition to his posts in various industry associations, Porter also has held posts as the Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture, state chairman of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service Committee, secretary-treasurer and vice president of the Southern Association of the State Department of Agriculture, and chairman of the Tennessee Forestry Commission. Porter has also held many community leadership positions.

An accomplishment of Porter's dedication to the industry is the establishment of the Tennessee State University Nursery Crops Research Station. The creation of this facility is a direct result of the foresight, initiative and perseverance of Ed Porter.

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Ed has received many honors recognizing his contributions to the nursery industry including the Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association's Wholesale Nurseryman of the Year, the Farmhouse Fraternity's Daryl Snyder Award for service in agriculture, Emeritus Trustee at the University of Tennessee; the McMinnville Chamber of Commerce's Free Enterprise Award, The Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association's Hall of Fame Award, and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture naming its diagnostics laboratory building after him, The Edward S. Porter Animal Industries Building, the ANLA Hall of Fame Award (2002), and SNA's Slater Wight Memorial Award (2003).

SNA believes industry members should be recognized for their distinguished talents, extraordinary service and life achievements. The SNA Awards Program is designed to recognize professionals who have demonstrated their commitment to the Southern Nursery Association and the industry through these annual awards. For a list of previous SNA award winners, visit the SNA website at [www.sna.org](http://www.sna.org).

Founded in 1899, the Southern Nursery Association is a non-profit trade association representing the horticultural industry in the southeastern U.S. SNA provides member services to wholesale growers, brokers, retailers, landscape contractors, landscape architects, grounds maintenance contractors, interiorscapers and allied suppliers. The SNA strives to unite and advance the horticulture industry through educational, research and marketing efforts.

Photos of all award winners can be found on the SNA website at [www.sna.org](http://www.sna.org).

For more information on SNA, contact the Southern Nursery Association, Inc., PO Box 801454, Acworth, GA 30101, 678.809.9992, [mail@sna.org](mailto:mail@sna.org), or visit the SNA website at [www.sna.org](http://www.sna.org).

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