

NEW YORK STATE
FLOWER
INDUSTRIES, INC.



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BULLETIN

Editor: Laurel K. Matthes
764 Village Blvd. So.
Baldwinsville, New York 13027

DIRECTOR OF THE MONTH

.....Wally Hirsch

Mr. Wally Hirsch is "Director of the Month." He not only serves as a current director, but has also been a member of the Board previously, as well as a past Board Member of the Capital District Unit of Teleflora.

Wally, born in 1947, is a graduate of SUNY Cobleskill from which he received an A.A.S. degree in Floriculture in 1967.

He and Kate enjoy flying (he has been a private pilot since 1968) and cross-country skiing. Wally has two sons, David, aged 15, and Jeff, who is 10. In his spare time he coaches YMCA youth soccer.

Wally's lineage in the greenhouse business goes way back in history. Binley's was founded in 1893. Alexander Hirsch, Wally's father, joined the company in 1932.

Binley's incorporated in 1946 when Alexander became a partner. In 1960 Alexander became full owner. Alexander's father and grandfather were both in the greenhouse business. Wally's great-grandfather owned greenhouses in Hungary. Wally started working full time in 1967 and his son David now works weekends and holidays. So, this is truly a family operation!

Binley's consists of four divisions: retail flower shop; wholesale greenhouses, with seasonal pot plants grown in about 35,000 sq. ft.; landscaping; and a retail garden center, which operates under the name of Quaker Farms. Wally divides his time among the four areas, which keeps him a very busy man.

Alstroemerias Coming into Vogue As Cut Flowers by Yong H. Kim

Flower lovers across the United States will see a colorful flower called "Alstroemeria" showing up in increasing numbers in florist shops in coming years.

Scientists at Cornell University have found a way to make this colorful, native South American flower come into bloom any time of the year. The trick is to cool the plant's underground stems, a requirement that is believed to be unique to the Alstroemeria. Scientists at Cornell and two other universities are now in the process of developing new varieties of the foreign flower.

Most Alstroemerias now being sold in this country come from overseas, primarily from Holland and Columbia. Only a few growers in California have begun production of this crop in recent years. "Alstroemerias can be a profitable crop to grow," says Robert W. Langhans, a professor of floriculture in the New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell. Langhans predicts more and more Alstroemerias will become available to consumers in coming years. In his view, increased production would make this attractive flower as common as the

continued from page 3

statements for the \$75,000.00 limitation has ranged from approximately 8 1/2 to 9%. Effective April 1, 1984, the Group will qualify for a \$50,000.00 loss limitation at a premium charge of 10.5%. It must be recognized, says Mr. Rae, that the law has provided for benefit increases through 1985, and the ever increasing medical expenses will increase the cost of future losses, particularly serious accidents. It is Mr. Rae's recommendation that the Group accept the lower loss limitation of \$50,000.00 any one accident as a hedge against increasing loss cost.

One of the most extensive bills on Worker's Compensation - Disability Benefits was a result of negotiations conducted by government leaders, labor and industry, and was comprised in Chapter 415 of the Laws of 1983. The major changes for 1984 concern temporary total, permanent total and death increases to \$275.00; with temporary partial and permanent partial increases to \$135.00. For disability commencing on or after July 1, 1984, the maximum weekly benefit will be \$145.00.

Section 210 was amended to define exactly the injuries that are compensable when an employee participates in an athletic activity. The employer will be liable for Workers' Compensation Benefits if the employer: 1. Requires the employee to participate; 2. Compensates the employee for participating; 3. Directly sponsors the athletic activity. There is some question as to what constitutes sponsorship, and Mr. Rae expects that this will be tested in the courts.

In conclusion, Mr. Rae feels that the New York State Ornamental Horticulture & Floriculture Industries Safety Group No. 453 is in a very sound financial posture, and is continuing to provide the participating Group members with a significant savings in the cost of their Workers' Compensation coverage.

continued from page 1

nation's other leading cut flowers, such as chrysanthemums, carnations, and roses.

An herbaceous perennial, the *Alstroemeria* ranges from creamy white to yellow, pink, orange, and purple, with intriguing markings and spots accentuating the flower. The keeping quality, says Langhans, is exceptionally good, lasting at least two weeks; that's better than mums, carnations, and roses.

"*Alstroemerias* are relatively easy to grow," says Langhans. "They are essentially free from insect and disease problems and are easy to handle." Under commercial conditions, *Alstroemerias* come into bloom, starting mid-February through June, thus limiting the availability of this flower to about four months a year.

The secret to persuading the *Alstroemeria* to bloom at any time of year is to keep the soil at 55 degrees F. until it starts blooming. Otherwise, it refuses to flower, says Langhans. This cool treatment should begin immediately after planting and continue for at least 12 weeks. They are propagated by planting their underground stems, known as "rhizomes," that send up shoots which reach the height of 4 to 6 feet at maturity. Cornell researchers discovered that the rhizome holds the key to flower initiation.

For reasons not yet clearly understood, cool temperature of the soil or rhizomes in the range of 50 to 60 degrees F. somehow turns on the "biological clock" of this plant to initiate flowering. Soil temperature above 70 degrees keeps the plant vegetative without flowers.

This requirement for continued cool temperature of the rhizome for flower initiation is unique. This phenomenon has not been seen in any other type of flowers, according to Grace Price, a graduate student who observed this unusual characteristic while studying *Alstroemeria* culture under the direction of Langhans.

continued from page 4

She also found that air temperature within a greenhouse need not be controlled; it's the rhizome that must be kept cool for at least 12 weeks to induce flowering.

Test plants that were established last fall in Cornell's greenhouses are now coming into bloom and will continue to do so until July; the soil temperature was held down to 55 degrees for 12 weeks until mid-February, when these plants began flowering. "These plants will keep on flowering clear through summer months if the soil is kept cool," Price says. "By planting this flower at different times of the year, we can have flowers in succession." Well water could be piped through the soil to keep the temperature down to the desired level. Various types of mulches also help cool the soil.

One hurdle blocking large-scale production of *Alstroemerias* in this country is that planting stocks are leased from European suppliers, and growers pay hefty royalties annually. In an effort to overcome this obstacle, Langhans and fellow scientists at the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Connecticut are teaming up to develop new varieties for commercial use.

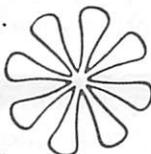
WELCOME NEW MEMBER....

Robert Isabell

Robert Isabell, Inc.

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New York, New York 10001



Pictured left to right above are Dr. James N. Boodley, Jean Schaefer, George R. Schaefer, Chairman, Board of Trustees, NYSFI Research and Education Fund, Inc., and Dr. John G. Seeley. Dr. Seeley and Dr. Boodley were honored at a testimonial dinner on April 1, 1984 for their contributions to the field of floriculture.

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