The History of Countryside

Now celebrating its 60th year in business, Countryside Flower Shop, Nursery and Garden Center has been serving McHenry County, Illinois, and surrounding areas since 1960. The company is recognized among the top garden centers and nurseries by numerous local, regional and national organizations.

Business Begins in 1960

Bill and Katherine Hameder (pictured) purchased the property on which Countryside sits in 1957 and the business officially opened in 1960 after construction of several of the buildings that still stand today. Their passion for flowers, shrubs and trees grew steadily throughout the years due to their steadfast focus to produce the highest quality products backed by friendly, knowledgeable service.

Continuing the Dream in ’73

Richard Harms and James Riedl purchased Countryside in 1973 and expanded the business from its original 13-acre footprint to 28 colorful acres that include a completed nursery, floral department, garden center and landscape department. As customer needs grew, they continued to expand the business’ growing capabilities by purchasing Garden Valley Greenhouses in Woodstock, Illinois. This facility included new technologies to improve growing methods and ensure proper climates were maintained for production of quality plant inventory.

Maintaining Commitment

Throughout the years, the company’s unwavering commitment to quality, the industry and the communities they serve remained. Its contributions to schools, numerous non-profits, and local Chambers of Commerce have been fueled by a single belief: that by contributing to the well-being of others, their communities and the industry at large, people find more meaning to life. There is no doubt that Countryside’s commitments have helped strengthen their connection to the community.

Thriving Through Education

Countryside supports continuing education for its employees. Through its active participation with associations such as the Illinois Certified Nursery Professional Program, employees advance their knowledge in various areas of horticulture such as landscape design, plant identification, disease identification and more. For the public, Countryside continues to produce informative seminars, group tours and educational opportunities throughout the year.

Celebrating 60 – Passing the Trowel

In September of 2020, after 47 years of ownership, Richard Harms and James Riedl sold Countryside Flower Shop, Nursery, and Garden Center and its private growing facilities in Woodstock, Illinois, Garden Valley Greenhouses. Despite its strong market presence (even during the Corona virus pandemic), age and health concerns had become a concern for Richard and JR. They realized it was time to back off from the day-to-day pressures of running the business and take time to enjoy their growing families and friends.

Cultivating the Future

When industry leaders Johannes Pieterse (JP) and Brent Troost were introduced to Countryside through a business broker there was no doubt that Countryside was a fit for the two industry professionals. Both highly accomplished growers, each hold an impressive resume of experience as highly skilled greenhouse operators and senior growers for large scale producers. And like their predecessors, both have a strong passion for horticulture, community and family and value the importance of building on a gifted legacy.

Today, our future continues to look bright and our commitment strong. We remain focused on quality, service and community as JP and Brent continue to Cultivate the future of Countryside.