

5 MINUTES — WITH —

JD BOONE

By Teresa McPherson



JD Boone is the owner of Dothan Nurseries in Dothan, Alabama.

Could you share a little about your background?

I grew up in this business; my parents have a landscaping business. I didn't really care for it until I got old enough to need a job, and then got into it begrudgingly. I now love it and couldn't imagine doing anything else.

As a family business, what measures do you take to separate the family part from the business part?

I never stay late; I will come in early and do work while my family is sleeping, but never stay late. I like to be home after work and have dinner and family time with my wife and two teenage boys. I work a lot during the spring, but try to take extra time off during the slower summer days.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

Coming up with ideas with my staff and putting them into action. I love challenging my staff to come up with new ways to make Dothan Nurseries better and "cooler." They have great ideas, and as a team, we make it happen.

What advice would you give to someone just starting out in horticulture?

I could give 20 different answers, and I don't know if you can print this, but ... join The Garden Center Group. I would've been — and still would be — completely lost if I had not joined 15 years ago. I don't see how somebody that knows a lot about running a garden center or someone that doesn't know a lot about running a garden center doesn't join this group. Danny [Summers], Robert [Hendrickson], Sid [Raisch] and crew are a big part of my success. At least have somebody you can talk to about your business that can give you honest answers.

Beyond that, I would say, price your products for what they are worth — don't use a generic formula to get your pricing. Learn about and understand "perceived value."

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Watching my kids play basketball. I also love playing the drums. They are a little loud for my neighborhood, so I moved them into my office at work. If you ride by at about 6 a.m. most mornings you can hear me playing.

Favorite plant to grow? Why?

Night-blooming jasmine. It's just the coolest plant! I've had one in my yard for 12 years. It smells so good, and is the biggest surprise when the blooms start opening up at night during the late summer. 🌙