

## Kiss My Aster

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### Are We Having Fun Yet? Yes, Actually ...

*Amanda Thomsen*



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Let me tell you how it's going at the shop! I've just started my third week of business, and as of right now, no two days are anywhere near alike. I couldn't chart a map of what's happened or what's going to happen for my life. The best I can do is stay open minded and try to keep upright.

The first week was jam packed with well-wishers. I never sat down or ate. We were wiped out of plants every day, which added to my day

length, since I'd have to replenish at the wholesale plant market in the early mornings before work. I was distracted at home with my family because I spent all my time thinking about how I could keep up at that rate. I was sold out of all the decorative 4-in. pots on Day 2. All of them. "Oh, you'd like a pot for that plant you're buying? Yeeeesh. Maybe later next month." Everything I originally ordered in May came lightning quick, but it seems now my orders have a much longer lead time. We're all on vacation either mentally or physically. No one is getting a 4-in. pot anytime soon.

Then Week 2 rolled around and I had luxurious HOURS alone with myself in the shop, which is like a horror movie when it happens to you after you'd just bolstered your stock to deal with the plant mob. I'd also already panicked and hired a few employees and now my hair sweats when they walk in the door because all signs point to the fact that I'm going to have to pay them. Week 2 had less fluff, more substance. We got things DONE, we made BIG sales and sent home some BIG plants. If the first week was puppy love, the second was going steady.

In Week 3, I'm scaling up by adding grow lights/racks in the basement that as of right now doesn't even have water. So we'll be carrying a backpack deck sprayer full of water down those 100-year-old stairs and LOVE every minute of it. This way I can have backstock and even propagate a little in the basement. I figure that I have the space, so why not dip my toes in?

I've advertised an event calendar, which is going over like piñata candy on the floor in front of a bunch of hungry first graders so far. I'm going to apply for a BYOB license with the city when I get a chance. I'm starting out with



terrariums for kids to build and herbal cleansing bundles, as well as an informational presentation on growing native plants.

Week 4 is utterly ridiculous. A year ago we booked a trip to Yellowstone that we planned on happening either before we opened or so far after we opened that I'd have staff that could cover while I'm gone. Well, it didn't happen like that. We're closing the shop for a week NOT EVEN one month in and I'm feeling really lousy about it. So I'm trying to limp through this week bringing in minimal new plants, lassoing orders that are slated to arrive while I'm gone (spoiler alert, it's 4-in. decorative pots!) and training a 16-year-old to let himself in the building and water the plants. Oh, the heartburn that last sentence gives me. It's not that I don't deserve a break, it's that it's so soon after opening and I'm still just so excited to be there.

Needless to say, Week 5 is going to be an absolute riddle, but as always, I can't wait to hear (or be!) the punchline.

**GP**