

# LISA WATTERS -LAIN

General Manager and Owner  
Watters Garden Center

As a local girl, Lisa Watters-Lain would ride her horse to the YMCA swimming pool, when it was still outdoors.

"Growing up in Prescott was a real treat – rare by today's standards," Watters-Lain said.

After school, she and her three sisters worked in the family garden center. There, she learned what real customer service was.

"Back in those days, you knew everyone," she said. "We would meet customers at school, church, the grocery store and at the YMCA pool. It was a small town back then, and word spread fast – good or bad."

She added, "It has been decades, but I still feel the pressure to deliver more than customers expect; it's within the company's DNA to make sure the community talks positively about Watters Garden Center and our family."

After graduating from Prescott High School, Watters-Lain achieved her degree in special education from Arizona State University and her master's degree from Northern Arizona University, but her love of gardening and fond memories of working in the family business never left.

Watters-Lain married her college sweetheart, after graduating from ASU. Together, they raised four children and the next generation to own the family garden center.

"Our kids developed a strong work ethic working here," she said. "It's a joy working with family."

She added, "Just last week, we had four generations of family here in the garden center – not all working, but family collaborating in the garden center."

As Prescott has grown, so Watters Garden Center has been able to grow.

"My father, Harold Watters, never dreamed we would use all the land when he built the garden center in 1982," Watters-Lain said.

She and her husband, Ken, now wish they had a few more acres to expand, too.

Watters Garden Center has been voted the best garden center in Arizona many times and has made the top honor of "Most Revolutionary Garden Center" in the country by peers.



"It's a lot of work, and you can never be happy in retail," Watters-Lain said. "There is always something that can be improved or makes you better. It's work and fun all at the same time."

Competing head-to-head with giant in-the-box stores is challenging, but this is where Watters-Lain shines. The mountains of Arizona have different garden needs from anywhere else in the country, and this is where Watters Garden Center makes a difference in the community.

"Small business is responsive and able to grow plants unique for the area," she said. "Watters not only has the right plants at the right time, but we also help locals with design and education, so their plants don't only survive, but thrive, in the garden."

*Prescott Woman Magazine* features her garden advice each publication. Watters-Lain and her staff hold free garden classes at 9:30 a.m. every Saturday, and she co-hosts "The

Mountain Gardener" radio show, which airs throughout Arizona.

"Watters' success comes down to hand-holding our customers, helping them choose the right plant and then surrounding them with local garden advice that ensures success," Watters-Lain said.

As a second-generation owner, Watters-Lain hopes one of their children will one day carry the legacy.

"Running a small business is ideal for families," she said. "It has allowed me to be an individual, boss and mother, with the flexibility to thrive in each, which is not always easy, but I never get bored."

Watters-Lain's weekly garden advice can be found at [LearnToGarden.org](http://LearnToGarden.org); her weekly podcast can be found at [TheMountainGardener.podbean.com](http://TheMountainGardener.podbean.com) and is published in *Prescott Woman Magazine*. She can be found most days managing her team at Watters Garden Center in Prescott, Arizona.