

Volume II 2015

**Matrimoni,
stile italiano**

Weddings,
Italian Style

**Destination:
Wedding**

**Diary of an
Events Planner**

**Education
+ Display
= Prom Profits**

**Observations
of an Events
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the professional florist



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Volume II 2015

Cover picture of Pearl and Peach Avalanche+® Roses bouquet courtesy of the Lex+ Avalanche group, the Netherlands.

- 4 Leadership Report**
- 4 Your Latest Member Benefit... A New Website**
By Rod Crittenden, MFA Executive Vice President
- MFA**
- 4 Three Elected to MFA Board**
- Wedding Features**
- 6 Matrimoni, stile italiano**
By Barbara Gilbert, Editor
- 8 Destination: Wedding**
By Jackie Burrell, AIFD, CF
- Event Planning**
- 10 Diary of an Events Planner**
By Scott Awad, AIFD, CF
- Personal Profile**
- 12 A Floral Life: The Enduring Power of People**
By Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, AAF, AIFD, PFCI
- Prom Marketing**
- 14 Education + Display = Prom Profits!**
By Kevin Adamo
- Designer Event**
- 18 2015 Nature's Creative Edge: The Final Chapter**
By Alice Waterous, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI
- Designer Spotlight**
- 19 We're Having a Party!**
By Libbie Deering, CF, 2014 Academy Winner
- WUMFA**
- 20 Leadership Report – Bring on Spring!**
By Diane Schulte, CF, WMFM, WUMFA President
- 20 Teleflora Unit Wins Award**
- 21 Observations of an Events Specialist**
By John Hosek, AIFD, CF, PFCI
- Neville on the Level**
- 22 Get Your Party Dress On!!**
By Neville MacKay, CAFA, PFCI, WFC
- Design Tip**
- 23 Designing Underwater Arrangements for Events**
By Derek Woodruff, AIFD, CF, PFCI, MFA Designer of the Year
- CF Report**
- 25 CF News**
By Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF
- 16 Industry Info**
- 27 Professional Education Center**
- 29 In Memoriam**
- 29 Business Card Ads**
- 30 Classified Ads**



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Publisher: Rodney P. Crittenden
Advertising Director & Sales: Rodney P. Crittenden
Editor: Barbara Gilbert
Graphic Design: Joe McGurn
Photographer: Al Cooley -www.alcooley.com
Printing: Village Press Publications

MFA is not responsible for the statements or opinions published in the *The Professional Florist*. These represent the views of each author and are not necessarily the views of the association or its staff.

LEADERSHIPREPORT

Your Latest Member Benefit... A New Website

BY ROD CRITTENDEN, MFA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



Iwould like to introduce you to the latest Michigan Floral Association member benefit, the NEW MFA website. The

new site is constructed with cutting edge technology using Elegant Themes and Word Press. We have created a site that is easy to navigate on either a PC or a mobile device, whether you're a florist or a consumer looking for information.

The home page features a menu bar on the top allowing access to everything on the site with a click of the mouse. You can also use a drop down menu and then click. Information is available on the Great Lakes Floral Expo, Find a Local MI Florist (MFA retail shops, MFA retail shops with a Certified Florist on staff and a list of Certified Florist members), Join MFA, Benefits/Education (Education Center, Certified Florist, scholarships, MFA News, *Professional Florist* magazine, MFA board/staff, industry awards, professional partnerships), MI Floral Foundation (Hall of Fame, funding, donors), events, classified ads and Contact MFA.

The Find a Local MI Florist page uses the very powerful interactive Google

Maps tool. It allows users to locate a local MFA member flower shop or a member flower shop with a Certified Florist on staff. Simply enter your address, or the destination address in the address/zip field. To find a listing of MFA members in a particular city, use the "city" field, and scroll down to select the city.

The radius button is preset at a 25-mile radius with the option to adjust to 10 miles for a tighter search or up to 50 miles for a wider search. Once the user has selected a florist there is the option of getting directions to the store via Google Maps, clicking on a link connecting directly to the member's website, or sending an email to the store. The member's store address, phone and fax

Three Elected to MFA Board



Elections have been held for the Michigan Floral Association board of directors. Reelected for three year terms were Janice Curran, and Teresa Cytlak. Jerome Raska joins the board as a new director from region one.

Janice Curran, Teleflora territory sales manager for Michigan, has served as a director at large for three years. "The board of directors works hard to make

sure that the services offered by MFA are the best in the industry and are relevant to our members today...and it is my sincere pleasure to serve on the board for another term."

Teresa Cytlak from Ridgeway Floral in Three Rivers, Michigan, has served on the board for



several years. "The Certified Florist program, the Great Lakes Floral Expo and scholarships bring educational opportunities to MFA members. MFA is only as good as its members make it. I enjoy and want to continue to be part of making the Michigan Floral Association even better." She is region three director.

Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, CAFA, CF, CFD, PFCI, Blumby by JRDesigns, Ferndale/Detroit, will serve as a director of region one. He has been a floral industry professional for 30 years and is well known as an educator and speaker. "I see the need for a strong floral association. As times change, our businesses change and our association needs to be the support system to provide guidance and opportunity for education and financial stability."



number are listed. This listing helps increase the search engine optimization (SEO) with Google.

This past Valentine's Day traffic to the Find a Local MI Florist page increased after we had positive media interviews with Paul W. Smith on radio 760 WJR and "The Big Show" with Michael Patrick Shiels during the week leading up to the holiday. You can read the press release and listen to the Paul W. Smith interview in the news section at the bottom of the home page. The MFA will continue to promote this page to connect members with flower consumers.

As time allows please look through the new site and let us know what you think, good or bad. If you're a retail florist or a Certified Florist member please visit your listing on the Find a Local MI Florist page to make sure we have everything listed and all links are correct. We will continue to work at improving and updating the site as needed. ✿

WELCOME

New MFA Members!

Harts Florist

Erica Bruce

834 S. Van Dyke Road, Bad Axe, MI 48413

Phone: (989) 269-9569

Website: www.hartsfloristonline.com

The Platinum Petal

Samantha Stump

110 South Main Street, Wellington, OH 44090

Phone: (440) 647-8844

Website: www.theplatinumpetal.com

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Joel Neitzke

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WEDDINGFEATURE

Matrimoni, stile italiano*

BY BARBARA GILBERT, EDITOR

*THE red rose whispers of passion,
And the white rose breathes of love;
O the red rose is a falcon,
And the white rose is a dove.
But I send you a cream-white rosebud
With a flush on its petal tips;
For the love that is purest and sweetest
Has a kiss of desire on the lips.*

—The White Rose, John Boyle O'Reilly, 1844–1890

Mauro Adami is one of the founders of Domo Adami bridal fashion company, a top leader in “Italian made” bridal fashion. Due to special requests from brides to design not only the dress but the entire wedding, designers Adami and Andrea Facchinato started Sugarevents (Domo Adami is the fashion part of the company).



Last year Domo Adami began a collaboration with the Lex+ Avalanche group in the Netherlands, producers of Avalanche roses.

Adami commented on how important flowers are for wedding designers. "Flowers are essential in weddings. I'd say they are the soul of the whole event together with the bridal gown. They express the mood and the theme and what we want to represent. The Language of Flowers, "Floriography", can be an interesting tool and gives expression to words not spoken."

Adami had some advice on how to create a better collaboration between bridal shops and flowers. "While the dress is certainly number one on the bride's list we always put the dress and the flowers on the top of the list. Dress and flowers have to match for the perfect wedding result. I'd say that florists and flower designers should create some partnerships with bridal atelier, attend specific wedding exhibitions and explain how important the combination of these elements is.

"We need to have accurate information about the flowers such as color, form, availability, etc. A mobile app with digital information about flowers and plants with pictures would be wonderful. This would certainly help us to be more effective. Sometimes, for example, we might not be certain which flowers are in season or what colors are available for matching the requirements of the weddings." A flower app is scheduled to be released in April. It is a project of <http://www.infoflowers.info/>. ❀

Information for this story was provided by Charles Landsdorp, project manager, wedding flowers, charles.landsdorp@gmail.com. For more information go to <http://www.avalancheroses.com/en/home/>.

**Weddings, Italian style*



WEDDING FEATURE

Destination: Wedding

BY JACKIE BURRELL, AIFD, CF, FLOWERS FROM SKY'S THE LIMIT, PETOSKEY, MI

We have a lot of brides who choose the Petoskey area for their weddings. They come because we have the perfect backdrop of crystal blue Lake Michigan, wooded rolling hills and elegant Victorian neighborhoods. Petoskey is located across Little Traverse Bay from Harbor Springs, next door to Bay Harbor, within a half-hour to forty-five minute drive to Charlevoix and Mackinac Island.

Sometimes the first thing that a bride says to me is "I'm not from here but...." Usually the bride or the groom have family ties in the area, they vacationed here as kids, came north to visit grandparents at the cottage, skied here in the winter time or just visited once and fell in love with the area.

Nothing beats the view as you come up US 131, crest the hill and see Little Traverse Bay for the first time. I still remember the first time I came to Petoskey, it was love at first sight. Other than the bay, the other thing I remember noticing was the steeple of St Francis Church and I have lived and worked within a block of the church for the last 34 years.

I spoke with Debbie Norris who works in the event department for Stafford's Hospitality. She said probably 85 percent of the 70 weddings they had in 2014 at The Perry Hotel, Bay View Inn and Crooked River Lodge were destination weddings. They find most of the couples have some sort of connection to the area.

The view of the water and the sunsets are the biggest draw. Stafford's has an information packet for brides to put in their welcome baskets that includes 101 things to do in the Petoskey area. Our local chamber and visitor's bureau will work with the brides to help with brochures to send out to guests or for their welcome bags. When dealing with brides from out of town, Debbie and I both agree it is all about prompt communication and good follow through as many times we never even meet the bride until a couple of days before the wedding or the day of the wedding.



Diary of an Events Planner

BY SCOTT AWAD, AIFD, CF, EVENTS TO RENT, INC., EAST LANSING, MI

Whether corporate or personal, events are one of the cornerstones of our business at Events To Rent. Since we are a party rental business first and foremost, when we take on a full blown event with rentals, flowers, décor, lighting, etc., we put our heart and soul into it.

Andrew Maglio and I bought ETR in November of 2005 and right away added several services including floral design. Our sales shot through the roof at least for the first two years. Then the great recession hit and like everyone else in the industry, we had to tighten our belts and become smarter at finding ways to profit, even if the profit margin was low.

We also had to make sure that clients who used our services felt they were getting everything they deserved for the dollars spent. The “over the top” events slowed down, but in a down economy, party rental businesses tended to thrive. This is due to the fact that people scaled back from country club or hotel ballroom events to at home, backyard tent events.

Now that we have moved past this, the event business is back on the upswing. In January we were contracted to provide the floral décor/centerpieces at the Inaugural Gala for the Governor of Michigan, Rick Snyder. This was a major undertaking as the guest count started out at 1,500.

Having a great relationship with Kennicott/Nordlie in Flint was key to our success. On the 26th of December, we received the flower order: 1,700 hydrangeas, 1,700 white roses, 750 white stock and 3,000 stems of miscellaneous flowers and foliage. Working with the same supplier for all our events, ensures that they can handle any issue. For this event, as well as the large wedding we had on December 27th, everything was PERFECT!

When all was said and done, we ended up with 1,000 guests, 150 tables and a total of 286 designs that had to be arranged and delivered in sub-zero temperatures. All of this was possible because of our amazing design/delivery and set up staff, comprised of full time ETR employees and free-lance help.

We were fortunate to have previously collaborated and worked with the coordinator hired to execute the entire event. Having this personal relationship was essential to execute a seamless and extraordinary event.

Coordinator Kelly M. Brennan, CMP, CPCE, commented: “It is always a pleasure to work with Events to Rent, and for this event they took it to the next level. As soon as we were able to select our vendors for the 2015 Michigan Inaugural Gala, I knew Events to Rent was going to be my first stop. From paper to table, this amazing team took the First Lady’s vision and catapulted it to life. The ooh’s and aah’s are still being talked about. I knew Events to Rent could turn ordinary to



extraordinary. Simply put...they are sensational and the best of the best!"

Our goal is always providing our client with high quality product along with friendly, professional courteous service at affordable prices. Whether the event is a cozy get-together or a grand gala, the client's needs and expectations must always be met and exceeded.

We do not often advertise for weddings or events. We will, from time to time, run a commercial on local TV when we can barter for the spots. Our dollars are better spent on giving our event/wedding clients more for their money in the way of impressive flower designs which always gives us a return on investment. Ninety percent of our weddings/events are booked through word of mouth.

This being said, we do use social media such as Facebook to promote our services since what we do is very visual and pictures speak volumes. We constantly upload photos from past events to our website and social media pages for clients and prospective clients to see.

The most important component of planning events is the "one on one" consultation in our showroom. It is very important to meet the client to get a feel for their vision as well as their budget. Having them onsite is beneficial as they are able to see our vast inventory as well as design portfolios.

When we book the consultation, we send out a packet of information which includes our policies, contracts, and questions we might ask in the meeting. We find this very helpful so that the client comes prepared. It also helps keep the initial appointment to approximately an hour. We will go overtime if need be, but since this is an unpaid consultation with a client who may or may not book, we are mindful of "time is money".

We never give out written quotes when flowers and design are involved without the customary non-refundable deposit. However, we always are willing to give out an overall cost for the event with a verbal breakdown on each piece. Our policy is not to price out quotes from any of our competitors but put a plan together with our ideas and costs. This has always worked very well.

I remember a client who came to us with "her" plan based on "her" research. I knew this was not the case as the written portions seemed to be those of a professional designer. I found we knew the other company and called them. The client had deleted the business name as well as the "property of" statement.

With this confirmation, I contacted the client, let her know I had confirmed my suspicions and this was not the way we did business. I told her she should find another firm to handle the event. In the end, she was dissatisfied with who she used and came to us when her other daughter got married. Now she uses no one else.

Once the client books our services and we have a plan, the next thing we do is work out a recipe sheet for all flower design

items. We put this on an Excel spread sheet and send it to our supplier for pricing. Then we build the designs based on the amount we charged the client, and the prices given by the supplier. This allows us to have a confirmed price as well as keep track of inventory as items arrive and is a guide for the designers to follow.

As ETR is an event floral design company and not a traditional flower shop, our buying habits are unique. When we order fresh flowers for an event we must be mindful of what we buy since we usually do not have a chance to sell leftovers to walk-in traffic. However, we do add anywhere from two to five percent to our order depending on the product to account for poor quality, add on designs, and situational circumstances such as weather or venue climate. Most of the time product is "left over" and it is our belief that adding this product into the event designs gives the client a bigger look, more for their money and a feather in our cap. By doing this the client is always very pleased and is more likely to give us a positive referral and thus another event!



Finally, the most important part of any event is the execution. To be done properly one must be prepared with time lines, venue requirements and availability. This is achieved by knowing the contact on site and being in communication with them so that all of the pieces come together seamlessly, especially in the eyes of the client.

I contact the event coordinator on site to arrange for delivery, set up and strike, and relay this information to our client. The client does not have to worry about doing this leg work and that makes us shine in their eyes. We take on this stress so they do not have to.

The event business can be very profitable when done correctly. I will not say that it is easy but if you have the knowledge and interest, I would encourage you to consider increasing yours. ✨

PERSONALPROFILE

A Floral Life: The Enduring Power of People

BY BOBBI ECKER-BLATCHFORD, AAF, AIFD, PFCI

Although the dizzying exuberance of the Internet offers unprecedented and ever-expanding choices of information and connections, there remains a certain galvanizing benefit to personal contact with people and the messages they convey. These interludes are very often key to the decisions we make that influence our lives.

It has been a passion and a privilege to be a professional florist and a presenter. I began my career in the floral industry by marrying into the Ecker family. From the moment I stepped into that realm, it was obvious that the intrinsic value of connections with positive and supportive people is key to the quality of life.

The Ecker family operated a florist shop along with greenhouses in Waverly, Iowa. They were growers, wholesalers and retailers at the time of my marriage to Ted Ecker. Those were the days my friend. We thought they'd never end. That's how that oft quoted melody goes.

At the time of my entrance the company was called Wright's Greenhouses. The Wrights were relatives of the Eckers. Wrights Greenhouses had two generations of family involved in the operation previous to selling the business to the Eckers. The business was established so the name change came after several years of the change of ownership. During my 60 plus years in the industry there have been a magnitude of changes both at Ecker's and in every aspect of our lives and work. And the beat goes on.

Mass Production

In some circles mass production is a threatening phrase reminiscent of production lines at McDonald's, Culver's or a host of other fast food operations. In reality, the Ecker operation was a mass production center when I joined the family. The shop and greenhouses were located in Northeast Iowa in a town of 8,000 souls. Surrounding the Waverly area were small towns with funeral homes but no florist. As a result, the funeral directors in town and the surrounding area would take orders for the sympathy tributes and call the

orders in the day before the funeral service. The orders were taken for casket sprays or blankets, flat sprays, wreaths, baskets, and specialties called "set pieces."

In addition to the basics, there was the broken wheel, the open door, the empty chair and other more complex and time consuming designs. The work would often begin in the wee hours of the morning. Crews would assemble in the greenhouses working on cement benches and often producing hundreds of flat sprays in a wide range of price points. Sprays were begun with fern bases and tied with sheer ribbons. The orders came flying in fast and furious and it was simply a matter of production from menus. Each funeral director was given a selection guide for use in sales. It was mass production.

Opportunity Knocks

There is a saying that rings true for all of us: "Of magic doors there is this. You do not see them, even as you are passing through." Opportunity often knocks at the door through past associations or acquaintances. Very often it is because we are a solution to someone's needs. This has been the case throughout my life. No doubt this has also been your experience.

Learning the retail portion of the Ecker operation was natural to me. My mother's family was shopkeepers and business people. Bob Ecker, my father-in-law, was a great designer. Bob taught me the basics of design. During my apprenticeship, I fell in love with the "flower business". Working with family and flowers was a pleasant experience and suited my lifestyle.

Our home was next to the business so it was a convenient situation for raising a family and getting to work on time. Then to add to



the passion, a phone call from a fellow florist added another dimension and a source of revenue to my life and career plans. Opportunity was knocking.

Off and Running

During the 1950s I renewed my friendship with Frank and Harriet Kelvington. Frank owned a successful florist shop in Waterloo and was an impresario of sorts. Harriet and her father owned and operated *The Ross Conservatory of Music*. The conservatory offered dance, piano and elocution instruction along with classes in social etiquette and speech.

Frank, Harriet and Harriet's father, Mr. Ross, were very well known and respected in the community. The family was prominent in business and social circles in Waterloo and environs. Frank was involved in state and national florist organizations and was active in promoting flowers and the arts in general. Harriet and her father were urbane and an integral part of the arts.

The door of opportunity opened for me when The Waterloo Woman's Club asked Frank and Harriet to suggest a commentator for their annual fund-raiser called *The Arts, Flowers and Music Extravaganza*. The extravaganza was always held in the massive Electric Park Ballroom in Waterloo and was a not to be missed event. Frank was always consulted on the program and the commentator. Although I was an unknown to the sponsors and had no credibility with them, Frank suggested I would be a natural to work with him on the show.

Frank endorsed me enthusiastically. He added that in addition to being an up and coming floral designer of note, my sense of fashion and style would make me a perfect commentator for the event. Of course Frank's endorsement of my emerging talents was like a ticket to ride. Was I qualified? Was I ready to go? Well, ignorance is sometimes bliss and I had confidence in Frank, as did the ladies who were sponsoring the event. Perhaps we all need an agent who promotes us to move forward in life. As luck would have it, I was off and running on the road to becoming a

commentator–designer. Yes. I was off and running but apprehensive and naturally a bit anxious.

Mentors

My connection with the Kelvington and the Ross families was long standing. My parents were acquainted with them and because my Mother had ambitions for me, her only child, she registered me as a student at the Ross Conservatory.

Mama’s hope was that I would emerge from the classes of dance, music and social etiquette a more polished personality. Well – that was of course, pie in the sky, but I went along with her hopes and dreams, as it was fun and enjoyable.

Call Me Madame

An intriguing Russian émigré, referred to as Madame Lasky was also on staff at The Ross Conservatory. Madame was rumored to have come to Waterloo at the behest of the relatives who wanted her closer to family. Madame was a fascinating lady. The walls of her studio were covered with autographed photos of Hollywood actors and actresses and theatre personalities thanking her for contributing to their successful careers.

Being enrolled in her speech, poise and social etiquette classes elevated me in the eyes of my classmates. Ah, the power of association and the magic of Madame helped my image considerably. She was the epitome of sophistication and she added a mysterious and romantic flavor to the conservatory image. In addition to being a gifted pianist and musician, Madame wore silk smocks, and interesting and fashionable clothing that was intriguing to all.

Madame told Mama that I showed some promise but that in the hula dance class designed to promote grace and calm I continued to do the fastest hula in the entire class. The encouraging news was that Madame thought I showed some promise. This glimmer of hope for me encouraged my Mother to keep me enrolled to study with these fascinating people. Her objective was to not only to develop my personality and poise, but also to keep me off Sycamore Street while she was working.

A Quick Start

With the endorsement of my mentors and armed with costume, makeup and script provided by them, I was groomed and anticipating my debut on the stage at the extravaganza. With Frank making the introductions and with a handsome local radio personality whose name I cannot remember as co-commentator, the art, flowers and music was presented to the audience with great aplomb.

I was a mere decoration and a minor member of the cast. A cocktail hour preceded the show and the event was all about seeing and being seen. Little did I know that however unimportant my role, the appearance was a quick start to a segment of my future as a presenter and a commentator that would sustain me throughout my life.

Doors Open

After the program at the Electric Park Ballroom, Frank Kelvington made certain that it was known that Bobbi was available for presentations and commenting and could be contacted at Ecker’s Flowers in Waverly, Iowa. He then advised me to prepare a fee schedule for appearances to differentiate between a free engagement versus a performance fee.

Thanks to Frank and his encouragement, *The Wonderful World of Flowers* was born and new adventures were on the horizon. The universal appeal of flowers and foliage captures most audiences although there is always drama and crisis in any performing art. Armed with promotional flyers and networking, I

**“We never know how high we are
Till we are asked to rise.
And then, if we are true to plan,
Our statures touch the skies.”**

–Emily Dickinson

had a full calendar of presentations. As I had evolved to a management position at Ecker’s my major responsibilities were to the flower shop and family.

The popularity of *The Wonderful World of Flowers* began to soar. Another program I developed called *Symbolism in Flowers*, was in demand at church gatherings throughout the state. My husband Ted was a licensed pilot and although he had a busy schedule and was in charge of the greenhouses we could often fly to and from events with ease if the weather was favorable. The plane was an Aeronca Chief, a two–seater with ample room for supplies.

At one of the *Symbolism in Flowers* presentations, I met two sisters who were impressed with the program and were influential in the state and national Farm Bureau organization. They audited the program and refined it to suit the Rural–Urban Days meetings in the State of Iowa. Those were busy days for both Ted and me. We were not able to accommodate all 90 counties but managed to successfully book and present at 30 of the meetings with the show. The culmination of the connection was that we also booked the national conven-

tion through the power of people who supported us.

The Show Must Go On

Into each life some rain must fall and crisis looms up without permission. Although most of the time presentations go on as planned, there are challenges to overcome. On one frustrating occasion, the weather was threatening and Ted said that in spite of inclement weather we could fly out of the storm in time for the appearance. He calculated that by the time my presentation was ended the storm would have passed and we could fly home again.

Ted and I always had a checklist for the trips for both the plane and for the program supplies. On this occasion, because of the weather challenges and my state of mind, I had neglected to check the loading of the supplies. Our hosts at the meeting had a car waiting for us upon landing. When I moved to unload the flower boxes and tools, I realized I had not loaded the cargo. What to do? The storm was moving in rapidly and there was no time to do anything but arrive at the auditorium. The show much go on and there was nothing to do but go on.

When I took the stage before a packed audience, I told them that it was a pleasure to be here and launched into an explanation of the situation. Then, I asked them to bear with me and imagine the program as if there were beautiful flowers and foliage in each segment. I would present, they would close their eyes and imagine, and it was a very quick program. Of course there was no charge to the organization and no tomatoes were thrown at the presenter and the pilot. Amen.

On another occasion, a flash flood engulfed our florist shop and greenhouses devastating our entire location. It was a very busy week at the flower shop plus I had committed to present for The National Conference of Friends (Quakers) approximately three hours drive from the shop. Even though none of the family or our employees had slept more than a few hours during the aftermath, my dedicated staff accomplished the shop work while I packed up the flowers and foliage, put on a generous amount of makeup, dark glasses and donned a large hat. Driven by a faithful friend, we headed for the show. The Friends group was an understanding and appreciative audience. I was a sight for sore eyes, but the show must go on. ✨

Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, AAE, AIFD, PFCI, has spent a lifetime in the floral industry Bobbi is a marketing and promotional specialist as well as a commentator and floral design expert. She consults with industry members connecting from seed to shelf. Her email is florapros@aol.com.

PROMMARKETING

Education + Display = Prom Profits!

BY KEVIN ADAMO, COUNTRY LANE FLOWERS, HOWELL, MI

The three major areas that have allowed our prom sales to increase considerably are, in the following order: Educate the sales staff, educate the customer and display, display, display!

First I had to educate my staff. It does not matter how long your employees have worked in the floral industry, whether or not they are designers, sales associates, part time, full time or holiday help, all of them need to learn the new product, styles and designs that are now available for prom.

About 10 years ago I could have probably ordered all white sweetheart roses to get through a prom since most of my staff offered three white roses with some babies breath. The sales associate would ask what color dress and they would respond, "Black." "Great, how about white roses with an iridescent bow?" Or "White dress, ok, how about some white roses with a colored bow?" Guess what we sold the most of in our shop and where the average price stood? That's right, we sold almost all corsages with white roses and the average cost of our corsages was at \$19.95.

For several years it slowly started to change but not as much as I would have liked. I even caught myself thinking, we can't sell higher priced corsages like that at my store, that is not my customers' taste. A few years later I started taking my design staff to the MFA Great Lakes Floral Expo. I have to give credit to Doug Bates, CF, CFD, Designs by Vogts Flowers and Gifts, Sturgis, Michigan, who in my eyes is the king of corsages! His enthusiasm for thinking out of the box and making the boring every day corsage



This necklace was created with colored aluminum wire. Rolled rose petals accent the large rose blossom set on a base of peacock feathers.

pop with color and excitement got my entire staff revitalized and excited to get back for our next prom season.

Yearly, my designers and sales staff attend at least two shows to stay up to date with styles and trends. There are plenty of hands-on workshops offered every year at the MFA Great Lakes Floral Expo or at local wholesale houses sponsored by different wire services. Take advantage of these seminars and let your staff get educated by some of the top designers in our field. No matter how many years you have been in the industry or the level of designer, you can never get enough education! Education keeps you growing.



The two wristlets are connected with gemstone style ribbon and accented with wrapped wire. The throats of the orchid are decorated with large gemstones.

White ranunculus with rolled red rose petals are featured in this corsage accented with black feathers, clear rhinestones and butterflies.



Second, we need to educate our customers. If they always hear the same thing from our sales associate/designer that is all they are going to know. In my case, most of my customers only knew about white rose corsages with some babies breath and a bow. At the extreme they might take a color rose but it was just to match what the young lady was wearing. Pink dress, Pink roses! Just like anything in our stores, if we do not offer it to the customer, how are they going to know about it?

Educating the customer was a little bit harder and took more time to happen as opposed to educating my sales staff. We all know how people are with change. If they are comfortable with it, they stick with it. This is why it is important for your sales associates to let your customers know what colors are available, what items are available and how they can take the design to the next level and give it a little spark!

Dont forget Selling 101, the sales associate's tone of voice and enthusiasm helps spark the interest from your customer and willingness to go to the next level and try something different. When there is a new item you are carrying, show it - show it- show it.

For us, new on the market this year is the glitter stem wrap from Atlantic. This is a roll of glitter corsage tape sold in several colors that will save time and money when you want to wrap the stem of a boutonniere or wrap some wire for added bling! You can rub your fingers across it all you want, the glitter is not coming off the tape. You bet when our customer comes in this year, they are all going to be feeling this tape and shown how it can be used to make their prom flowers even more special and unique.

Last, but not least important is displaying the products to create that special prom design unique to him/her. This is where we really saw the difference in sales for our prom flowers. It started off just a simple display showing some different color rhinestones, ribbons, butterflies and wristlets. Each year it has grown along with our average sale of prom flowers and we now have what we call our "Prom Bar."

This consists of foam boards that display all our possible additions such as feathers, rhinestones, jewels, pearls, butterflies, color wire etc. that are displayed in sections by color and with a number so all orders have no guess work. We group all our wristlets by price so customers can see how they can upgrade to each level. The customer can feel and touch all the items. We can put their swatch of material next to the sample to see how it looks and help visualize what it is they are creating.

Our Prom Bar takes up about 12 ft. x 4 ft. section in our store front during prom time. We have many pictures of our designs placed around the board allowing our customers to see our work. We have several I-pads for our customers to use that also allows them to view our work and get some ideas. Last year we added a TV screen that has a slide show of even more designs.



In this boutonniere, the base is created using a ring covered with metallic stem wrap and rhinestone ribbon. Lily grass loops, seeded eucalyptus pods, green hypericum and green craspedia complete the design.



Flat wire with gauge wire coil form the boutonniere's base. The design features silver filigree leaves and blue delphinium blossoms.

This year we are going to add some samples on the table for display. Again giving them the opportunity to touch, feel and visualize the product.

Our big reveal this year is going to be the night before the display is ready for the sales floor. We are having a "Prom Night" from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at our store. This will consist of our full display along with many more designs created and being created during the show. We have partnered with the local tux and dress shop who will have models walking around showing off their new designs which enables us to show off our new designs. We will have a salon and make-up artist showing how they can help with prom.

Now it is not just us promoting the event, but at least four other businesses marketing this event to their customers. What a great way to increase traffic for the event at no cost to you. We will be marketing this event via school newspapers, local newspaper and social media. All customers who place an order that night will receive a free upgrade on their bracelet choice. For instance if they were going to just get the standard wristlet, they will now get a step-up wristlet such as a slap wristlet.

No matter the size of your store or your community the key to increased sales is to educate and display! Since we have begun promoting education for our sales staff, educating our customers and creating a huge display for prom our average cost of a corsage has increased almost \$20.00. Thats right, those customers who use to complain about a \$24.95 corsage are now paying \$45.00 and loving what they get! Take the time to educate it pays off! Go get those sales. ✨

Designs were created by Kathy Spenser, Kathy Cunningham and Edward Smith, Country Lane Flowers.

INDUSTRY INFO

AIFD Calls for PFDE Candidates

The deadline for submitting applications for the 2015 Professional Floral Design Evaluation is April 15.

The American Institute of Floral Designers PFDE is a two part test. Part one is an online test based on educational objectives and knowledge derived from "The AIFD Guide to Floral Design: Terms,

Techniques and Traditions." This reference tool is provided to everyone who makes application to participate. Candidates must successfully complete the online test with an 80 percent or better by May 1, 2015.

Part two is a live evaluation to be held June 28, 2015, in Denver, immediately prior to the AIFD National Symposium "Journey." Candidates have four hours to create five specified designs which are then

Sunreviewed and evaluated by seven AIFD certified evaluator/judges. AIFD provides all flowers and hard goods necessary to complete the designs.

To enroll in the AIFD PFDE process or to learn more about becoming a CFD or member of AIFD, visit <http://aifd.org/membership/become-cfd-and-aifd>.

SAF Names New Staff Members

The Society of American Florists announced two new staff members.

Shawn McBurney is the new senior director of government relations. McBurney is the former senior vice president of governmental affairs at American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA). In that role, he monitored federal legislative activities and represented the group on tax, labor, international business, and other legislative issues.

Prior to AH&LA, McBurney was appointed by President George W. Bush in 2001 to serve as associate administrator, Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs and senior advisor at the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).

Brian Walrath, has joined the staff as the new membership manager. He has extensive membership and marketing experience at multiple non-profit trade associations and professional societies.

He has a proven track record of helping organizations recruit and retain members and looks forward to helping do the same with SAF. His most recent position gained him additional experience in retail marketing and the wholesale environment as a marketing manager for Dizzy Pig, a spice seasoning manufacturer and retail store.

Floralife Receives Award

Floralife has received an External Manufacturer of the Year Award from AgroFresh, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Dow Chemical Company and a global business unit of Dow AgroSciences LLC.

AgroFresh develops and manufactures ethylene management systems that help extend the longevity and freshness of cut flowers and plants. Annually, the company shows their appreciation toward valued trade partners with special recognitions. For the first time one of their suppliers, Floralife, received this honor.

Dow's letter of recognition cites Floralife's "exceptional production" of products, such as EthylBloc™ Sachets and EthylBloc™ Truck Kits. These products were developed to prevent the effects of ethylene, to help keep cut flowers fresh, and maintain their beauty "from harvest to vase." Also noted was Floralife's manufacturing performance, supply-chain management, and valued cooperation in the mutual efforts of Dow and Floralife to grow the Chinese floriculture market.

Floral Holiday Calendar

FLORAL HOLIDAYS	2015	2016
New Year's Day	Thursday, January 1	Friday, January 1
Valentine's Day	Saturday, February 14	Sunday, February 14
St. Patrick's Day	Tuesday, March 17	Thursday, March 17
Easter Sunday	Sunday, April 5	Sunday, March 27
Passover	Friday, April 3	Friday, April 22
Admin. Professional (Secretaries) Day	Wednesday, April 22	Wednesday, April 27
National Teachers Day	Tuesday, May 5	Tuesday, May 3
Cinco de Mayo	Tuesday, May 5	Thursday, May 5
Dia de Las Madres (Mex.)	Saturday, May 9	Tuesday, May 10
Mother's Day (US/Can.)	Sunday, May 10	Sunday, May 8
Memorial Day	Monday, May 25	Monday, May 30
Father's Day	Sunday, June 21	Sunday, June 19
Independence Day	Saturday, July 4	Monday, July 4
Grandparents' Day	Sunday, September 13	Sunday, September 11
Rosh Hashanah	Sunday, September 13	Sunday, October 2
Yom Kippur	Tuesday, September 22	Tuesday, October 11
Thanksgiving Day (Can.)	Monday, October 12	Monday, October 10
Bosses' Day (US)	Friday, October 16	Monday, October 17
Sweetest Day	Saturday, October 17	Saturday, October 15
Halloween	Saturday, October 31	Monday, October 31
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 26	Thursday, November 24
Hanukkah	December 6 -14	Dec. 24-Jan. 1, 2017
Christmas Day	Friday, December 25	Sunday, December 25
Kwanzaa	Dec. 26 – Jan. 1	Dec. 26 – Jan. 1

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Our corsages
& boutonnieres
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**TOTALLY
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WORK**



**We help our
retail florist
customers...**

...with **FREE**
posters for your
flower shop!

Crush it
at **PROM**
with your
BEST BUDS
(and ours!)



Prom season is almost here, and Kennicott Brothers, Vans & Nordlie are ready to help you put your "best buds" forward! We take pride in sourcing only the finest flowers & supplies for your retail store.

What's more, we've committed to helping provide **FREE** marketing materials to our valued customers throughout the year. It's our way of thanking you for your business, and helping support our industry.

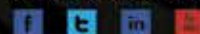
Contact your sales representative to reserve your **FREE** prom posters (37" x 17") for your retail space. Your customers will take notice... they may even totally tweet it.

Grand Rapids, MI (616) 785-9500
Grandville, MI (616) 534-6833
Flint, MI (810) 767-8883
Detroit, MI (586) 755-4200
Traverse City, MI (231) 943-3466

Cleveland, OH (216) 662-4200
Dayton, OH (937) 222-2201
Twin Cities, MN (952) 831-8008
Indianapolis, IN (317) 291-8267
South Bend, IN (574) 282-2884

Chicago, IL (312) 492-8200
Elk Grove, IL (847) 734-8650
Alsip, IL (708) 371-8000
Aurora, IL (630) 896-1091
Waukegan, IL (847) 244-3110

Milwaukee, WI (414) 443-1100
Atlanta, GA (770) 449-0100
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www.kennicott.com



DESIGNEREVENT

2015 Nature's Creative Edge: The Final Chapter

"Invention", September 18, 19 and 20, 2015, is scheduled to be the last edition of "Nature's Creative Edge".

BY ALICE WATEROUS, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI
FLORAL CONSULTANT, GRAND HAVEN, MI

Begun as a master class taught by Hitomi Gilliam, AIFD, and Bob Friese, AIFD, in 2006, "Nature's Creative Edge" took shape at Bob's West Michigan woodland property. By popular demand, another class was held in 2007. Following this class, local friends were invited to view the completed works. By the third year, "Nature's Creative Edge" had become a full blown public awareness event.

Bob Friese has contributed his property and stood the expense of preparing the site for this event since its inception including electrical access throughout the exhibit space plus truckloads of mulch used to establish and refresh the trails each year. Additionally, he provides housing for many of the designers and nourishing lunches each day as the designers and helpers prepare the

exhibits. Designers are also given access to his extensive garden and wooded property.

Bob has always maintained he would host the event until he was 80 years old and that time has nearly arrived. As a fitting and useful "Curtain Call", the large assortment of physical props and salvaged items from over the years of the exhibit will be assembled as design surprise kits placed at sites along the trails in the woods. Designers will draw for their spots along the trail and use the materials placed there. Designers can only bring their usual design tools plus any fresh or dried floral materials they would like to use. The rest must be "invented" from the surprise kits.

"NCE" has been staged primarily by members of the North Central Chapter of AIFD. However, up to 30 designers from as many as seven states regularly travel to West Michigan (at their own expense) to share their talent and love of flowers with the public. This event serves as a regenerative, creative break from their everyday routines for many of the designers and ultimately shares with the public the beauty of floral art on a large scale.

Funds generated from this event have made possible a great many educational opportunities both for the North Central AIFD Regional Chapter and the National AIFD organization's scholarship funds.

It promises to be a fun challenge for the designers and a delight for the viewing public by the time the curtain rises on Friday evening, from 6:00-9:00 p.m., Saturday from 6:00-9:00 p.m., until the final curtain comes down on Sunday from 4:00-7:00 p.m.



"Time" an oversized pocket watch with moving parts by Lori List, AIFD, and Karl List, Marion, WI.



"Shower of Light", by Alice Waterous, AIFD, Grand Haven, MI, overlooks the creek.

This family friendly event usually attracts over a thousand viewers each year who are allowed to stroll at their own pace along the paths set on the approximately five acre site. They often relax, have some refreshments and stroll again as darkness transforms the exhibit, lit with candles and spotlights. The exhibit is professionally photographed with picture discs available each year for sale, however guests are free to take their own photos as well.

Fortunately floral industry suppliers such as FloraCraft, Kennicott/Nordlie, Smithers Oasis and Kennicott/Vans have always supported this event with a large variety of donated materials. The exhibit also has support from many of Bob's garden club members and friends from the area who volunteer their time to staff the exhibit before, during and after. Michigan Floral Association members have lent support throughout the years and *The Professional Florist* has featured the event several times. NCE was also featured several times in *Flora* magazine. ✿

Juried designers are welcome to apply to either help with an exhibit or choose to do their own at this year's NCE, September 18-20. The forest can accommodate up to 35 - 40 displays easily. If you are interested in participating contact Bob Friese, (231) 788-6983, or Alice Waterous, email awaterous@gmail.com for details about qualifications, time frame and criteria.

The pictures are from the 2014 Nature's Creative Edge.



"Fast Food" a giant frog dining on giant dragonflies by Carolyn Clark Kurek, AIFD, Franklin IN.



"Circulos" a gently swaying mobile by Craig Montanye, AIFD, Holland, MI.

DESIGNERSPOTLIGHT

We're Having a Party!

BY LIBBIE DEERING, CF, VOGT'S FLOWERS, GRAND BLANC, MI
2014 MFA ACADEMY WINNER

This design is perfect for corporate parties, weddings, or any event that requires flair and style! A white, rectangular, textured ceramic planter is filled with a block of foam cut level with the container. Then the green willow orbs are secured in the foam with three glass stakes.

Apple green beaded wire creates a transparent wall of interest within design's line of vision. Green cymbidium orchids are inserted along with magical green thistle and some moss to cover mechanics. The finishing

touch is complete with stems of sea star fern added to frame the design and a few thistle buds glued in various locations for rhythm.

This eye-catching look will take center stage at any event and can work well as a table centerpiece, buffet arrangement, or on a registration table. The options are endless. ✿



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WUMFA LEADERSHIP REPORT

Bring on Spring!

BY DIANE SCHULTE, CF, WMFM, WUMFA PRESIDENT



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Fax: (517) 575-0115

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Executive Assistant: Cindy S. Ching, AIFD, CF



I hope you all feel a spring in your step and new energy in your soul after attending our 2015 convention, "Fields of Greens".

Many, many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make it a success. Even though I've been in the floral business for over 30 years I still gain useful tips, fresh ideas and a reignited excitement for my profession at the convention. Please see our website www.wumfa.org for a recap and photos.

Now we can now turn our focus to proms, Easter, Mother's Day and weddings. I hope this flower buying season brings you many customers and increased sales. Are you attending or participating in your local bridal fairs? At Metcalf's Floral Studio we participate in Madison's annual Wedding Planner Bridal Fair. We find it's beneficial in connecting with brides in our area, showing them trending colors and styles and showcasing our designs.

My tenure as president has come to a close. It has been an honor and privilege to be your leader. We have undergone a number of changes that will benefit us for years to come with a new executive director and website, plus social media and educational opportunities. Rod and Cindy at the office have been terrific to work with and are committed to seeing us grow as an organization. Their expertise in everything flowers and enthusiasm in running a floral association are among the best in the country.

I encourage you to run for a position on the board of directors. It is and has been a great experience and pleasure to work with the individuals who are current board members and committee members at large. Everyone works together for the greater needs of this organization. WUMFA is looking to floral professionals like you who can guide us into the next generation of our association.

Let's extend our congratulations to Patty Malloy our new president and leader. May your experience be pleasurable and gratifying. I know you'll do us proud. A huge thank you goes to Bob Larson, past president, as his term on the board comes to a close. His dedication, passion and cakes have been awesome.

Thanks again to everyone for this opportunity and honor. ✿

Teleflora Unit Wins Award



The Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Teleflora unit received an Outstanding Unit award at the Teleflora presidents meeting held in Burbank, California. Pictured above are from left: Donna Nelson, Teleflora manager of industry relations; Rich Salvaggio, vice president of industry relations; Melissa Maas, president of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan unit; Bill Smith, central regional unit director, and Lottie Slovacek, industry relations coordinator. ✿

Welcome New WUMFA Member!

Parkway Floral, Inc.
Leah Manthey & Carly Johnson

1001 Milwaukee Ave.
South Milwaukee, WI 53172
Phone: (414) 762-0246

Website: www.parkwayfloralinc.com
Email: parkwayweddings@yahoo.com

Observations of an Events Specialist

BY JOHN HOSEK, AIFD, CF, PFCI
SURROUNDINGS EVENTS AND FLORALS, VERONA, WI

As a full service special events company and retail florist, we do all sorts of events from fundraisers, corporate picnics, holiday parties, and weddings to transforming rooms for theme parties.

When we first meet with a client, we have what I like to call a brainstorming session. We want to go over all the ideas, design concepts and suggestions, regardless of how wild they might be. For example, if it is a fundraiser, we want to cover every detail including number of guests, timing of the event, and especially the budget.

With my background in graphic engineering and interior design, I have an advantage in communicating with my brides or event clients. Many times during an appointment I will do sketches to give them room parameters and ideas. We are all very visual people and to be able to quickly thumbnail sketch a room or a design really gives me an edge

Next, I will usually do a site review unless I'm familiar with the facility,



Decorated chandeliers at a "Moulin Rouge" fundraiser.

making sure load in and load out areas are easily accessible and checking to see if there are any logistics that we need to

work through. Many times I will have color swatches or possibly even do a storyboard with more advanced sketches colors and concepts. During this time frame a proposal has been put together, considering how to incorporate activities like entertainment, DJs, caricature artist, or palm readers.

You have to take many things into consideration when making a proposal such as the amount of time it's going to take to transform a room. Linens, chair covers, chair ties, ceiling treatment with chandeliers, drape fabric, or twinkle lights, all must be taken into consideration. One of the biggest factors is labor cost, making sure you have enough manpower to make the event appear seamless.

During the past year I have observed that some of our clients have really wanted to make their events unique and different. As opposed to being in a hotel, some have chosen venues like art galleries, theater stages and open fields. The trend in the last couple years for events in barns has been on the downswing this year.

I feel very blessed every day to be able to do what I love and enjoy doing! ✿



Giant suckers were highlighted at this candy land 50th birthday party.



This arrangement, featuring ostrich plumes, was done for a casino's high rollers New Year's Eve event themed Silver Screen.

NEVILLEONTHELEVEL

Get Your Party Dress On!!

BY NEVILLE MACKAY, CAFA, PFCI, WFC



I remember when I was a child, watching my mum and dad getting ready for a party and how exciting it was. Dad would splash on the “special” cologne while mum would apply and “tissue press” her lipstick. They were

square dancers, so her dress with all its pleats and ruffles was hung out to fluff up, and dad’s best matching shirt and tie were laid out on the bed, all in anticipation of a great night ahead. Oh how I dreamed of dosie-doe-ing about in that red gingham dress...

We in the floral industry get to be back-door participants at many great parties and events, and much like that pretty red dress, we dream of what it’s like to walk in and experience the glory that awaits the guests.

Fortunately, many of us do get to enjoy the parties and events, because we often score an invitation after having built up a good relationship and becoming friends with our clients. I personally have been a part of a good many swanky soirees, (some of which I was even invited to) and after all the stress and effort we go through to make for a perfect event, it’s nice to hear good comments firsthand from other guests.

Boy, it can seem daunting at first to plan and create florals for a larger event, but with a good game plan everything can go smoothly. I tend to break things down to smaller projects so nothing looks too terribly overwhelming. Start with a good consultation with the client to get to know the pertinent facts about the event. Remember, “Who? What? When? Where? And Why?” are questions that you should be able to answer quite early in the game, while working on a total look, colors, pricing and all that good stuff. I won’t get into that bother now as it will bore many of you, and I’m not really interested in teaching a how-to class today anyway.

Relationships are important. Actually, relationships are going to happen regardless, so it’s up to you whether it is a good relationship or a bad one. I try to work towards developing a good one myself. Think not only about the client you are dealing with, but those people you work with as these people are often of more important than the client on some level.

Listen, we all know a miserable so and so we dread having to lock horns with; as I write this, I think of one person who still after all these years makes the veins on my bald head stick out. I remember setting up a big wedding at a hotel years ago and witnessed her go off on a sweet girl who was trying to lay tablecloths, making the kid cry.

I whispered to the girl that the evil witch would be dead long before she would be, so not to fret, and then went to the witch and reminded her that she was no better than anyone else here, and we all are merely the “help”. Here’s the

kicker: That little petal who cried that day came to see me a few years later to have me look after her wedding flowers!

When I do an installation, I make sure I have a little extra (sometimes I keep flowers in my car) just in case, and I learned this from experience. Years ago I got to do a lovely wedding for some Canadian celebrities, and the venue was about a five hour drive from my shop.

The client asked if I could put some greenery on the ceiling light at the reception, saying it was a simple light with a few lamps. Easy. Well, I got there and fell back when I saw not one “simple” light, but three massive ones hanging there, begging to be covered with greenery. I went for a drive in the

country... here’s a tip, friends, look for houses that are for sale that may need a bush trimmed here and there...just saying.

Remember to make an event the best possible representation of your work and don’t be afraid to stick to your standards. I’ve said “no” more than once when asked to work with or create something from a client’s bag of crap, but also have said “yes” to please many who have offered their treasures; just be up front and honest with what you can, will and are willing and able to do for your client. Oh, and have fun with it.

Afterwards, go home and put on that party dress and think of me! ✿

Relationships are important. Actually, relationships are going to happen regardless, so it’s up to you whether it is a good relationship or a bad one. I try to work towards developing a good one myself.

DESIGN TIP: Designing Underwater Arrangements for Events

BY DEREK WOODRUFF, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI
DEREK LLC, TRAVERSE CITY, MI
MFA DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

Submersed flowers have great appeal at social functions. When flowers are placed underwater, they become more vibrant, opulent and you can see details that you have never noticed before. This excites the guests and becomes an immediate conversation piece. It's important to know the best types of flowers to use underwater and the best mechanics to execute the design successfully.

Flower selection: Avoid flowers that have fuzzy or woody stems as these tend to promote bacterial growth which shortens the vase life of underwater arrangements. Flowers with fleshy or waxy components work the best. Some great examples are orchids, tulips and mini calla lilies. You'll also find out quickly that most flowers float.



Mechanics: Vessels containing arrangements can quickly become crowded. In my experience with these types of designs, less is best. In the underwater design pictured, I have used only two elements: Mokara orchids and Syndicate Sales glitter stems. The glitter stems are wired, so their weight holds the orchid stems in place when the vessel is filled with water, making them a decorative mechanic. Flower pin frogs are another great mechanic for use underwater.

The best way to perfect this method of floral design is to practice. Experiment with different elements and see for yourself what works best for you. Have fun! ✿

Certified Florist Manual & Testing

Did you know? MFA's Certified Florist (CF) program is a comprehensive program that covers all aspects of professional floristry and is the most affordable program available to florists today. And the most convenient: You can self-study at your own pace with this great manual/reference resource.

The Certified Florist accreditation is nationally recognized and an approved pathway to AIFD accreditation. MFA offers an optional, educational "Steps to Certification" class to help prepare for certification.

Other Certification or Certified Floral Designer programs available today would cost you over \$1,000 and could take you years to accomplish! But not this program:

***Cost for manual and one round of CF testing is \$599.99 (includes tax & S/H)**

***Cost for manual only is \$399.99 (includes tax & S/H)**

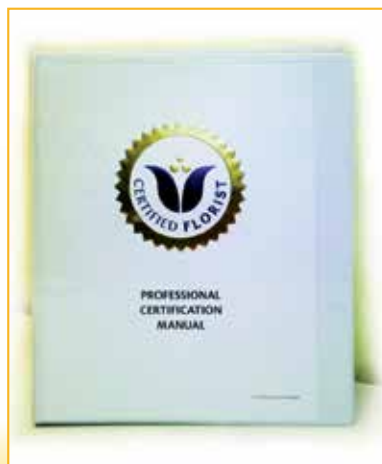
Consumers today are offered more and more options for purchasing flowers and are looking for your credentials or certification to help them justify spending their money with you. Let them discover you are a Certified Florist when they look into your business!

Get your CF manual today and prepare for the CF exam, which consists of 2-1/2 hours of hands-on design (you make five designs: one duplicate for incoming wire service orders, one vase, one pin-on corsage, one wrist corsage and one wedding bouquet,) and two hours of written work (30 product ID and 120 multiple choice questions). If you pass each section with a score of 80 percent or better, you become a Certified Florist!

The CF Manual consists of the following chapters and books:

- 1. Care & Handling • 2. Product Identification • 3. Customer Relations/Sales • 4. Delivery • 5. Marketing • 6. Accounting • 7. Gluing • 8.

- Lighting • 9. Basic Floral Design (this topic is covered using two books that are included with your manual purchase.) *Florists' Review Design School and Flower Arranging... Step by Step Instructions for Everyday Designs* • 10. Study Guide & Evaluation Forms



Visit www.michiganfloral.org or call 517-575-0110 and register today!

CFREPORT



Design Style Prom Flowers

As the prom season and Mother's Day approaches, be sure you are prepared for these two very important floral events. Make your bases ahead of time. If you use leaves, tape them together. If you use bows have the popular and neutral colors all ready constructed. When it is time to start gluing, you will have a good base already to go. Making a corsage follows the same principles and elements as an arrangement. Your eye should follow the lines of the design with no holes. A larger flower can provide the focal point. Think of the corsage or boutonniere as a little arrangement. Use your creativity to make a variety of designs. Glued corsages can be easy and very profitable. A properly done glued corsage can be beautiful and cost effective. Poorly done, a glued corsage can fall apart and disappoint your customer. Be inspired during this exciting floral season. ✿



Corsages and boutonnieres designed by John Hosek, AIFD, CAFA, CF, PFCI.



CF Tip

From pages 143-146 in the CF Manual: Glue is Critical

Cold glue is the right choice for designers. It doesn't damage flowers and foliage. Plus, it forms a waterproof, protective seal over wounds when flowers and foliage are cut and holds when arrangements are refrigerated. Remember: Leaf shine should not be used on foliage prior to gluing because it prevents the glue from adhering.

CF News

The next CF testing date is June 7, 2015 at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

CF Flower of the Month Mini Cymbidium Orchid

Available year around in a variety of colors. These unique flowers last from seven to 14 days and are ideal for corsage work.



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Michigan Unit Wins Award

Members of the Michigan Teleflora Unit pose with their National Achievement Award. From left: President Debbie Custer, Ed Smith, Past President Waneita Bovan, CF, Glen Powell, Libbie Deering, CF, Dave Pinchock, CF, Jeanette Ballien and Mike Anderson. The award is based on running a successful Make Someone Smile program, presenting design programs, staying within budget, participating in the scholarship program, communication with the home office and turning in paperwork on time. Not pictured Gregg Custer and Shelley Adair. ✨



MFA Professional Education Center

Introduction to Design

Member \$900 • Non-Member \$1000

12 WEEKS OF CLASS

Wednesday Evenings, April 29, 2015 - July 22, 2015

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Tim Latimer, CF

This comprehensive course will introduce beginning students to the exciting field of floral design. Focus will be placed on the application of the principles and elements of design, proper mechanics of construction, care and handling of fresh materials and use of color. This class will be a great first step for those desiring to become a Certified Florist. Time will be divided between lecture and hands-on design. All materials are included in your course fee and you will have a completed floral design to take home each week. Topics include: vased arrangements, symmetrical triangles, asymmetrical triangles, horizontal centerpieces, round designs, hand-tied bouquets, corsages, and boutonnieres. The class will meet for 12 weeks beginning April 29 except the week of May 6 for Mother's Day. There will be 36 hours of classroom instruction. Since this is a personal enrichment course there will be no exams. Limited course enrollment of 12 will ensure that each student receives personal attention.

Intermediate Floral Design

Member \$900 • Non-Member \$1000

12 WEEKS OF CLASS

Thursday Evenings, April 30, 2015 - July 23, 2015

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Tim Latimer, CF

This course builds upon the foundation of the basic design course. The focus will be on the information presented in the Certified Florist (CF) Manual with the goal of preparing students to take the CF examination. (Students who do not wish to take the CF exam will still be welcome.) The CF manual is the text for

this course. You may purchase this manual at: www.michiganfloral.org or call (517) 575-0110. This manual is recommended but not required. All other materials will be included in the registration fee. Time will be divided between lecture and hands-on design. A sample test will be given on each topic. Lecture topics include: care and handling of flowers and plants, product identification, customer relations/sales, delivery, marketing, accounting, display, intermediate floral design. Design topics include: vased arrangements, bridal bouquets, corsages, boutonnieres and sympathy. Designs will incorporate the contemporary techniques of grouping, layering, basing, framing, and many more. Each week you will take home your designs. The class will meet for 12 weeks beginning April 30 except the week of May 7 for Mother's Day. There will be 36 hours of classroom instruction. Since this is a personal enrichment course there will be no graded exams. Limited enrollment of 12 will ensure that each student receives personal attention.

Steps to Certification

Member \$149 • Non-Member \$199

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2015

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Instructor: Cindy S. Ching, AIFD, CF

Lunch Included

Cindy will guide those who plan on becoming a Certified Florist. This session will cover do's and don'ts, methods and mechanics, insight and answers. This is a hands-on experience. Tips on how to prepare for both the written and design portions of the test will be given. Students will spend part of the day reviewing the written test and then work in the design room learning what is needed to pass the exam, using all the new CF written and hands-on sections! Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of what it takes to pass the prestigious national CF exam. Class will run from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with a half hour break for lunch, which is included in the registration fee. **Includes all flowers/supplies. Bring your own tools – scissors, wire cutter, needle-nose pliers, florist knife and bunch cutter.**

Visit www.michiganfloral.org or call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110 for more information and to register!

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INMEMORIAM

KATHERINE "KAY" OSWALT has died at the age of 89. She and her late husband Neil owned Oswalt, Inc. Wholesale Florist, Detroit, MI. Her son Paul now runs the business. She is also survived by sons David (Mary), Gary (Norma) and

Terry, daughter Linda, sister Janet Kelly, seven grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

IGUR TOMAS ORLANDO, age 70, has died. For 50 years he owned and operated Sigur's Flowers in Taylor and Warren, Michigan.

He is survived by his life companion Roberta Boileau, daughter Mary Paschal, sister Mariann (Nicholas) Zander, nephews James (Jenna) Zander, and Nicholas Zander II, three grandchildren and a great granddaughter. ✨

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FYI

Watch for highlights of MFA's 2015 Great Lakes Floral Expo and the 2015 WUMFA Annual Convention in the next issue of *The Professional Florist!*



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HELP WANTED

Territory Sales Representative (Floral Division): Lion Ribbon, a division of Berwick Offray LLC, is one of the largest manufacturers and importers of ribbon in North America and we are looking for a qualified, customer-centric Sales Representative to cover our Wisconsin/Iowa/Illinois territory! This commission based job opportunity puts you in the driver's seat! As a Territory Sales Representative you will be provided an established set of accounts yet there are still plenty of untapped opportunities within your reach among the independent gift, craft, garden, and floral retail markets. This is a full time position with benefits. All Sales Representatives are reimbursed for automobile usage and associated selling expenses. Our Reps are also provided with a company-owned laptop, printer and a fixed mobile phone reimbursement. Apply online at <https://cssindustries-openhire.silkroad.com/epostings/> or email molly.brown@cssindustries.com for more details.

Wholesale Job Opportunities:

Nordlie, Inc., Michigan's largest wholesaler, has excellent opportunities for high energy staff in numerous capacities. Inside sales, route sales, designing, or merchandising – stop by our Warren, Flint, or Grandville stores. Full benefit program. Contact any one of our store managers: Tom Figueroa, AIFD, CF, Warren, 586-755-4200. Chris McGahey, Flint,

810-767-8883. Leslie Walton / Deb Durrant, Grandville, 616-534-6883.

Full Time Floral Designer Wanted:

Looking for an experienced floral designer. This person will be a fun, creative, self-starter who loves to work with customers and associates and is located in Southwest Michigan. Competitive compensation and benefits package offered. For more information please send resume to PO Box 67, Haslett, MI 48840.

Customer Service Manager:

Seasonal Part-Time Work: Fair Field Flowers, a cut flower marketing group located in Madison, WI, is looking to hire a Customer Service Manager for the 2015 season. Applicant must have working knowledge of local cut flower industry; excellent communication skills including email, website, and telephone. Season runs May through October, 10-20 hours per week, hourly wage \$11-15 per hour depending on knowledge and skill level. Applicants send resume and inquiries to info@fairfieldflowers.biz enter "FFF CSM" in subject line.

Sales/Driver: Seasonal Part Time

Work: Fair Field Flowers, a cut flower marketing group located in Madison, WI, is looking to hire someone to drive the company's vehicle during the 2015 season. Applicant must have excellent customer service skills, valid driver's license, working sales knowledge of local cut flowers, computer ease, and ability to lift 40 lbs. Season runs May through

October; 3-4 days per week, 150-200 round trip miles per run; hourly wage \$11-15 per hour depending on knowledge and skill level. Applicants send resume and inquiries to info@fairfieldflowers.biz enter "FFF Sales/Driver" in subject line.

FOR SALE

For Sale: Walk-in Cooler, 12' x 5' 9", with condensing unit and Evaporator, 4 yrs old. \$3000 OBO. Also 5 Door Display cooler, 13' x 3', with condensing unit and Evaporator, 4 yrs old, \$5000 OBO. Call Mark at 989-828-5100 or email fourseasonsfloral.shepherd@email.com.

SEEKING DONATIONS

MFA Scholarship Committee Seeks Donations for the 2015 Raffle: Help fund the MFA Scholarship program with a donation to the Silent Auction. All kinds of items are needed. Electronics, tools, sporting equipment, as well as any floral related products. For more information on how to donate call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110 or go to www.michiganfloral.org/mfa_scholarship.html and download a Silent Auction donation form (PDF file).

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The Professional Florist (ISSN 2150-8658, USPS 008593) is the official membership publication of the Michigan Floral Association, 1152 Haslett Road, Haslett, MI 48840. All membership dues include a \$50 subscription fee. Non-member subscriptions are available at the same rate for selected research, publication and related personnel. *The Professional Florist* is published bi-monthly for members of Michigan Floral Association.

Periodicals postage paid at Haslett, Michigan and other additional offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Professional Florist*, P.O. Box 67, Haslett, MI 48840. Phone: (517) 575-0110. FAX: (517) 575-0115.

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