

Volume V 2015

the professional florist

**Promoting
Those 'Floral'
Holidays**

**A 'Journey'
Through
the AIFD
Symposium**

**Learning
the Art of
Floral Jewelry**

**Flowers: They're
Colorlicious!**

**Preventing a
Valentine's Day
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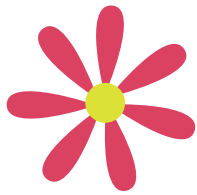


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LEADERSHIPREPORT

MFA... Your Silent Partner for 96 Years!

BY ROD CRITTENDEN, MFA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



Over the years our products and services have changed but one thing has remained consistent, our one hundred percent commitment to helping florists be the best they can be. Our mission statement is simple, yet specific: to provide education and professional partnerships, which help position Michigan Floral Association members at the forefront of the floral industry.

The MFA is committed to bringing programs and partnerships to our industry, each designed with one thing in mind, to meet the mission statement.

Education opportunities are offered and provided in a variety of ways. The 2016 Great Lakes Floral Expo "Together We Bloom" has a new floor plan and the schedule will feature seven hands-on classes, seven business sessions and five main stage design shows.

The Professional Education Center, located at MFA headquarters in Haslett, offers introductory, intermediate, and steps to certification floral design classes year-round, as well as regional hands-on workshops in partnership with our local wholesale members.

The MFA sponsors and administers the Certified Florist (CF) program, a nationally recognized, professional brand for individuals who want to be the best they can be. Each year, MFA also awards scholarships to help with the cost of attending these educational programs. Over \$2,000 was awarded in 2014 with plans to award over \$6,000 in 2015. Every 60 days *The Professional Florist* magazine provides readers with timely articles on weddings, sympathy ideas, special events, design tips and more.

MFA members have access to professional partnerships saving them money and helping them to be more profitable year after year. Our self-insured worker's comp program continues to perform at AAA+ levels returning an average of 45 percent of the member's annual premium.

We also have great savings on business and personal lines through Auto Owners. Members enjoy a quality money saving credit card processing program, savings on gas and vehicle maintenance, and collection services.

New for 2015 and beyond is the "Find A Florist" page at www.michiganfloral.org. This new interactive map powered by Google automatically places each member's company in the Google database increasing your SEO with Google. The page receives

over 2,000 consumer hits per month. MFA is driving orders to member's businesses 24/7/365.

The Association works diligently year-round to promote consumer awareness. Press releases sent out to the media prior to the major holidays answer the questions: "Why should I buy flowers from a professional florist?" and "How do I maximize my dollars spent?" These releases have been effective in 2015, yielding live radio interviews on local and statewide radio programs, including the one and only Paul W. Smith, WJR, Detroit, and Michael Patrick Shiels, The Big Show, Lansing, syndicated statewide.

MFA is your industry voice in Lansing and Washington DC. I am proud to serve as the president of The Capitol Club for 2015/2016. The Capitol Club is an association of the 50 top chief executive officers of the capital area's most well recognized and established associations representing business and professional communities. Our club meets the first and third Monday of each month during the legislative session, our speakers are elected or appointed officials who update us on current issues.

The group is committed to excellence in organizational management and to the advancement of legislative advocacy for our respective associations to enhance the great state of Michigan. On the national level I travel to Washington DC each March and attend SAF Congressional Action Days.

During our day on Capitol Hill, MFA members and I meet one on one with our elected officials and discuss the issues. This past March we addressed immigration reform for agriculture, ACA treatment of "seasonal" employment, and ACA full-time definition. We also informed our leaders of the following facts about the Michigan floral industry which many had no idea about. Number of retail florists 526; Number of employees 2,487; Total sales \$205.15 million; Number of wholesale florists 15; Number of floriculture farms 1,332; number of employees 24,908; Total sales \$439.22 million.

I hope you'll agree when I say that the MFA is working hard year-round to accomplish our mission statement. In the coming weeks you'll be receiving your 2016 MFA annual membership billing in the mail. I would like to say thank you to all who supported our efforts this past year and I would ask for your continued support by renewing your membership for 2016. Your annual membership, when pooled together with others, is making a difference, ensuring we are able to meet our mission of providing education and professional partnerships which help to position Michigan Floral Association members at the forefront of the floral industry.

Our email and phone is always open for ideas and suggestions on things we could do to help your business grow or if you just want to call to say hi, we'd love to hear from you. rod@michiganfloral.org, (517) 575-0110.

Thank you for your continued support! ✿

Attention! Potential Exhibitors

Reserve Prime Space Now for the 2016 Great Lakes Floral Expo



2015 Great Lakes Floral Expo Facts

Total 2015 registration: 403
 285 buyers/designers/employees representing 124 businesses
 72 representatives from 26 exhibiting companies
 46 students from 9 different schools

New For 2016

New Floor Plan

Saturday, March 5, 2016
 Show Hours: 10:00 am - 6:45 pm
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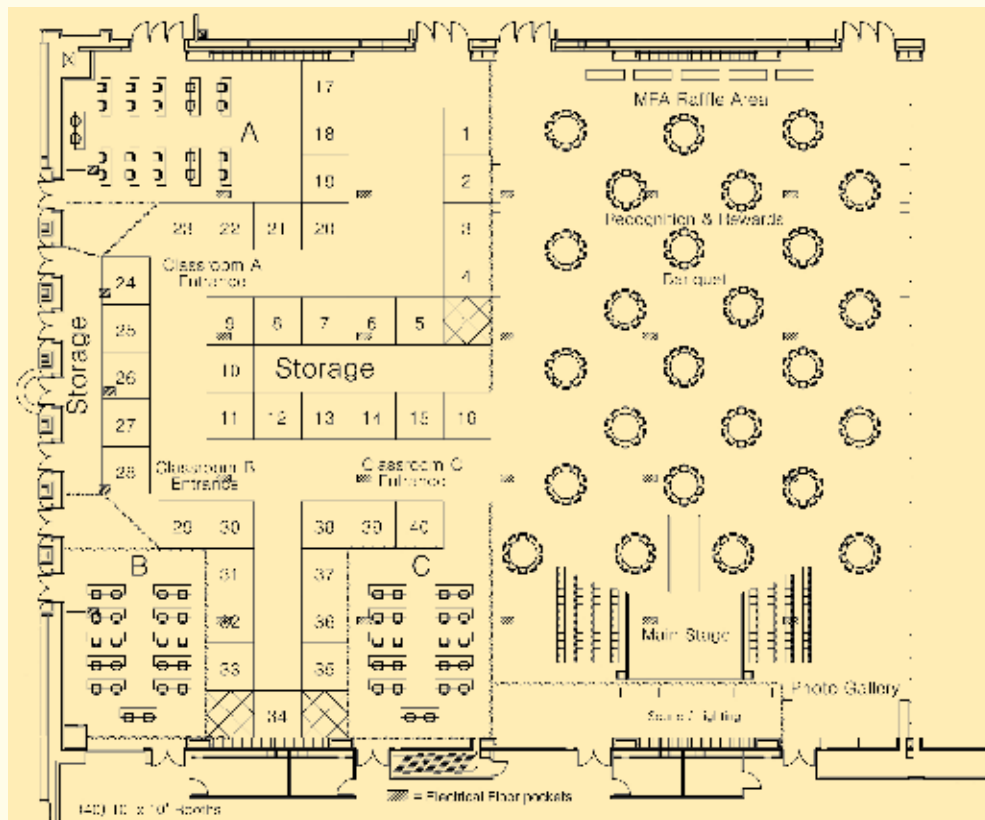
Banquet Cocktail Party on the Trade Show Floor 5:00 pm - 6:45 pm Saturday

Sunday, March 6, 2016
 Show Hours: 11:00 am - 2:30 pm
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"The Great Lakes Floral Expo is the place you want to be seen! Over the years, it has allowed me to personally meet with many existing and potential clients. Plus, the upbeat and professional convention hall provides an excellent setting for my company to showcase our products. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to exhibit at the GLFE!"
—Dawn Feldpausch, Regency Group



I have been attending MFA conventions for 32 years and have always picked up at least one new idea every year, even after all these years. I enjoy chatting with the exhibitors and keeping up with them on current and future trends in the industry. I always make sure to take advantage of the exhibitors' specials.
—Stephen Welch, President, CEO, Bentley Florist, Inc

FLORALHOLIDAYS

Promoting Those 'Floral' Holidays

BY SADIE QUAGLIOTTO,
BLUMZ...BY JR DESIGNS,
DETROIT/FERNDAL, MICHIGAN



Most U.S. employers recognize at least five national holidays a year including the Fourth of July, Christmas, Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving. But, in the floral industry, we have many more "floral" holidays. These are special days of the year when people are more likely to stop in or give us a call to pick up or send flowers to someone special.

The spring/summer floral holidays include huge sale days like Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, and Administrative Professionals Day. It also includes some smaller floral holidays like Memorial Day, Easter, Fourth of July, and Passover. It can be easier to promote the bigger holidays and a little more difficult to market the smaller ones, but anyone who is willing to put in the time and effort can make these holidays more profitable for their business.

The most important thing is make people aware of the upcoming holidays. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are a great way to keep your customers aware of the upcoming events, holidays and sales.

It is important to collect emails and get people added to your network so that you can keep florals on their mind especially when they need to celebrate a holiday or special event. We run a lot of contests on our website to keep people involved and to get more followers. The more people that see your message the better.

Be creative and smart about what you post and when you post it. If you are doing it right, your following will grow and so will your potential customer base. This June, we gave away a dozen roses every day of the month in celebration of National Rose Month. By doing so, we gained a lot of new followers and saw an increase in sales from last year.

We also do a lot of DIY marketing at Blumz. If we find out there is a local event going on that needs florals we might team up with the creators to sponsor the event and feature our flowers.



FLORALHOLIDAYS

Always use the freshest, longest lasting flowers when making that donation. Market research repeatedly shows consumers rate long life at the top of their list in reference to fresh floral products. This is a great way to get your name out into the community while showing off what you can do in the design room.

When you are showing off your work make sure you are putting your best foot forward, go big and show them the full potential of what your shop and designers can do. We try to make sure to have a Blumz ribbon featured on each display so everyone knows who made the event look so pretty. This is a great way to attract potential clients while giving back to your community.

Sometimes we step it up, get out and make a scene to get some attention. This year we had a person in a daisy costume dance in the heart of Campus Martius in downtown Detroit to celebrate the first day of Spring. The "Daisy" invited people to visit our store to get a free gerbera. People really enjoyed taking pictures and a lot of new people visited the store. It went so well that we had a Easter bunny dance in the park for Easter. We have also had a "Rose" dance in front of our Ferndale location to help raise awareness for National Rose Month.

Getting potential customers to know that you are there is half the battle, getting them into the store is the other half. We run all sorts of specials throughout the year to get people to come in and say hello. We have invited pet owners to come into the store with their puppies to get a free rose, and we have given discounts if people show us that they rode their bike to the store.

It is important to find creative ways to get people to come in and see what you have. Blumz does a lot more than make arrangements and deliver flowers, and once people know that, they are more likely to stop in when they need a small gift, or are planning a big event.

Getting your name and the quality of your work out there for people to see is the most important step in growing and maintaining your business. There are lots of ways to do that, these are just a few that have worked for us and will likely work for you. Do not be afraid to try new things to get people in the store, once you have them there you are much more likely to make a sale! ✿



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AIFDNEWS

A 'Journey' Through the AIFD Symposium

BY LAURA L. PARKER, AIFD, CF, CFD, FRESH START FLORAL CONSULTING LLC, HOLLY, MI



Celebrating fifty years of education, inspiration, and fellowship, the American Institute of Floral Designers gathered for their National Symposium in Denver, Colorado. The 2015 theme "Journey" was exhibited in numerous ways as the

Institute continued its long standing tradition of dedication to the future of floral industry.

Hundreds of volunteers, guest designers, and committee members arrived several days early to prepare and look toward the future. Over 125 floral designers from around the world participated in the Professional Floral Design Evaluation (PFDE) in hopes of attaining AIFD accreditation or CFD certification. Sixty-nine floral designers were inducted as AIFD Accredited Designers. Michigan inductees included Doug Bates AIFD, CF, CFD, of Vogt's Flowers in Sturgis, and Laura Daluga, AIFD, CFD, from the Department of Floristry in Ann Arbor. Wisconsin's Toni Piccolo, AIFD, CFD, *gia bella flowers & gifts*, Burlington, was also an inductee.

As attendees began to arrive, the fun really started. Nearly 900 attendees began connecting with old friends, building new relationships, and sharing ideas about design, business, and the challenges and blessings of life in the floral industry. Everyone came to be renewed and inspired.

The Partner's Expo was a huge success with many industry suppliers, and business partners sharing their newest products. A new element to the Expo was a live demonstration stage presented by Fitz Designs featuring a number of AIFD members.

The programs presented this year were an inspiring combination of practical and creative education, and dynamic inspirational presentations that stretched the imaginations of attendees. Presenters included some of the world's most amazing floral educators. The programs kicked off with Pete Samek, AIFD, CFD, presenting "*Looking at Principles and Elements of Design*" bringing his straightforward creative approach to the core of what we do.

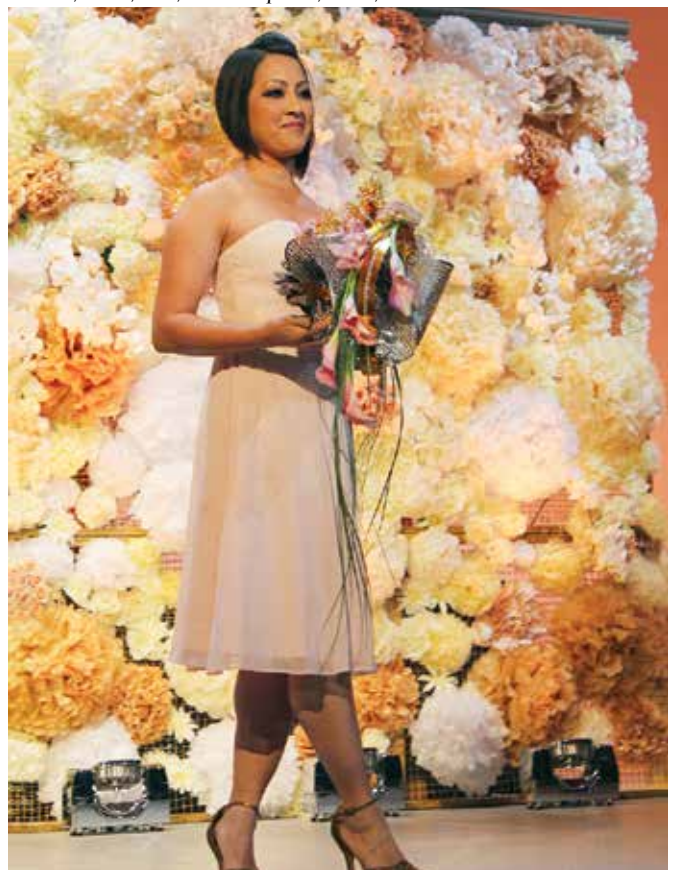
Ann Jordan, AAF, AIFD, CFD, joined by Michigan's own Scott Awad, AIFD, CF, CFD, as well as by George Mitchell, AIFD, CFD; Bob Gordon, AIFD, CFD; Tina Cocker, AIFD, CFD, PFCI, and Brooke Raulerson, AIFD, CFD, presented "*Reflections: AIFD's Five Decades of Design Excellence*" a retrospective of design trends from 1965 through today.

Rocio Silva, AIFD, CFD, and Jose Luis Silva, AIFD, CFD, presented "*Besame Mucho - Kiss Me A Lot*" bringing their creative interpretation of Mexican culture to the stage. Lesley Bolden, AIFD, CFD, and Anthony Swick, AIFD, CFD, presented "*Retail Therapy - Everyday*



Justin DeGonia, AIFD, CFD, created this arrangement for the Inspired by the Material design segment.

Journey: Down the Wedding Aisle featured bouquets by Katie McCormick-Kharrat, AIFD, CFD, and Philip Rice, AIFD, CFD.





Japanese designer Yoshimi Nakayama, with interpretation by Kiko Zimmerman, delighted the audience with his program entitled *Sudachi* from the Japanese "Su" to nest, and "dachi" to fly.

Designs" leading the audience through an exploration of ways to examine and reinvent everyday arrangements.

The next day, Jenny Thomasson, AIFD, CFD, took the road less traveled with her creative and unique approach to plants as a design base in her program "*Plants: The Road Less Traveled*". One of the highlights of the symposium was the program by John Haines, AIFD, CFD, and Gretchen Sell, Design Master color tool, inc., entitled "*Color*" where they shared a diverse and inspiring collection of designs that beautifully expressed the impact and relationship of color in our work.

Johan Huisman of the Netherlands presented daily life in a Dutch flower shop in his program "*Destination Holland: A Day With Johan In The Flower Shop*". The day wrapped up with a sympathy design program by Susan Ayala, AIFD, CFD, PFCL, called "*Legacy... A Sympathy Tribute to Designers*" in which she created designs in memory of well-known floral designers.

The final day began with "*Inspired by the Materials*" a collaborative program coordinated by Lisa Weddell, AIFD, CFD, along with Justin DeGonia, AIFD, CFD; Ken Senter, AIFD, CFD; Brenda Veasman, AIFD, CFD. It was a day filled with inspiration and variety as Carol Farid Gordy, AIFD, CFD, shared her beautiful permanent botanical designs in the program "*A Beautiful Journey in Flowers*".

Attendees were touched and inspired by the wedding program presented by Katie McCormick-Kharrat, AIFD, CFD; and Philip Rice, AIFD, CFD, that took the audience on a trip through the wedding process with the couple and their florists from initial consultation all the way through the ceremony and reception.

The final program of the week was presented by Japanese designer Yoshimi Nakayama, with interpretation by Kiko Zimmerman. He shared his stunning and expertly crafted designs along with his philosophy that our design and growth journey does not end. The program entitled "*Sudachi*" is from the Japanese "Su" to nest, and "dachi" to fly. The perfect ending to this week of creative inspiration and education as attendees left to fly home to their nests and use what they learned. It was a great "Journey"!

The 2016 AIFD Symposium, "Inspiration" will be held July 3-7, in Orange County, California. ✨

Mark Anderson of FloristWare put in the winning bid for a complementary registration to AIFD in an online MFA auction. Kae Nilsson, Floral Consultants, won the bid in the WUMFA online auction. MFA and WUMFA would like to thank AIFD for providing the free registration.



Plants: The Road Less Traveled was presented by Jenny Thomasson, AIFD, CFD.



Susan Ayala, AIFD, CFD, PFCL, was on stage with the sympathy tributes show.



Michigan's Scott Awad, AIFD, CF, CFD, described a wedding reception arrangement in the *Reflections: AIFD's Five Decades of Design Excellence*.

NEVILLEONTHELEVEL

Looking to the Future

BY NEVILLE MACKAY, CAFA, PFCI, WFC



The December holidays are done and dusted; well all but the ever present flashes of glitter that are in and on everything, no matter how hard you try to remove it, and those odd little pieces of dry cedar that “arrive” on a shelf or basket until about August. I hope you all made it through not too bitter or damaged.

January is a crap time for many of us as it’s usually a) bad weather b) bad sales or c) a combo of both. Once we drag ourselves through this “shake your head and get ready for a full year ahead” all will be better! Hahahaha!

It is a great time to not only put your crap, I mean precious merchandise that was far too good to be sold at a deep discount, away for next season’s offerings, but time to regroup, plan for what’s to come, maybe go on a safari to a gift show, or reconsider therapy.

The Winter and early Spring months can be a drain on business, so think of ways to draw customers in, keep or get their attention and make them want to spend their pennies in your shop. At our shop we offer classes in the evenings during slower periods and that really boosts moral and cash flow as we not only charge for the instruction, but offer a discount on purchases, do a little demo as a bonus and have refreshments for everyone...and who doesn’t love a tasty snack?

There are many ways to boost your profile, so get going and do so. If you can participate in a wedding show, go ahead. Many of us don’t like the rush of so many brides all at once, so you can also think of doing a series of short “lunchtime” demos, showing new styles or techniques, whether it’s wedding themed or not. Put the info on all the social media sites and watch the results.

Keep window and shop displays current. I travel a bit and was in a city last year (can’t say where but it was in the USA) on March 16. I remember this because my birthday is in March. I went into a shop and lo and behold, the place had FIVE large poinsettias on display. When I asked the lady what they were (I played dumb, which is surprisingly easy for me!) she gleefully said they were poinsettias and if I were to get one I could keep it...blah blah. I stopped listening. Anyway, I left her with her plants. On another trip I saw Christmas wreaths on a wall in a shop in April. I turned and left. That is worse, almost, than having near dead plants in the window as you are trying to “bring them back”. We ain’t healers!

Anyway, I got off topic so let me think what I was going to tell you. Oh, right, displays. Have fun with your displays and make people remember your shop because of them. We are filled with creativity and this is a great opportunity for us to show others what we are capable of.

If you’re in a high traffic area, do a fresh piece in your window

now and then. I think of one shop in San Francisco I always take the time to go see because of their window display of fresh flowers. You may want to partner with another business for added props and display area. We are working with our neighbor, Lily’s Lingerie on displays and promotions...think of the twists with “Lily’s Lingerie” and “My Mother’s Bloomers”, eh.

I put a huge photo of David and I in our window at Valentine’s Day one year, along with a love note I wrote to him. For Mother’s Day we get photos of all our Mums and put them in the displays to celebrate our mothers. These displays, of course, need to be photographed and posted everywhere.

We are so fortunate this year in that we have moved to our new location, (5486 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia) and before we packed our bags for the move, we got rid of a lot of, well, garbage. It is amazing what we accumulate and keep, thinking that oh, someday, someday. I have pants at home I’ve kept for years, thinking I will once again squeeze into them; you know what I mean.

I go to many shops and do little demonstrations and mini-classes which is both fun and so rewarding and sometimes get to have a little tour about. It shocks me sometimes what I see hanging about in a stockroom that really should be buried with the sins of the past or in some museum somewhere. Of course, I never say anything though, as I am far too reserved...not.

Look, it was a lot of work to move, so think about it before you do. This is our third location in 23 years and believe me, this is my last; I’ve got to get up and go left. From having to find the perfect place, selling off the older merchandise, and buying new goodies, to getting everything changed to our new address, there are challenges. I know I have forgotten some address changes, but clearly Visa still found us.

When we began the process, we started with one drawer, then another one, then the storage room and before we knew it, we were in a fight, I mean it was getting done. Now, although I am all for just walking away and leaving everything behind to start anew, you may want to look at picking a drawer, box, bin or area of storage once a week if you can bear it and giving it a good going through. It feels great and you’ll have room for even more treasures to save.

Darling floral friends, we are all family, and as part of your family, I wish you the best of the very best this world has to offer. Work with your community, celebrate other’s successes and offer help to those in need. We are a strong, creative and wonderful group of people and I am proud to have you as my family. Now, go be fabulous and make a difference to someone’s life. ✿

Neville MacKay, CAFA, PFCI, WFC, lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. He is on the Smithers Oasis (North America) design and education team, speaks and designs internationally, appears regularly on TV and radio, and hosts tours to the UK. Neville has designed for many heads of state and celebrities. He opened his floral shop, My Mother’s Bloomers, in 1992.

Marketing: Lifestyle Versus Trend

BY RENE VAN REMS, AIFD

We are all products of our environment. Aware or not, where we live, our habits, culture and possessions form the backbone of the lifestyle we live. Our lifestyle is a map of preferences that we use every day in making purchasing decisions. Lifestyle is a strong marketable demographic. It is everywhere. Lifestyle is decided in many ways and is very personal especially in today's market.

A trend is a general direction in which something is developing or changing. It is something new or reinvented, a tendency, movement, drift, swing, shift, course, current direction or progression in fashion, home decor and style.

In retail, lifestyle as well as trends both need to be considered as part of any successful marketing campaign. Strictly



from a creative perspective, a trend applies to the creative element of the purchase such as color, size, form, texture, etc.

These elements change often in a capitalistic and materialistic purchasing environment. The "latest", "newest", "hottest" styles come to mind. With an overwhelming array of choices, the end user in the retail environment can pick, choose, and even customize their purchase at every turn. The Nike website comes to mind.

Fads, trends, and classics come and go. Style is omnipresent and simply morphs. Samples of fads (a one to three year run), are unicorns, bumper stickers, beanie babies, macramé, pet rocks, etc.

Trends are three to five year runs. Often a good trend becomes a classic. It may have three lives. Samples are chartreuse

green, succulents, gluten free foods, funky named sodas, and sports drinks.

When we deal with classics, they have proven their value in the marketplace and customers are repeating purchases. Classics, because of their longer phase in the marketplace, are too many to mention, but sunflowers (and all things sunflowers), lucky bamboo, phalaenopsis orchids, bromeliads, and roses have proven timeless.

Style is constant, trends come and go. Trends are a portion of what creates style. Knowing the difference will make for a successful retailer.

For more information about style, consult "The Substance of Style", by Virginia Postrel, Harper Collins publishers. ✨

Rene van Rems, AIFD, is a world-renowned designer and commentator. He is the owner of Rene van Rems International, a designing, consulting, marketing, and publishing company in Vista, California. He conducts stage programs, workshops, and seminars for corporate events, trade shows, and the floral industry. This article was prepared for the Sunshine Bouquet Company and featured in their promotional materials at the IFE show in Chicago.

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WIREWORK

Learning the Art of Floral Jewelry

BY KATHERINE SEEBURGER, CF, THE PEONY AND THE PEACOCK, ANN ARBOR, MI

When the Michigan Floral Association announced a modern wire work class with internationally known designer Wendy Andrade, AIFD, NDSE, FBFA, at Nordlie, Inc. in Warren, Michigan, it seemed too good to be true.

However, through some fortuitous events, a few well-timed conversations (thank you Doug Bates, AIFD, CF, CFD, and Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, CAFA, CF, CFD, PFCI, and Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF, CFD) and the sponsorship of Smithers-Oasis, Nordlie, Inc. and the Michigan Floral Foundation, Wendy Andrade was indeed teaching “Floral Jewelry...Wearable Art”.

Her combination of technical mastery, gifted teaching ability, and wonderful sense of humor created an atmosphere of generous sharing and unbridled creativity. Encouraging us to learn the mechanics (It all really comes down to this, doesn't it?) and then making them our own fostered a significant learning experience.

She thoughtfully brought along a most capable assistant, Colleen Carr, AIFD, CF, CFD, to complement her instruction of 22 students, both during the demonstrations and the hands-on portions of the evening. While she walked through the steps to create her fresh floral jewelry, stressing the importance of the order of creation, her assistant walked the room showing the techniques to students who were farther from the front of the room.

The first step we learned was to create a spiral to finish the end of the wire; the spiral technique shows up later in the design work to add visual interest and a place to attach floral materials. Next came the lattice technique; this serves to handsomely bridge the openings for leaf or petal shapes or whatever shape your creative heart desires. This mechanic is practical, supportive, and creates visual interest.

Having had Wendy Andrade's book, *Fresh Floral Jewelry*, for about a year now, the lattice was something I have had trouble understanding. She spent incredibly helpful one-on-one time with me to show and explain the technique. Creating lattice now makes perfect sense to both my brain and my fingers. This alone was more than worth the cost of the class which was way less than expected thanks to the sponsors.

The next step was bullion lace coils. Oh what fun these are... and a great excuse to sit down and watch some television while you work. Eight to ten wraps of the bullion wire around a pencil, pull the coils off, make another set of coils, pull them off and repeat...until enough to cover the lattice. The bullion lace coils are a very versatile technique as they can also be used on their

own to create a massed design that reminds one of the most delicate lace.

These techniques and the ever-important reminder not to cross one's wires are the foundation for the designs in *Fresh Floral Jewelry: Creating Wearable Art with Wendy Andrade*. I highly recommend it. Learning and practicing these techniques leads to having one's own special approach to designing.

Always important to the floral designer is how to promote and price our designs, espe-



Necklace using spiral, lattice, and bullion lace coils technique by Katherine Seeburger.



Mega wire necklace using massed bullion lace coils by Wendy Andrade.



Wrist corsages using spiral, lattice and bullion lace coils technique by Katherine Seeburger.

cially those as intricate and distinctive as fresh floral jewelry. Promoting these designs to our clients is very important and should be done with care and enthusiasm...this means great lighting, complementing fabrics or surfaces to present the pieces on, and a prime location that allows clients to linger, marvel, and discuss how perfect the design would be for such-and-such event. The most desirable comment is: “How in the world did you do that? It's so beautiful!”

Displaying designs such as necklaces, bracelets, earrings, anklets, rings, vase adornments, napkin rings, etc. showcases how versatile we are as designers. Because these pieces as so unique, this is not work we can tell clients about, this is work

WIREWORK



Double triangle diamond wire necklace using spirals, lattice and bullion lace coils by Wendy Andrade.



Bridal bouquet of diamond wire using spiral, lattice, and bullion lace coils technique by Wendy Andrade.

we must show. It is also a great idea to wear these designs when meeting with clients and when we are out in public as our fabulous floral selves.

Pricing this remarkable floral jewelry is partially based on materials and labor but also should include perceived value. Custom floral jewelry makes our clients stand out as trendsetters, takes their events to the next level, and shows just how artistically we can support our clients' need to communicate

their individuality. Meeting this need allows us to use perceived value to inspire our pricing. Clients who appreciate this level of artistry will compensate us for it.

In just three hours of class time, we learned the design techniques needed to not just recreate the gorgeous designs in the book but to create our own designs that our clients will love. The class also underscored the advice given out by almost every florist I have ever talked with: Take all the classes possible as each instructor brings new ideas and different techniques and look out for opportunities to learn from designers who would not otherwise cross your path. In addition, look around and listen during class, fellow students have a lot to teach and share while they are learning.

Thank you to Wendy Andrade, Colleen Carr, the Nordlie, Inc. team who stayed late, and all the sponsors. An international instructor teaching less than an hour from my home was an amazing opportunity and experience. I look forward to her upcoming book on bridal bouquets... and hope she comes back to Michigan to teach again. ✻

Wendy Andrade's floral jewelry book is available at the MFA office. The 125 page, four color book is priced at \$32.00 plus postage if mailed. It can, however, be picked up at the office, 1152 Haslett Rd., Haslett, MI.

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NEW FOR 2015

Flowers: They're Colorlicious!

BY GRETCHEN SELL, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, DESIGN MASTER COLOR TOOL, INC., BOULDER, COLORADO

Mmmmmmm! Aren't those flowers colorlicious? What a delightful word! I think it sums up the delicious topic of color... rich, complex, energetic and emotionally satisfying. Sounds like a fine wine or chocolate, doesn't it? Well, we do crave color much as we do food!

Does any other topic engage our industry more? Growers, wholesalers, retailers, and designers annually anticipate the release of color trend forecasts. Floral chat rooms speculate what new hue will be Pantone's Color of the Year? From the ground up, color influences market directions. The development of new flower varieties is now more color driven. Popular wedding flowers and colors influence a wholesaler's stock. Retailers scout gift markets for color directions of new accessory products.

Every day we use color adjectives. We sell ruby red roses, porcelain blue hydrangea, fuchsia peonies, coral gerbera daisies, watermelon pink snaps. Customers bring us swatches. We match, accent and coordinate palettes everyday. Color vernacular is our norm. How many of your lay friends know what Chroma is? Daily, we artfully manipulate the visible spectrum to compose vibrant messages wrought in leaf and petal. We are immersed in color!

Surveys conclude consumers choose COLOR as the #1 determinate in making a floral purchase. Longevity of the flower and the particular variety came in second and third.

Color provides a first impression and influences your customer. What use to be 60 percent of their buying decision is now reportedly 85 percent!

So... do you really think you are in the flower business? Ready to reconsider?

Maybe, you are in the color business! Now is a great time to embrace your color knowledge and reveal to your customers the color expert you are. Utilizing color effectively brings added value to your business and offers a creative edge over competition.

Here are a few tips to refocus your color skills.

Paint a Picture

On the phone, painting a picture with descriptive color can upsell bunched blossoms or floral designs. To a customer's inquiry such as, "My wife likes pink, what can you send?" which response sounds prettier, grander and presents more value? "Oh, we can vase a pink bouquet of mixed flowers." or "May I suggest a monochrome-chic bouquet of select blossoms in blush, perfect pink, rose sorbet and raspberry?"

Study adjectives and pepper your descriptions with a few. It seasons the sale. Educate your sales staff to do the same. Start with scripted words for store specials to get them familiar with the enthusiasm colorful language brings to a sale.

Become an Interpreter

Color speaks without words, yet conveys a story. We're all familiar with that statement. But do you know what controls color language? Contrast. It's the most important principle of design affecting color. Control that energy and you control the language of your design.

The nuance of a color conversation can be controlled by any number of contrasts. As a primer, let's focus on just a few.

Value Opposition creates an energy read. You remember value, the lightness or darkness of a color. The closer in value your color choices are, the quieter the results, a softer-spoken tone. The greater the contrast, the more energy the relationship exhibits, creating a more vivid or vocal effect.

When focusing on a single color combination the wonder of monochromatic contrast is evident. Surrounding a pure color with tints, tones and shades of that color (aka, its color values) causes the pure color to lose brilliance, while the tints, tones and shades gain visual vitality. Even in a monochrome design you can control the subtleties of the conversation.

Thirdly, white adds contrast, as it tends to brighten the colors next to it. A solid blue sky may appear dark, but is brighter with a few fluffy, white clouds. In floral design, incorporating white with pastel hues is easy because the color values are closer together. However, adding white into a bouquet of deep, vibrant hues requires a little finesse to be visually pleasing. The contrast created is much sharper and needs to be tempered by grouping white blossoms together and ensuring that the white is either an accent or the dominant feature. Avoid a spotty, polka-dot effect which dilutes the color intensity.



With minimal variation of value between the pink and butter tints the colors in this bouquet are familiar and friendly to each other, their harmony sweet. But, interject the higher contrasts created with black and white and the conversation is punctuated to stay lively. As an element of the tablescape, the fuchsia table number contributes to the vitality of the contrasts.



*1. With the presence of white contrast provided by the elephant containers, the vibrancy in this dynamic tablescape is turned up.
2. Effectively add white to deep colored bouquets by grouping the white elements.*

COLOREDUCATION



The power of color to evoke energy is evident in this comparison. The galvanized bucket of daffodils is pretty, but the bucket colored in robin's egg blue arouses our excitement for spring's arrival.

As you gather flowers for open orders, practice your new language skills. Listen to the color conversation being created as you add or subtract color and its respective contrast to a collection. The interactions are amazing! Remember to include the container color as a part of the palette. An easy method for a confident color statement is to arrange blossoms of contrasting color in a colored container. Even if you are color intuitive, knowing the why behind color interactions is empowering.

Color Consult

Giftable designs are self-contained color studies, but when designing for weddings or special events, the surroundings give you opportunity to expand a color story. During the consultation, perhaps even before the discussion of color, have the customer describe the feeling the event is to portray. Color contrasts are key to communicating the emotion in event design too. And, knowing where the flowers will live helps develop the total experience.

In a wedding the first backdrop to consider is the bridal party. Photos will long tell the story of that special day, so be sure to translate the bride's desired expression. Many brides come armed with a swatch of the bridesmaid's dress and declare, 'I want my flowers to match.' Exact matches produce a very flat conversation.



1. The pale pink roses the flower girls hold blend into the matching background of their dresses. It's an unchanging intonation. The bride's brighter pink roses are more rhythmic against the pale pink.
2. The strong value contrast that the coral pink dresses provide enriches the pink tints of these bridesmaids' bouquets. This same bouquet would be a lovely option against pale pink.

Disarm that approach by showing the bride pictures illustrating the effect of tone on same tone. Or, gather blossoms in color collections that depict various emotional options.

Become familiar with the event venue. Are there dark areas where flowers are desired? Using white blossoms might seem to be the most visible. But consider that the bouquet will shrink in visible size due to the strong contrast created. Tints in light to medium color values will create a more expansive feeling and will be more vivid in dim lighting than their pure hues.

The background for the tablescapes is another major consideration developing the event emotion. Remember not all colors in a chosen palette have to be incorporated in flowers. Mix the color of vases, tablecloths, napkins, favors, table numbers, candles and flowers to express the palette. Integrating all the elements in coordinating color produce sophisticated embellishments.

Nuevo Colorist

Show your fashion and trend awareness by merchandising your store in HD color. Implement a technique straight from the runways for attention grabbing displays. Fashion designer Kate Spade first embraced color blocking by pairing one bold color to another to create well-executed color pops. While color blocking can be used in floral design too, it's über dynamic for window displays with focus on a simple subject. Integrate a simple geometric shape in bold graphic color of two or three hues as backdrop to the display focus.



A turquoise stripe spotlights this display with a vivid block of color. While this is a painted wall, the effect can be interpreted with a drop of fabric or foam board.

Color sells and the right color sells more. Trend colors garner attention whether consciously or not. Their fresh appeal draws on our emotions. Capitalize on that by merchandising current stock amongst backdrops of complementing trend colors. Create mini seasons with changing display palettes. The rotation generates excitement and influences return visits.

Continuing Education

Studying color is an active endeavor that will reward your ROI. It's an extensive topic, but don't be overwhelmed. Understanding color is an awareness of relationships. Observe the analogy and contrast to determine what connects color or what separates it. In design, the ultimate goal is juxtaposing the two in a harmonic manner to stimulate our mind and express our emotions. ✿

Design Master is delighted to share more color information with their brochure "As a designer". If interested in a free copy, email your request with a mailing address to info@dmcolor.com. Visit their website at www.dmcolor.com.



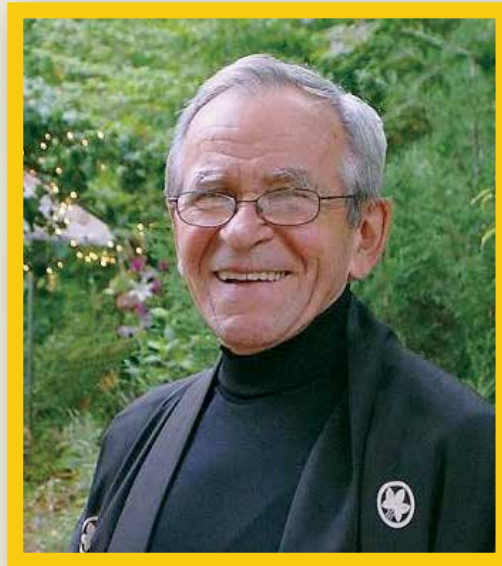
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The Michigan Floral Foundation supports the industry through various educational opportunities and community enrichment activities. It provides financial aid to those seeking to become a Certified Florist. Contributions are tax deductible. Donations can be made in honor of a birthday or anniversary or in memory of a loved one. To donate contact the MFA office (517) 575-0110 or visit www.michiganfloral.org and click on the MFF in the menu bar.

DESIGNERSPOTLIGHT

Spring Holidays – Spring Is in the Air!

BY ENRIKA KARALIUS, AIFD, CFD,
ROYAL PETAL, CRESTWOOD, IL
2015 MFA DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

All shades of green, spring pastel tones, and moss coated textures are harmonized in this simple, sophisticated dual centerpiece. The soaked floral foam in the Lakeside wood containers are filled with grouped green hydrangeas, "Green Arrow" spray roses, and other organic textures. Upright curly willow, apricot branches, delphinium and sarracenia provide a backdrop and fencelike foundation for the design which also includes sword fern, calcynia,

succulents, lotus pods, and lily grass. To create the ruffled effect with the galax leaves, each leaf is rolled into a cone shape and then the rolled leaves are inserted into the foam. This parallel system design style works well for all spring gifting occasions whether it's Easter, Mother's Day, or Administrative Professionals Week. ✿

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INDUSTRY INFO

Who Can Be Classified as an Independent Contractor

The U.S. Department of Labor has quickly followed its proposed rule to expand the number of workers eligible for overtime (see the June 12, 2015 edition of *SAF's Washington Week In Review*), with a new interpretation of who can be classified as an independent contractor.

On July 16 the DOL Wage & Hour Division Administrator issued "Administrator's Interpretation No. 2015-1" (AI) on the application of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for identification of workers who are misclassified as independent contractors.

The AI states DOL's unequivocal opinion that "most workers are employees." The new interpretation could cause significant challenges for business owners, leading to more private litigation as well as increased DOL investigations and enforcement actions.

Simply put, the AI will sharply limit many businesses' use of independent contractors, transforming these workers into W-2 employees covered by Social Security, Medicare, benefits, FMLA and other rights.

The AI states that DOL will rely on its view of a worker's "economic independence" in determining whether they are an employee rather than an independent contractor. It proposes to look primarily at whether the worker is truly in business for him or herself or is economically dependent on the employer for which he or she provides services.

The AI also stresses that the control factor, which courts have traditionally used as a key test, should not be given undue weight. It unambiguously states that the agreements or titles used by employers and independent contractors are wholly "irrelevant" to the determination.

DOL identified six factors it would use in its analysis of a worker's status:

1. The extent to which the work performed is an integral part of the employer's business. According to the AI, this factor is central to the analysis. If the work is integral to the business of the employer, it is more likely that the worker is economically dependent on the employer.

2. The worker's opportunity for profit or loss depending on his or her managerial skill. The AI flatly rejects the ability to control one's own hours as an indicator of such an opportunity, but looks instead to whether the worker exercises managerial skills which require the use of judgment or initiative to affect the opportunity for profit or loss.

3. The extent of relative investments of the employer and the worker. The AI describes the investment of a real independent contractor as one that furthers the independent contractor's capacity to expand or reduce its cost structure or extend the reach of the market for its business. It states that investing in tools and equipment does not necessarily indicate that the worker is an independent contractor where the tools and equipment are only needed to do the work.

4. Whether the work performed requires special skills and initiative. The AI seems to reject this factor outright, emphasizing instead that a worker's business skill, judgment and initiative will help determine if the worker is economically independent. Technical skills, in the view of the AI, are not indicative of any independence or business initiative.

5. The permanency of the relationship. The AI assumes that if an independent contractor wants more than one assignment from a company, then he or she must be rejecting independence. It describes this factor as a worker who typically works one project for an employer and does not necessarily work continuously or repeatedly for that employer.

6. The degree of control exercised or retained by the employer. According to the AI, the worker must control meaningful aspects of the work to view the worker as conducting his or her own business. If the employer has control, the worker is an employee. Moreover, even where there is no control, the FLSA covers workers who are economically dependent.

If workers who have been considered independent contractors are now classified as employees, many things change. These include compliance with the FLSA (record keeping, minimum wage and overtime), tax withholding, payroll taxes for Social Security/Medicare, unemployment compensation and workers' compensation. Others include inclusion in group health insurance plans and ACA issues, ERISA-covered retirement plans, eligibility for FMLA, leave and other benefits, calculation of leave entitlement, eligibility for meal and rest breaks, reimbursement for business expenses, immigration compliance, plus statutes such as Title VII, ADEA, the ADA, other anti-discrimination laws, and a host of state and local laws that traditionally do not cover independent contractors.

One significant issue that will require ongoing analysis is that, even if employers change their use of independent contractors, the risk of various liabilities from prior practices still remains.

With the AI, DOL has created a great deal of uncertainty. Business owners need to start looking at how they make decisions regarding classification of current non-employee workers.

Some of the factors that you should consider in assessing the independent contractor issue are:

- How you currently use independent contractors.
- How independent contractors manage their businesses and the extent to which an independent contractor is running a business.
- Whether you can defend your past independent contractor classifications.
- Whether you can defend your retention of these classifications after the AI was issued.
- The cost of converting independent contractors to employees versus the risk of keeping them classified as independent contractors.

An issue brief developed by the law firm of Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP can be found here [www.sheppardmullinrichter.com].

laboremploymentlawblog.com/2015/07/articles/independent-contractors/dol-says-most-independent-contractors-actually-employees/] and an article published by the Society of Resource Management (SHRM) can be found here [<http://www.shrm.org/legalissues/federalresources/pages/administrator-interpretation-independent-contractors.aspx>].

For business owners concerned that some in their workforce will now be deemed employees, the safest course of action is to work with legal counsel to determine the proper course of action.

SAF members can contact attorney Paula Calimafde (Kal-i-MAF-da) for a free 15-minute consultation on this and other small business legal matters. She can be reached at (301) 951-9325. Be sure to mention your SAF membership.

This article is by Shawn McBurney from the July 31 SAF Washington Week in Review.

AIFD Installs New Officers

Joyce Mason-Monheim, AIFD, CFD, PFCI, Designer Destination, Tucson, Arizona, was installed as president of the American Institute of Floral Designers during the organization's 2015 National Symposium held in Denver. She succeeds Tim Farrell, AAF, AIFD, CFD, PFCI, Farrell's Florist, Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania.

Installed as president-elect was Anthony Vigliotta, AIFD, CFD, of Anthon Design in Los Angeles. Kim Oldis, AIFD, CFD, Details... it's all about the flowers in LaConner, Washington, was elected to serve as vice president. Frank Feysa, AIFD, CFD, Garden Gate Inc., Aurora, Ohio, was named secretary and Tom Simmons, AIFD, CFD, of Three Bunch Palms Productions in Palm Springs, California, will continue as treasurer.

Leanne Kesler, AIFD, CFD, of the Floral Design Institute in Portland, Oregon, will serve as the membership chairperson and Lori Novak, AIFD, CFD, Archibald Florist, Rancho Cucamonga, California, will take on the role as AIFD 2016 symposium coordinator for "Inspiration", July 3-7, in Orange County, California. Tom Simmons will be the program coordinator.

Thomas C. Shaner continues as executive director and Kristen Phillips, CAE, IOM, as associate executive director. AIFD has also introduced Justine Harper, the new director of communications and marketing. She is taking over for Molly Baldwin-Abbott who is now the publications coordinator. AIFD is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland.

Two Michigan Florists Gain Judge Recognition

Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, CAFA, CF, CFD, PFCI, and Robbin Yelverton, AAF, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI, Blumz...by JR Designs, Detroit and Ferndale, Michigan, have been recognized as AIFD Certified Floral Evaluator/Judges. They can now evaluate at the Professional Floral Design Evaluation (PFDE) program if asked by the membership committee and can judge local, state, regional and national floral design competitions as a Certified Floral Evaluator/Judge.

Time to Start Planning for the Holidays

BY PATTY MALLOY, AIFD, CFD, WUMFA PRESIDENT



As summer winds down and we move our activities indoors it's time to start planning for the upcoming holidays.

Make plans for the entire fall and winter seasons, along with some longer range plans for the spring. You'll find some great articles in this issue of *The Professional Florist* to help get you thinking ahead especially for the spring holidays.

To help our member florists with design inspiration, WUMFA held a few workshops in August that hopefully many of you were able to take advantage of in a city near you. If there are any particular floral design subjects that you would like to see offered please let us know. We aim to offer the best and most trendy design experience we can to help keep you up to date.

Also be sure to mark your calendar for the WUMFA Annual Convention, April 1-3, 2016 in Green Bay. It will definitely be an event you will want to attend.

The WUMFA board constantly strives to find ways to bring value to its members. We have a great group of wholesalers and florists on the board who work together to bring you the best member benefits.

WUMFA is one of the strongest florist associations in the country. There's so many ways that it pays to be a member: scholarships, education opportunities, convention, fuel savings program, trade magazine, and wholesaler discounts just to name a few. WUMFA was at the Wisconsin State Fair in Milwaukee this summer with a display promoting Find-a-Florist on the website, another great benefit for our members. All this for under \$100 per year... what a value!

Share this with your floral friends and invite them to join WUMFA. We want to continue to build membership to keep the organization strong and vital in our industry.

I want to welcome our newest board member, Toni Piccolo, AIFD, CFD. She will fill a vacant term as director-at-large. It's wonderful to have her and all of our talented board members working together to make WUMFA a solid, appealing organization for everyone's benefit.

Keep "making smiles" with flowers every day. Have a great fall season and let us know what else WUMFA can do for you. ✨

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WUMFA

Preventing a Valentine's Day Meltdown

BY MELISSA MAAS, BANK OF MEMORIES & FLOWERS, MENOMONEE FALLS, WI



So many of us get to work and begin our bustling day. Before we know it, it is 5:00 o'clock and we haven't even begun to think

about what to do about Valentine's Day. As we head home, we reflect on our day: Orders were filled, the phone was answered and deliveries were made; we put out the fires.

Let's try something new, let's do a little fire prevention. First step is to schedule some time in your calendar to figure your Valentine's game plan. We all know our best time to think. Mine is late at night when the house is quiet and I have the computer all to myself. I set aside an hour or two just focusing on Valentine's Day. This means no checking email or Facebook, just me and my *Check Point* list. Lists, who doesn't love a list?! This list can be used from year to year or even holiday to holiday.

Some *Check Points* can take a little longer to plan than others. How many of us have had this happen, an employee yells out that she has used the last sheet of tissue paper on the 13th, or no one can find that fill-in driver's cell number on the 14th, right after he left the shop without the chocolates.

So, let's begin some prevention. Let's break down the *Check Point* list to get us thinking what we can get done ahead of time to make sure we do not have any meltdowns.

Fresh Flowers: Ordering your fresh ahead of time is the best way you can save time and money. Create a list of what you will need for the entire week. Negotiate prices with your wholesaler to get the best deal; be prepared to turn in your order by December to get the best prices. Have all your product come in on one day and schedule your team accordingly to process it. This



Set up attractive and colorful holiday displays.

will save you time the rest of the week by not having to stop every day to process.

Save this list. On February 15, I take some time and write notes on what we needed more of or flowers that we had an abundance of. Since the 14th is a floating holiday, consider the percentages each day of the week represents.

Plants: Once the wholesaler's price sheets are available, order the plants right

away to lock in the best price. Be sure to have your plants come in the week before Valentine's Week to give you plenty of time to pot up and bow each plant. This will give you the time to arrange the plants on the sales floor.

It helps to have price tags made a few weeks prior to save time. Plant up novelty containers with add-ons such as butterflies and nests for an added profit. Staff an extra



Profitable add-ons will add to your bottom line.

person to allow for smooth sailing the day you decide to get plants delivered.

Vases/Containers: These can be ordered and shipped in January. Pieces can properly be priced and displayed. In my shop, the team loves this time of the year; new product is coming in weekly and they are geared up for the holiday.

Inventory: Again in January, start in one corner of your design room and open every cabinet and drawer to find product that you will need. Answer this question, “Do I have enough to last me through the end February?” This will save you time and energy from having to order more rose strippers or knives when you realize you are short the week of Valentine’s Day.

Delivery Boxes: I can’t tell you what a hassle it is when you run short of delivery boxes. Delivery drivers do not have room in their vans for stacks of cardboard or the time to make special trips. Create a special spot in your shop for overflow and make sure everyone knows where it is.

Drivers: First week of February, call your regular drivers and seasonal drivers to confirm when you will need them. Make sure you communicate the extra days you will need them to drive. Have someone in your shop create a list of the drivers and their cell phone numbers and put it by each phone in the shop. Take a moment and check to see if you have enough maps, door hangers and clip boards. Pull these items early and set aside.

Employee Schedule: Map out the entire week for each team member to work. Predict

what days you will need people to stay late. Have some employees open the shop and others come in later in the day. This keeps the shop energized when the new shift arrives. Schedule each team member the maximum hours they can work for the week; do your best to stay on track.

Chocolate/Balloons/Stuffed Animals, aka add-ons: Chocolate is your number one add-on at Valentine’s Day. Create a nice display right by your register; they will

practically sell themselves. Order your add-ons weeks before the holiday to layer in your displays. This can get your team familiar with the products and prices so they are ready to add on.

Sales Floor: January is a great time to revamp those displays. Start with a fresh slate, sweep and mop the entire floor. Dust off each container and make sure everything is priced. Pull any miscellaneous containers and place directly in the design room; tell your designers to use these items first. This can really give the shop that mini face lift to get the holiday started on the right foot.

Signage: Walk around your shop as if you were a first-time customer. Do you have proper signs on the sales floor? Most customers do not feel comfortable picking up something to buy if they do not know the price. Create a sign in January telling your customers when Valentine’s Day is “Valentine’s Day is Sunday the 14th.” It will get them planning ahead. Put your shop hours up in the window, “Extended Hours this Week.” Just like when you walk into Target, large signs make it clear what everything costs.

Specialty Wire Service Products: If you belong to a wire service, take into consideration what fresh flowers you will need to fill the featured product. Order extra specific colors or flower types. Unpack the products so they are easily accessible and clearly priced. Double the cost of the container and add on an amount for shipping depending on where it is going. That way your team will not have to yell out “How much are these again?” or “Where is that Teleflora book with the prices listed?” Clear pricing saves time and money.

Employee Treats and Games: If you are like me, I am at the shop from sunup until sundown the week of Valentine’s Day. We do not have time to run out the week of Valentine’s to pick up cookies or pick up lunch. Plan ahead! Have an “Emergency” candy or treat box in the shop. Call the week ahead to have lunch brought in. Buy a few extra chocolate boxes to hand out for good work. Create a fun game for the week, such as, “whoever sells the most add-ons wins the giant heart chocolate box”. These simple gestures can lift spirits and the moral in the shop. ✿

Preparing for the holiday can be fun. As I tackle each check point I feel the load being lifted off my shoulders. I am not fighting the fire anymore. I am preventing it!

1. Fresh Flowers
2. Plants
3. Vases/Containers
4. Inventory
5. Delivery boxes
6. Drivers
7. Employees Schedule
8. Chocolates/Balloons/Stuffed Animals
9. Specialty Wire Service Product
10. Sales floor
11. Signage
12. Employee treats or games

WUMFA

Denise Gehrke Inducted into PFCI

Denise Gehrke, AIFD, PFCI, Waukesha Floral & Greenhouse, Waukesha, Wisconsin, has been inducted into the Professional Floral Communicators-International. The ceremony took place at the Society of American Florists convention at Amelia Island, Florida.



She has worked in the floral industry for more than two decades, presenting programs and workshops on a diverse range of topics. Her presentation expertise includes color, holidays, merchandising and displays, permanent botanicals, principles and elements of design, sympathy, trends, weddings and events, everyday and corporate work.

She joined Waukesha Floral & Greenhouse in 2003. Today, she is the company's creative design manager and fresh cut flower buyer. She has taught floral design classes for Milwaukee Public Schools, and was a teacher/curriculum writer for the Wisconsin Upper Michigan Florists Association's Center for Education.

The new inductee has held a number of leadership positions with WUMFA including board member and committee chairman. In 2012 she was the president of Teleflora's Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Education Unit when the unit was named Unit of the Year.

PFCI members are vetted for presentation, publication and leadership experience, and candidates must submit an audition DVD of a live presentation to demonstrate their communication skills. ✿

WUMFA Time at the State Fair



WUMFA promoted buying flowers from a professional local member florist at the 2015 Wisconsin State Fair. The flower cart in the Horticulture Building had a map showing the location of members and a QR code taking consumers directly to the "Find A Florist" page on www.wumfa.org. Over one million people attended the fair during the ten day event. Susan Wilke, AAF, PFCI, and Melissa Ball Maas put the cart together. Plants were supplied by Karthaus & Sons, Germantown, WI.

Marty Loppnow, AAF, Waukesha Floral & Greenhouses, Waukesha, WI, created the form for this postcard from Wisconsin. Fairgoers pinned pompoms and roses on the form to complete the postcard.



This year's Grand Champion Floral Challenge was won by Phil Meyer, AIFD, Albrecht's Sentry Floral, Milwaukee, WI. Pictured above are, left to right, commentator Susan Wilke, AAF, PFCI; Meyer; first runner-up Cheri Baumruk, Memorial Florists, Appleton, WI, and second runner-up Doug Jaeger, CF, Everlasting Flowers & Gifts, Wauwatosa, WI. Nancy DeSonia, DWF Wholesale Florists, Milwaukee, WI, co-commentated the challenge. WUMFA thanks Krueger Wholesale Florist, Rothschild, WI, for supplying the flowers and supplies for the contest and all the wholesalers for donating products for the leis and halos and postcard projects.



Eight Easy Steps to Boost Your Pinterest!



BY GAIL PABST



Pinterest, what a perfect social media platform for florists...always trending flowers and weddings. What more could you ask for?!? Not only is it a great place to showcase your work but also for finding what the upcoming trends are going to be.

Try These Eight Easy Steps

- 1. Make It Vertical and Good Quality** – Your photos should be of excellent quality on your website and on your Pinterest boards. No one wants to repin a fuzzy or low-quality photo. Also remember to make your photos more vertical than horizontal so you can see more of the photo on the Pinterest board; 735 X 1102 is the recommended size for Pinterest.
- 2. Pin Everyday** – Take a few moments during the day to pin a photo or two. Consistently pinning throughout the day generates more impressions, repins, and followers.
- 3. Ten Pins** – Make it a goal that each board has at least 6–10 pins on it. Boards with one or two pins just look ridiculous. If you don't have enough pins on a new board, keep it a secret board until you are ready to unveil it.
- 4. Use a Descriptive File Name** – When adding photos to your website, save the picture file with a descriptive name, searchable keywords and your website URL. This is the name the photo will automatically be given when someone pins it. You don't want it to be "bridephoto1". The majority of pinners just add the photo with the descriptive wording without editing.
- 5. Judged by the Boards** – Potential new followers will judge your Pinterest account by those first three to four rows of boards on your home page. So make them attractive and an accurate reflection of your business.

- 6. Rotate Your Boards to Reflect the Seasons or What You Most Want to Highlight** – Don't have a Christmas board up top in April, move your spring holiday boards to the top few rows. Also, it is important to rotate cover photos of each board as well to keep them fresh. Having a pin on more than one board is okay too if it fits in more than one category.
- 7. Add a Description to Each Board** – Don't start up a new board without giving it a description with searchable words and your website URL. Boards that just have pins and no description are losing out on a great way to be found. Remember to make the board name descriptive and searchable as well. "Cute" names might be fun but if they don't go with what's on the board or are not very searchable, you lose search ability and potential followers and repins.
- 8. Whose Pinning What** – Identifying which photos are being pinned from your site is pretty easy. Go to *Pinterest.com/Source/insert your webpage URL*; e.g., for Michigan Floral, we would put in *pinterest.com/source/michiganfloral.org*. You can do this with any website, even your competitors. Once on this page, you can quickly see all the content that people are pinning from your site. You can also find out exactly who pinned your content and which of their boards they pinned it to. You can click on their link to their boards to see what other pins they pinned. It's always a good idea to follow their boards. This is an easy window into how pinners are interacting with your content and which designs they like allowing you to strategically create Pinterest content that will resonate with wider audiences. ✿

Gail Pabst is a marketing and social media quality advisor. Gail has been part of the flower industry for over twenty years and is passionate on coaching clients on how to manage their social media channels and marketing programs themselves. She specializes in marketing strategy, social media, email marketing and content writing, saving customers time and money. Gail can be contacted at gailpabst@gmail.com.

IN MEMORIAM

PAUL L. KRAATZ, 73, has died. He was an owner and partner at Kraatz Flower Shop in Mount Clemens, MI. The shop was founded in 1947. He was a past president of the Michigan Floral Association and past chairman of the MHI Fund, active in his church and past president of the Mount Clemens Kiwanis Club. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Lorraine;

sons, Andrew, Darrin, and Jeffrey; two sisters, Arlene and Janet, and nine grandchildren.

CHARLES "CHARLIE" SMITH, died unexpectedly in his office last month at the age of 71. He was the owner and operator of Smith Floral and Greenhouse, Lansing, Michigan, and a lifelong member and

supporter of the Michigan Floral Association. He was named 2015 Retailer of the Year by the MEA and was also recognized in the Top 100 Teleflora florists nationally.

Surviving are his wife of 30 years, Karen; sons, Christopher and Spencer; daughter, Abby; siblings, Peter (Mary) Robinson and Sally (David) Trout; sister-in-law, Holly (Ron) Wellbaum, and very special niece Kristi Klemmer. ✿

CFREPORT



BY CINDY CHING, AIFD, CF

Design Style

An Asymmetrical Design

Spring colors and butterflies are a great way to promote the season for all spring floral holidays. After winter in northern areas, we need the spring colors to inspire us to look forward to warm weather. This asymmetrical arrangement does just that. An asymmetrical triangle with three unequal sides is known as scalene. The angle makes a scalene triangle resemble a “lazy L”. Scalene triangle designs have a vertical axis positioned off center, and materials placed unequally on each side. If you divided the arrangement vertically in half, one side may be visually heavier than the other. So, for asymmetrical designs to be visually balanced, compensation must be made on the lighter side with longer stems, heavier colors, or forms. The Bells of Ireland line flowers provide the arrangement’s form. Bring interest to the design by folding the aspidistra leaf in an interesting way. The butterfly brings the breath of spring. Asymmetrical arrangements are considered informal and more natural. ✿



*Arrangement by
Angela Christie, CF,
Flowers from Nature's
Gardens, Petoskey, MI,
2015 GLFE Surprise,
Surprise design contest.*

CF Flower of the Month **Tulips**

Available November through May with a limited supply year-round. Flowers are two to four inches high and will last from three to seven days.

CF Tip

Tulips will grow up to two inches after being cut and will curve toward the light. Allow for this in the arrangement. Refrigerate the arrangement to keep stem straight. Never slit the tulip stem near the flower in an effort to avoid flower drooping as this will only reduce nutrient uptake and shorten shelf life.



CF NEWS: The next CF testing date is Sunday, October 11, 2015, at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan. The next Steps Class is Thursday, October 1, 2015, at the MFA office.



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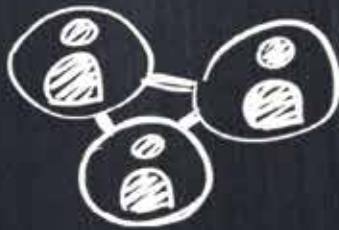
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DESIGN TIP: Proms...Fun and Profitable

BY DOUG BATES, AIFD, CF, CFD
FLOWERS BY VOGT'S, STURGIS, MI
2015 MFA ACADEMY WINNER

It's no secret that I'm a BIG fan of prom. The planning, the dance, the fun (the desperate attempts to cling to my youth, ha-ha). In our shop, prom is both fun and profitable. The secret is in easy selling and careful organization. An engaging Prom Bling Buffet is a must. Something that draws your customers in and makes buying a fun experience.

Borrow dresses from past customers, or a tuxedo from your local vendor, and incorporate them into a merchandising masterpiece that wows. You'll want to set out all your bracelets, bling, and baubles so that they can easily see what is available. Customers will be like kids in a candy shop and they'll want one or three of everything.

Of course, as a savvy businessperson, even if you're busy helping another customer, you've got attractive signage that helps clients understand what to do, and all accoutrement is properly labeled with



prices per stem. When you take their order, collect the names of both prom goers, along with contact information for both, their high schools and the date of their prom. Be sure to pull all the components of the order at that time, and place into a large corsage box with the order. This ensures that you're selling what you have on hand.

Begin making bows and bases as soon as the orders start rolling in, and feel free to glue in any bling or feathers. You'll add flowers a day or two before with Oasis® cold adhesive. And speaking of flowers,

start a master list of those needed for each prom weekend and add to it as your orders come in. We use bright colored card stock taped to our cooler door, but you can place it wherever it's easily accessible in your workroom.

Each high school has a different designated color, and each order gets a coordinating colored label when the necessary flowers have been added to the list. These ideas have helped our process run as smoothly as possible. With planning and organization, prom can be fun and profitable for you, too! ✨

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)**

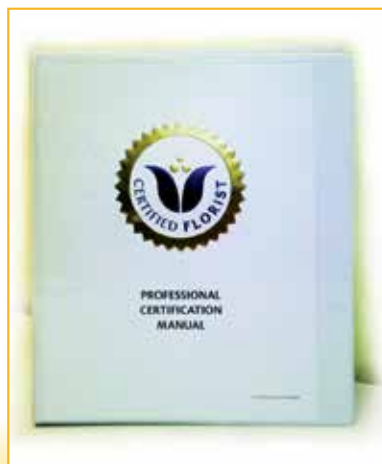
Consumers today are offered more and more options for purchasing flowers and are looking for your credentials or certification to help them justify spending their money with you. Let them discover you are a Certified Florist when they look into your business!

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!

EDUCATIONCENTER

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Member \$149 • Non-Member \$199

Thursday, October 1, 2015

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Instructor: Cindy S. Ching, AIFD, CF, CFD

Includes all Flowers/Supplies • Lunch Included

Cindy will guide those who plan on becoming a Certified Florist. Tips on how to prepare for both the written and design portions of the test. 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. Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of what it takes to pass the prestigious CF exam. Lunch is included in the registration fee. Class enrollment limited to 12. To download an application go to www.michiganfloral.org. Call (517) 575-0110 for more information. **Bring your own tools.**

Fall Workshops – Get in the Groove!

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Haven't taken the time to practice with all the trendy decorative wire, flat cane, glitter sticks, etc.? Here's a hands-on class that will add to your bag of tricks and elevate your designs to a new level. Be the talk of the town as you accessorize your work with an array of cost effective, unique creations. Add special touches that are sure to please. Upgrade your containers, jazz up your designs. This class will also inspire you to look at foliage in a new way using new techniques. Our panel of expert designers will get you started and share tips on how to use the many decorative items carried by your suppliers. Receive useful information on how to make, price and market these artistic items.

Tuesday, October 6, 2015 • Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Nordlie, Inc. • 25300 Guenther Road, Warren, MI

Instructor: Deana Gress, CF

Wednesday, October 7, 2015 • Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Nordlie, Inc. • 1289 M-37 South Ste #200, Traverse City, MI

Instructor: Jackie Burrell, AIFD, CF, CFD

Tuesday, October 13, 2015 • Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Nordlie, Inc. • 4611 Ivanrest Ave SW, Grandville, MI

Instructor: Alice Waterous AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI

Wednesday, October 21, 2015 • Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Vans Floral Products • 1858 Three Mile Road NW, Walker, MI

Instructor: James Lutke

Wednesday, November 4, 2015 • Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Rokay • 1125 Hill Brady Road, Battle Creek, MI

Instructor: Loma Fowler, CF

Wednesday, November 4, 2015 • Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Saginaw Valley Flower Exchange

1400 Tittabawassee, Saginaw, MI

Instructor: Laura Parker, AIFD, CF, CFD

MFA Members Score at Golf Outing

Thirty-two Michigan Floral Association golfers enjoyed a day of sunshine, fellowship, and fun at the annual golf outing held last month at the Emerald Golf Course in St. Johns, Michigan.

Congratulations to the following winners and all the participants. We look forward to seeing you all next year.

Men's Winning Team

Jim Schmidt, Bill Schmidt, and Chip Solomon from Hyacinth House and Charlie Schwarz from the Wexford Missaukee Inter. School District, with a score of 59.

Mixed Winning Team

Lisa Worthington, Jake Worthington, and Matt Worthington, Nordlie-Flint and Brent Blonshine, Nordlie-Traverse City, with a score of 57.

Longest Drive

Men: Jake Worthington, Nordlie-Flint

Women: Janice Curran, Teleflora

Longest Putt

Men: Jerry Hause, Hyacinth House

Women: Lisa Worthington, Nordlie-Flint

Closest to Pin

Men: Matt Worthington, Nordlie-Flint

Women: Lisa Worthington, Nordlie-Flint

Double prize winner Lisa Worthington of Nordlie-Flint.

Jim Schmidt from Hyacinth House with Steve Grinnell, David Chapman Agency.





Posing for the camera are Roger Wurtzel, Wurtzel Greenhouse; Kathy Kraydich, Moehring Woods Flowers; Janice Curran, Teleflora, and Tony Year, Mains Importing.

MFA would like to thank the following golf outing sponsors.

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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.

Floral Designer Wanted: For Runyans' Country Tree Farm! Operating as a Christmas Tree Farm for 40 years. Located in Clio, MI. Must have experience decorating wreaths, centerpieces, baskets, porch pots, whatever. Pay determined by experience. Season starts first week of November thru December 13th. Must love working with customers!! Custom wreaths and centerpieces done on site!! 3 days a week. *Please call Michelle @ (313) 530-0020.*



Top Level Designer Wanted: Work with a large friendly team in a comfortable and encouraging environment. Candidates must be creative and productive, as well as skillfully experienced in all aspects of design, including weddings & events. Interview with us to see why we were MFA's 2013 Retailer of the Year. The

commute to Ypsilanti is a lot easier than you think. Apply at Norton's Flowers & Gifts or email Tim at tgalea@nortonsflowers.com.

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 2016 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).

★ Important Reminder ★

MFA Scholarships!

Certified Florist/Great Lakes Floral Expo Scholarships

These scholarship awards will be up to \$500.00. They may be used for Great Lakes Floral Expo registrations with the exception of the Saturday evening recognition banquet and/or one Certified Florist manual with one round of testing that must be completed within the time frame of the scholarship. You may also apply for one of three Certified Florist scholarships sponsored by the FloraCraft Corporation.

New Hands On Workshop Scholarships – Applications accepted all year

These scholarships will be up to \$1000.00. This scholarship may be used to attend a MFA Hands On Workshop.

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To provide education and professional partnerships which help to position Michigan Floral Association members at the forefront of the floral industry.

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