



Volume IV 2017

**Holiday Decor
Trends 2017:
Here Today and
Here Tomorrow**

**Preparing
for Those
Holiday Sales**

**Making
Your Holiday
Open House
a Success**

**It's Beginning
to Look a Lot
Like Christmas**

**Flower Trends:
Pantone
Greenery**

the professional florist



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Publisher: Rodney P. Crittenden
Advertising Director & Sales: Rodney P. Crittenden
Editor: Barbara Gilbert
Graphic Design: Joe McGurn
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.

OOPS! Rokay Floral was mistakenly left off the list of product donors for the 2017 Great Lakes Floral Expo. We apologize for the error.

LEADERSHIPREPORT

Another Awesome Year in the Floral Industry

BY MFA PRESIDENT JEROME RASKA, AAF, AIFD, CAFA, CF, PFCI
BLUMZ...BY JRDESIGNS, DETROIT AND FERNDALÉ, MI



Six months have passed and 2017 is off to another awesome year in the floral industry. Your association hosted an amazing Great Lakes Floral Expo in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and coordinated a great convention for the Wisconsin and Upper

Michigan Florists Association in the Wisconsin Dells. Both of these events provided time for all facets of the industry to network, see new products and learn through both business and design related breakout sessions and main stage presentations

The Michigan Floral Association is also hosting regional meetings again this year. Spring and fall meetings are coordinated by your regional director, allowing your association to bring education directly to florists in these regional areas.

If you are not receiving information on these meetings and would like to, please contact the Michigan Floral Association at (517) 575-0110 and we can add you to the email invitation list.

In addition to our regular activities we are also working on

hosting a strategic planning meeting to evaluate the association and review its direction moving forward in the future. This association is member based, your opinion counts. Everyone received a survey recently and was asked to answer a few questions to assist in this process.

Thank you to the many that responded with your feedback. If you would like to be included in this planning process, please email the Michigan Floral Association office at rod@michiganfloral.org and we will be sure you are involved. Everyone is welcome.

Plans are underway for the 2018 Great Lakes Floral Expo "Floristry...an everyday event!" the weekend of March 2-4. Save the date now, it is going to be an amazing time for education, networking and seeing new trends in floral design as well as business sessions to guide attendees to a profitable future.

I thank you for placing your trust in me to serve as your president, but I remind you, this is YOUR association. Feel free to step up and get involved...you'll be glad you did! ✿

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Attention! Potential Exhibitors

Reserve Prime Space Now for the 2018 Great Lakes Floral Expo



2017 Great Lakes Floral Expo Facts

Total 2017 registration: 360
 260 buyers/designers/employees representing 122 businesses
 70 representatives from 23 exhibiting companies
 30 students from four different schools

2018

Floor Plan

- MFA raffle on show floor
- Designated Design Kiosk Stage on show floor

Saturday, March 3, 2018
 Show Hours: 10:00 am - 6:45 pm
 (3 hours of uninterrupted shopping time)

Banquet Cocktail Party on the Trade Show Floor 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Saturday

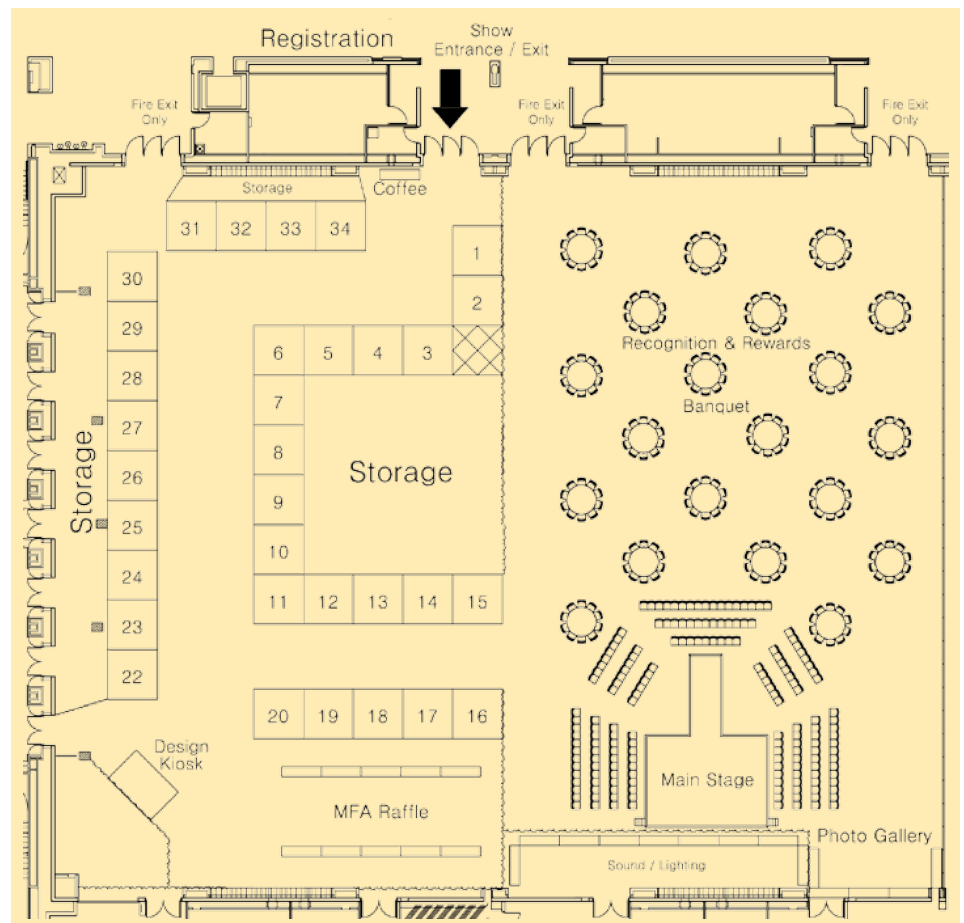
Sunday, March 4, 2018
 Show Hours: 11:00 am - 2:30 pm
 (1 hour of uninterrupted shopping time)

Product Reviews/ Design Demos on Designated Design Kiosk Stage During Show Hours

March 2-4, 2018

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel/Devos Place

Grand Rapids, MI



Call MFA at **(517) 575-0110** or Visit www.michiganfloral.org/greatlakesfloralexpo to Reserve Your Exhibitor's Space Now!

"Probably the largest, most exciting and best-run regional show in the industry, the GLFE is also the best opportunity for vendors to engage with florists face-to-face. Michigan florists are especially interested in and loyal to vendors they actually meet, and no event is more committed to taking care of their exhibitors and providing them with a great sales opportunity."

—Mark Anderson of FloristWare, Exhibitor for the past thirteen years

"The MFA annual convention has worked for me for many years. It's great being where my customers are, and getting to know potential new ones. This past convention was well attended and planned out. I was able to see a nice increase in sales."

—Jim Wilson of Norman Smith Enterprises, Exhibitor for the past 30 + years

HOLIDAYFEATURE

Holiday Decor Trends 2017: Here Today and Here Tomorrow

BY ROBBIN YELVERTON, AAF, AIFD, CF, PFCI,
BLUMZ...BY JRDESIGNS FLORAL AND EVENT PROFESSIONALS,
DETROIT AND FERNDAL, MI



To quote Susan Miller of *eHow*, an internet magazine that covers trends, DIY and decorating, “Trends in interior design come on the scene with every generation. Some of them become so popular they stay for a while as a component of a style, or they are declared a style of their own, while others leave when the next generations of designers come of age. Some

that fall out of favor are often seen a few generations later with a new name, and with new colors and new flourishes added.”

This also applies to holiday décor. There will always be the tried and true styles such as *Traditional* featuring reds, green, and velvet; *Natural/Woodland* incorporating branches, berries, bark, birds, cones and other organic naturalistic elements; *Winter White* and *Crystal* all about snow, ice and a touch of silver and of course *Metallic*, heavy gold and silver opulence.

These four are our core styles at Blumz. We add to that a *Whimsical* style that showcases decor that is fun, funky, playful, usually a non-traditional color, and changes most frequently from year to

year and *Vintage/Shabby Chic*, the feel of nostalgia from the 50s and 60s that is a very popular look in our community.

Each year, décor importers bring in new items, new colors and the latest “hot looks”. Many times it’s a revised version of a similar look from the year before; a different name, a twist on the color scheme or a new element added. With careful and creative buying, these new items can be worked into the main themes to freshen up the previous years left over merchandise and help create new excitement for the perennial styles.

We have found that most clients do not have the budget, nor do they wish to totally change their holiday décor to something completely different. During the holidays, we humans find security and reassurance in things that remind us of past holidays with family, friends and festive celebrations. We enjoy the nostalgic and familiar. However, people will purchase a few new items to provide a bit of the unexpected or enhance the collection they already have.

It’s up to us as creative professionals to take our décor and gifts from previous seasons, mix them with the latest and greatest and display it all in a manner that both excites and entices the client to make that decision to purchase. A few new over-sized items can be introduced to grab people’s attention and emphasize a theme. Incorporating a tree into a display one year and a door or mantle the next can help keep the looks from being too similar to the previous season’s display. Moving the theme to a different location on the sales floor can also create a “new” look.

The latest trends should always be watched, but keep in mind that as trendy as some things are, it’s always a wise decision to keep your clients likes or dislikes in mind. You can push the envelope for excitement and drama, but higher sales will more than likely revolve around the anchor styles. ✿

Two Wins in a Row for MFA Members!

This year’s winner of the 2017 Retail Florist of the Year award, cosponsored by the Wholesale Florist & Florist Supplier Association and *Florists’ Review*, was Kennedy’s Flowers, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

This follows last year’s win by Blumz...by JR Designs, Detroit and Ferndale, Michigan. Blumz was up against nine other florists in 2016 while Kennedy’s competed with seven others this year. Kennedy’s was also chosen the Michigan Floral Association retailer of the year at the 2017 Great Lakes Floral Expo.

Entries were judged by the WF&FSA president, chairs of the WF&FSA marketing committee, the previous year’s winner

and David Coake, editorial director of *Florists’ Review*.

Entrants were judged on eight different criteria:

- visual merchandising, store design and image
- advertising, marketing and promotions
- weddings and events
- flower variety, quality, display and more
- customer service
- employee benefits and training
- business achievement

HOLIDAYFEATURE

Preparing for Those Holiday Sales

BY AMANDA ROSSELL, KENNEDY'S FLOWERS & GIFTS, GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Preparing for the holidays can be a busy time of year for small businesses. The hustle and bustle can be overwhelming. Kennedy's Flowers and Gifts makes the season bright with exciting events and special promotions. Our mission is to spread joy, and this is especially true during the winter holidays.

Key to managing the holiday rush is early planning. Fall displays are on the floor beginning in August and our holiday merchandise gradually comes out in October. Kennedy's store manager, Trish Holmes, begins by staging holiday displays in the basement, grouping merchandise into different themes. She takes these "themes" and enters them into a weekly planning calendar.

Beginning the first week of October, she moves two displays each week from the basement to the sales floor. By the end of October, our designers have created approximately 25 custom silk wreaths to complement Trish's store displays. We are not open on Sundays, so we use the last Sunday in October as a final push to put finishing touches to our Winter Wonderland.

Trish assembles a team of five sales associates to come in and bring the remaining pieces up from the basement as she works on the floor to make sure displays look spectacular for our first big event of the season, the Annual Holiday Open House.



To prepare for this special event we send our top 100 customers a petite arrangement the week of the open house. In 2016, we sent our "Scatter Joy" arrangement, a mercury votive cup with Christmas greens, a rose and a few white pompons; those customers were encouraged to refill the container weekly for free until January 31, 2017. We attach a postcard to each arrangement with open house details as a personal invitation to attend.

At the open house, all of our customers have the opportunity to purchase these adorable refillable votives for \$25 and then can come in for the free weekly refills.

The open house is held the first weekend in November. We are open extended hours that weekend, kicking off our extended holiday season hours. We serve yummy food samples and refreshments during the day and offer wine in the evenings.

There are drawings for door prizes each day with prizes from Vera Bradley, Brighton, Thymes and many other great lines. During the open house customers can earn Kennedy's Kash, redeemable on a future purchase. For every \$50 spent in-store, they earn \$25 in Kennedy's Kash which is redeemable the first week of December.

We incorporate fresh flowers into our holiday displays, encouraging customers to step into the cooler and experience the pure positivity of our arrangements. We also invite our customers into the design room to see a special mantel design competition. Customers love getting a behind the scenes look at how our designers work their floral magic. Each designer chooses a style, sometimes based off of the store themes, and creates a unique mantel piece. They name their

Get What You Really Want This Christmas!

Use our handy reference list to make sure you aren't scrambling for last-minute gifts!

Holiday Open House
November 10-12
Kennedy's

Top Ten Gift Ideas

1. Brighton Jewelry & Handbags
2. Inspirational Signs Made In USA
3. Gert Plateau Studios Ceramics Hand Made By Local Artist
4. Thymes Fragrances For Bath & Home Made In USA
5. Darren Gyi Seasonally Inspired Wall Art Made In USA
6. Nora Fleming Interchangeable Serving Pieces For Any Occasion
7. Corkcicle Carstens Whisky Wedge Ditch The Cooler Keep The Cool
8. Vera Bradley Handbags, Blankets & Accessories
9. Uniquely Designed Notes For Guys & Gals
10. Hobo Stylish Yet Purposeful

Fill out this wishlist and send in your loved one. When they come in with a filled out wishlist, we will give them \$5 off their in-store purchase!

Holiday Shopping Made Easy

Limit one per person.
Redemption period: Dec. 1-23

Join us for a Men's Shopping Night
Wednesday, Dec. 21
See Sales Associate for details





seasonal accents. Designer Brenda Brown worked with each person to help them tailor the wreath to their own personal tastes.

Workshops are a wonderful way to give customers an in-depth look at the care and attention designers take with each piece they create. Our customers have fun and take pride in the finished product. As an added benefit, we offered 10 percent off an in-store purchase to everyone who took part in the workshop.

Last year, we tried something brand new for us hosting our first ever men's shopping night. The event was from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., the Wednesday before Christmas. Leading up to the event, we handed out wish lists to customers and promoted it through our e-mail club. The men who came with a wish list received a \$5 coupon for shopping during the night.

We had three different varieties of Founder's beer, served snack items that we carry such as beer cheese, martini dip, pretzels and nuts and streamed Sports Center on our in-store TVs during the event. The men had a blast. We will definitely be offering this again as a way to help our customers celebrate the season! ✿

piece, and we attach a short bio about each designer. Customers can vote on their favorite piece, and the following Monday we announce the winning design on Facebook.

We also draw the name of one customer from those voted who will take home a floral arrangement that coordinates with their favorite mantel design. In 2016, we had over 650 customers vote for their favorite. During our open house, customers can sign up for our other holiday themed events: complimentary in-store home decor consultations, wreath making workshops and our men's shopping event.

The first Friday in December, a few of our designers, who have a special touch with home decorating, offer 30 minute in-store consultations. We encourage customers to sign up in advance and start to think about what area in their home they would like to focus on, such as their dining table, mantel or entryway. Our designers help customize their space based on pictures, color swatches and measurements provided by the customer. This is so much fun for our designers, as it takes them out of their usual routine and allows them to flex their creative muscles in a different way.

Customers love the fresh and innovative recommendations our designers provide. We do offer consultations off site for \$75 per hour if a customer would like us to take a more hands on approach to decorating their home or business.

Our wreath workshop was such a hit in 2016 that we sold out two dates. For \$40 each participant was provided all materials: a grapevine wreath and a variety of winter greenery, berries and other

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HOLIDAYFEATURE

Making Your Holiday Open House a Success

Crystal Springs Florist, Benton Harbor, Michigan, is a family owned and operated shop, celebrating its 70th anniversary this year. The shop is widely known for its annual Holiday Open House which attracts 800-900 people on the second Saturday in November. Thanks to Russell and Lisa Siegert for sharing these helpful hints on how to make your holiday open house a success.



- Give your holiday open house a theme that the public can get excited about like "Winter Woodlands" or "Jingle all the Way".
- Design a postcard around the theme you've chosen and mail it out so customers can have it in hand one week before your event.
- Build your mailing list by having customers register for prizes. Have one special grand prize e.g. we gave away a National Park Pass to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our National Park Service in 2016.
- Offer refreshments (coffee, cookies).

- Schedule live holiday music throughout the day with seating, for everyone to enjoy.
- Hand out gift bags which may include a calendar for the new year, pen, coupons for return visits, etc.
- Radio and newspaper ads are also a good way to get your event noticed.
- Have a "kids contest" where kids under 12 have to guess something fun to win a prize. For example, "How many poinsettias are in the greenhouse?"
- Reach new customers by sending an invitation out with your regular deliveries, sympathy excluded of course. Do this one month prior to your event.
- Post your event on Facebook.
- Begin your transition from summer/fall displays to Christmas displays two weeks prior to your event. You don't want your shop to look empty. Start with one section of your shop, moving everyday giftware around to other areas while filling in with the Christmas giftware. Go section by section. Move fall to a far off corner all by itself.
- Wow Them! Create props and use Christmas lights that complement your theme. Visually stimulate your customers. Fill the air with wonderment and awe.
- Have fun and keep your customers guessing what you'll do next, Based on the theme you've chosen, rent a Santa, Rudolph, elf or snowman costume for the greeter who stands at the front door handing out the gift bags. Your customers will love it! ✿

Christmas Greens

Pictures and Descriptions Courtesy of Hiawatha Evergreens, www.hiawathacorp.com.



1. Noble Fir



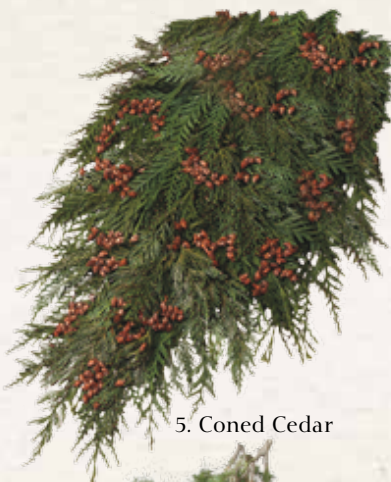
2. Silver Fir



3. Shore Pine



4. Douglas Fir



5. Coned Cedar



6. Princess Pine



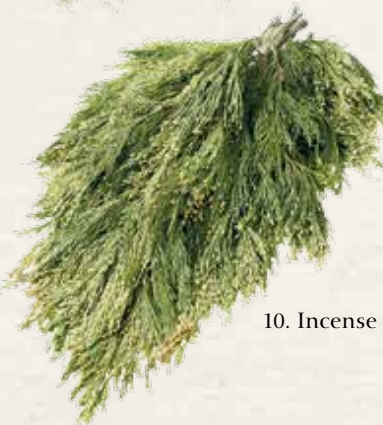
7. Port Orford Cedar



8. Mountain Hemlock



9. Juniper



10. Incense Cedar

1. Noble Fir boughs are long lasting, hardy and fragrant. They are the most frequently used bough material.
2. Silver Fir is dark green with a distinct cast of silver on the underside of the needles.
3. Shore Pine is rather dark, both in leaf color and bark. The needles are short and in pairs.
4. Douglas Fir boughs are a seasonal favorite.
5. Coned Cedar is accented with small clustered cones.
6. Princess or White Pine boughs are delicate, long needled and lacy.
7. Port Orford Cedar offers a classic elegance in traditional Christmas greens.
8. Mountain Hemlock features delicate dark green foliage.
9. Blue Berried Juniper is aromatic with delicate silvery blue berries.
10. Incense Cedar has golden buds, wonderful aroma and lacy foliage.

CFREPORT



A Line Mass Design for Christmas

BY CINDY CHING, AIFD, CF

Line Mass designs include straight line forms such as vertical, horizontal, diagonal, inverted T and L shaped. Curved line forms are crescent “C” shaped and the Hogarth curve “S” shape. This arrangement demonstrates an inverted T, having a strong vertical line of materials rising from the center of a strong horizontal plane. The vertical line is often longer than the horizontal line. Here, the vertical line of gold glitter curly ting ting is brought into the horizontal line of Christmas greens forming the T shape. Texture is provided with different kinds of long lasting evergreens including spruce, blue spruce, juniper, white pine, and cedar. A touch of gold millimeter ornaments, red lilies, berry sprays and pine cones complete the design.

Used as an elegant centerpiece, a beautiful buffet decoration or displayed in a foyer in front of a mirror, this holiday design will highlight the Christmas season. ❁



Getting The Most From Your CF Designation

BY ALICE WATEROUS, AIFD, CF, PFCI

Now that you have done the work to become a Certified Florist through the Michigan Floral Association, let's put it to work for you.

Be sure to shout out to the rooftops you are a Certified Florist or that you have x number of Certified Florist members working in your business. Start by frequently reminding folks on all your social media as you post. Let your clients/potential clients know what being a Certified Florist means to them in terms of quality of goods/services they will receive when doing business with your company.

When ordering print goods, signage, company shirts etc., be sure to add: “We have Certified Florist members on staff to

better serve you”. This is a way to show you are interested in being the best in your field and offering excellent products and services to your community.

Be sure to use the CF initials on your cards, advertising flyers, stationery and print advertising. When space allows print it out – Certified Florist. Make sure everyone in your organization knows what has gone into earning this designation so they can give a well-informed reply should anyone ask about the CF addendum. It's not just about adding initials to your name as some believe, it's showing your determination to keep standards high in your chosen field as a floral professional.

By going through the Certified Florist program and passing the written and hands-on test, you have shown your commitment to providing customers a knowledge of product, care and handling, customer service, business practices, solid design skills and more. Whether you have been in the business for a lifetime, or a few years, validating your skill sets is worth a mention once you have done the work of becoming a Certified Florist.

We challenge you...if you haven't gone through the program, begin today! By becoming a CF member, you will confirm your commitment to a strong, time-honored career as a professional florist. ❁

Decorated Lanterns for Christmas

BY DAVE PINCHOCK, CF, VOGT'S FLOWERS, FLINT, MICHIGAN, 2017 MFA DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

The popularity and availability of lanterns make them a natural for Christmas designs. Think of offering something like this adorned lantern for use as a perfect greeting over a door or window. Find a way to display this arrangement for best effect. If this isn't possible, take a photo of the design over an attractive entry door or window, and show the framed

picture alongside the swag. Furnish with an LED battery timer operated candle as the light source. What a great way to add ambiance to your client's entry.

This example is done with preserved birch branches and permanent botanicals in neutral tones. Many variations can be made either in botanicals or fresh evergreens, magnolia and berries. Display with signage that suggests to your clients: "Order a customized lantern design in your choice of decorator colors". Your customer can select from permanent botanical flowers and greenery choices displayed nearby.

Today's consumers are attracted to unique holiday accents that can remain throughout the winter season. This option is a terrific idea starter showing your clientele your originality and versatility. ❁

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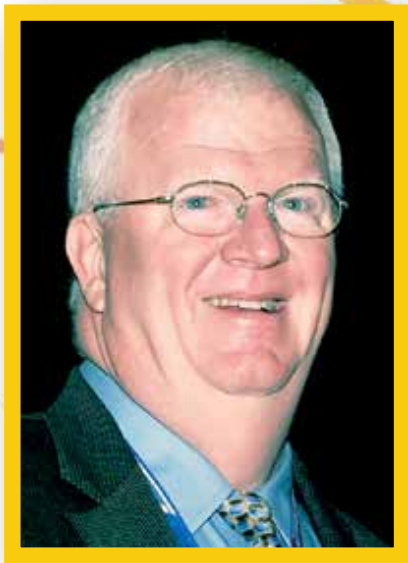
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Cleveland, Dayton, OH;
Tampa, FL





Plan Now to Honor **Dwight Larimer, AAF, PFCI**

At The Michigan Floral Foundation

Hall of Fame Awards Dinner

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

University Club, Michigan State University,

East Lansing, Michigan

Dwight Larimer, AAF, PFCI, has been a fixture in the floral industry for 40 years.

His record of service has made him an outstanding contributor to the success of not only his own company but also many floral industry organizations. In addition, he has been honored by his peers with several prestigious awards. His first award was in 1985 as the WF&FSA Young Executive of the Year. He also is the recipient of WF&FSA's highest honor the Leland T. Kinzele Award and a member of the Society of American Florists Hall of Fame. In addition he was recognized for his business acumen with the SAF Paul Ecke Jr. award and in 2016 the Michigan Floral Association presented him with its National Service Award. In the past he has served as president of WF&FSA, SAF treasurer, and as a member of the AIFD artist in Residence committee.

Currently he is chairman of American Floral Endowment board of trustees, and chairman elect of the Floral Marketing Research Fund. His career in the industry began at W.J. Cowee Inc., Berlin, NY and has culminated as president of Design Master color tool Inc., Boulder, Colorado. For 12 years he has made a commitment to fighting cancer and supporting AIDS research by participating in long distance bike rides.

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.

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You Want WHAT on Your Tree?

BY NEVILLE MACKAY, CAFA, PFCI, WFC



Many of us have spent hours decorating other people's homes and offices with the latest and most beautiful decorations their Visa limit can take. We've climbed ladders, moved furniture, and even missed parties, all to make someone else look good. I've done more than my share, so I will tell you how to hopefully make your experiences less stressful and more profitable.

Unless someone has more money than sense (There's more and more of them out there than ever before.) be aware of the budget, and offer things that hopefully go with what they already have, and also can be added to every year, so you can continue to make lots of money to spend on another diet plan in January.

Think about the space you are working with, the colors and style will better guide your choices. I steer far away from anything too trendy because every year there's something new, and who wants to be a "Last Season Nancy"? Using items that are trendy can, and often does backfire, although the client may like what you did this year, next year they will be less than excited about what you sold them.

This doesn't always work, I know. I was commissioned one year to

decorate a tree with Barbie Dolls, and of course I squealed with excitement. What a pain in the backside that project became because with every doll came inspiring tales, warnings and instructions from its owner (Apparently some were worth over \$1000.). That ordeal nearly turned me off dolls altogether.

I've covered a tree with fresh roses and baby's breath, also with potted plants and one with loads of crazy stuffed animals. Every year I think, "That's IT! I've officially seen it all!" but oh no, there's a new and even more crazy theme on the horizon.

I try to offer a three-year plan that can be added to each year. This way, I can offer a better budget. It shows a commitment to making a beautiful look, and guarantees the next year's installation. Then, by the third year, the first year's goods are starting to wear, and we offer yearly replacements and upgrades. This approach doesn't need to be boring though, so try and introduce a surprise or two each year to make your work stand out.

Making your work stand out is very important. Make it stand out in a good way every time, because the whole country is decorating for the season, and if yours is merely "pretty" it will



be passed by. We've got one large permanent tree that we've had for years at the store, and every year we try and decorate it with all reds and golds, all silvers, etc...you get what I mean, right?

Well, a few years ago we were trying to find homes for all the everyday permanent flowers we had rather than storing them (Because you know the MINUTE you do that, someone comes in, desperately needing to see all your silk roses.). We also had to decide what to do with all the holiday bits and pieces we kept from last year.

I decided to throw everything on that one tree...orange, red, pink...roses, lilies, daisies...baubles, stuffed toys and shiny plastic apples. Well, the more we added, the less I wanted to vomit, and so we left it filled with everything.

Here's the thing; IT WAS A HIT!!!! Everyone went loopy over this abomination, and as we sold things from it (and we sold a lot) we filled it up with holiday choices like poinsettias and ribbons. I was so shocked, surprised and excited. We even got an order to do "that wonderful eclectic tree" at someone's office.

Be the expert you are, and be the choice for clients when it comes to buy holiday décor. Offer your advice, guide the client toward a beautiful look, be mindful of cost, and for goodness sake, if a client LOVES a peculiar or less than conventional look, try not to laugh at them.

A lady told me once that I should come see her "wooden spoon" tree...and of course I laughed as I told her I wouldn't slow my car down to see that nonsense. It was weird, I thought, that she didn't find it funny at all. To each their own I guess. Ho! Ho! Ho! And away we go for a great season to come!! ✨

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, info@mymothersbloomers.com.

MEMBERPROFILE

Tie a Yellow Ribbon... or a Blue One, Red One, Etc.

BY BARBARA GILBERT, EDITOR

Ribbons are an integral part of a florist's bag of tricks. Used to decorate bridal bouquets, holiday arrangements, party designs, prom work, etc., they come in a variety of colors and textiles giving designs a finished look and adding to their value.

Lion Ribbon has been serving florists since 1906 when it was found by Oscar Lion. Its primary customer in the beginning was the millinery trade. Its main customer now is the retail floral industry. Lion is one of the largest purveyors of ribbon in North America with a product line of over 20,000 skus of woven novelty ribbons, floral satin ribbons, and poly ribbons and bows.

CSS Industries is the parent company of Lion Ribbon, Berwick Offray, Hampshire Paper, McGinley Mills, and several other entities. Lion, the retail division, joined the Berwick Offray family when Berwick Industries purchased C.M.Offray in 2002. In addition to ribbons and bows, other floral accessories produced include foil waxed tissue, pot covers, wristlets, picks, roll paper and film.

The company history notes: "Due to our commitment to offering Made in the USA products, our polypropylene ribbons and bows are extruded, slit and finished in Berwick, Pennsylvania. Single face satin ribbon, double face satin ribbon, grosgrain ribbon, and many other styles are woven in Leesville, North Carolina. Dyeing and finishing processes, occur in Hagerstown, Maryland."

How is ribbon made? For example: "We weave Offray ribbon in South Carolina on looms. We have hundreds of looms that can produce hundreds of types of weaves depending on the design and substrate needs such as polyester, cotton, acetate, etc. It can be woven yarn dyed, already colored (something like a plaid that looks plaid both front and back). It can be woven as greige goods (undyed). If undyed, product is sent to our Maryland facility to be dyed a solid color. We can also add print designs to the product in Maryland, hot stamp, digital. All ribbon is then spooled and flanges added in Maryland. Maryland is our primary warehouse for Lion."

The USA-based manufacturing facilities can also customize ribbon through printing, hot stamping, color matching, and various other processes. This allows the company to manufacture one-of-a-kind ribbon for special occasions and events.

According to Marla O'Dell, vice president of sales and marketing, "We are always looking to develop new products. About 18 months out our team puts together CSS Global Trends. Those trends are "edited" to



be floral specific. For example, pop culture is currently very trendy but not so relevant to floral. We incorporate those "fringe" trends by bringing in relevant color and sometimes a fun ribbon or two.

"For example, last year we did a ribbon with a pineapple print when pineapples were really hot. Using trends we work with our various manufacturing plants to implement prints, patterns, materials and looks that speak to the trends."



Screen printing machine

Digital printing



Retired Lion Ribbon Rep Reminisces About His Career in Michigan



New products are introduced in June and July for Valentine's Day/Spring and in December and January for the Fall/Holiday season.

A new line is developed for each holiday consisting of about 700 new patterns. These introductions are accompanied by freight, dating and/or "early order" promotions. Commenting on their best seller, O'Dell said, "Offray double face satin, known as the wedding ribbon, is the top seller. It comes in over 70 colors to complement the latest bridal colors."

In regard to the marketing of Lion products, there are several avenues the company takes advantage of. There are two year round showrooms, one in Atlanta and one in Dallas plus road reps. Websites include LionRibbon.com and BerwickOffray Wholesale.com. They have social media presence on Facebook Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter. Lion is present at 30 trade shows around the country including the Great Lakes Floral Expo and produces six to eight annual catalogs and supplements.

"We like to support our industry. We are a member of the Michigan Floral Association and other state groups as well as SAF, AIFD, AFE. We are firm believer in education and support industry associations that promote education. Plus, we like to be where our customers are."

The company prides itself on its dedication to customer service. O'Dell noted that, "Beyond the designated customer service people who answer the phone and have a deep knowledge of the customers and product, we consider our whole company customer service. This includes sales, warehousing, shipping, marketing, accounts receivable, samples, etc. We strive to make our customer's life easier any way we can."

In order to succeed and keep up with the changes in the economy, Lion is dedicated to delivering the right trends, competitive pricing, and continued great service. Their customers' buyers are on Pinterest and other sites looking for ideas and taking them to the retail florists. "We have to deliver products that make that happen. In fact, my favorite part of the job is seeing our products in use", O'Dell added.

O'Dell is supported at Lion by her staff which consists of Michelle Bolchune, the marketing director who is in charge of materials such as the annual catalog, and Heather Pierce, customer service manager. ✨

Long time Michigan Lion Ribbon representative Tom Swientek retired earlier this year after a 32 year career with the company. Here he shares some reminiscences about his adventures as the company's Michigan rep.

"Here's a story about my second week of work, which happened to be the week of Secretary's Day, 1985. Even though I had worked in the floral industry out West, they didn't celebrate Secretary's Day on that side of the country. I was all excited to sell ribbon and starting calling on my floral shops, but was not welcomed the way I anticipated.

"As a matter of fact, I was almost sworn at... 'What are you doing here...don't you know what week this is???' These Michigan florists were ready to literally kick me out of their shops.... 'It's Secretary's Week, that's almost as big as Valentine's Day. If you know what's good for you, you won't try to call on any more shops.' I thought, not a very good way for the new Lion Rep to start out, so I went home for the rest of the week (this was Tuesday), and didn't call on another shop.

"Early in my Lion career, I tried to follow all the rules to being a good salesman: introduce myself, be positive, have a little conversation, present the ribbon line, make recommendations, ask for add-on sales, complement the buyer, thank them for their business and say good-bye.

"Sounds good, doesn't it? Not when you have to embarrassingly walk back in the shop and ask for a coat hangar because you locked yourself out of the car. Yes, these were the days when coat hangars could still unlock a car. I only had to do this twice before



Tom at the Lion booth at the 2017 Great Lakes Floral Expo.

I carried a spare car key in my wallet.

"Sometimes, you can get down about not having a good day, or even a good week, in the world of selling but then, you get that one over the top, unbelievable, and sometimes unexpected sales call. My all time favorite was up in Indian River in Northern Michigan. The account is called Out of the Woods, and had never ordered from a rep. So, I called to make an appointment, and the owner said you can come anytime after 5:30 a.m. She also said, when you get to the iron gates, just push the call button and I'll let you in.

"I found the iron gates, pushed the button (not at 5:30 am, by the way) and drove at least a quarter mile on a winding road through the woods to this lady's house on Mullett Lake. Not a house like any I've ever been in before or since, but one with 10 bedrooms and 15 bathrooms, three kitchens, four fireplaces, and a 10 stall garage, with 1,500 feet of lakefront property.

"I had walked into a different world, and here I was selling ribbon. We proceeded to sit down at the kitchen table, and she did indeed order some ribbon, \$8,000 worth. I loved this different world, I loved selling ribbon, and I loved Lion Ribbon Company. This was as good as it gets. But it wasn't, my buyer made me lunch. Now, how's that for a sales call??!!

"How did I start working for Lion Ribbon? I met lots of vendors over the years at trade conventions and floral shows, and there was a consensus that the Lion Ribbon job was the best job to have in the floral industry. This is what I heard about Lion Ribbon reps: 'Once you had the job as a Lion Ribbon rep, you never quit, you either retired or died while still working. Lion jobs always had a great reputation and still do. I sent my resume to Lion...they called me to say there were no open positions, but they would keep me on file. They called back one week later to say that Michigan was available and flew me out to Secaucus, New Jersey, for an interview, and I was hired on April 15, 1985, income tax day.

"I worked for Lion Ribbon Company for 32 years, and consider many of my accounts my friends, and always will."



Tom with Wholesaler of the Year award.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

A Visit to the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

BY BARBARA GILBERT, EDITOR



Photos courtesy of Deborah Janke, Bradenton, Florida

The current exhibit at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, “Marc Chagall – Flowers and the French Riviera: The Color of Dreams” is veritable eye candy for anyone interested in art and horticulture.



The exhibit which runs through July 31 at the Sarasota, Florida, facility combines replicas of Chagall’s stained glass work and a variety of colorful plants. Additionally two of Chagall’s paintings which have never been shown publicly before are on display in the Payne Mansion, home of the Museum of Botany & the Arts.

The plants in the garden, orchids, bromeliads, and bougainvillea among others, are designed to remind visitors of the south of France, an area that inspired much of Chagall’s work.

According to the garden brochure, “Selby Gardens is the only botanical garden in the world focused on the conservation, research and display of epiphytes, or plants that grow on other plants without harming them, such as orchids, bromeliads and gesneriads.”

For more information on the Chagall exhibit, go to www.selby.org. ✿



My Floriology Experience

BY RON THOMPSON,
LANE STREET BLOOMS,
BLISSFIELD, MI



I had a great opportunity to attend the Floriology Institute this past spring. It was a five day course on "Wedding Bliss" conducted by Jackie Lacey, AIFD, PFCI. The ten designers in the class were from

Texas, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. During break time, we had the opportunity to share our life experiences in the floral world.

Jackie talked about selling, pricing, labor costs, wedding style, consultations, the bridal party, different ceremonies and color trends. We had hands-on lessons in different techniques for boutonnieres, pin on and wrist corsages, hand-tied and bouquet holder bridal bouquets. We learned how to make the flowers the star of any floral arrangements.

We talked about the different trends, techniques and accessories, also delivery and set up time. Additionally, we discussed how to promote your business with internet marketing and other social media.

Lastly, we divided into three teams to create and design a wedding by having a bride and groom on site. We had a consultation with the couple on design preferences, color choices, wedding styles, number of guests and the tentative budget. We picked out centerpieces for the tables, the bridal bouquet and boutonnieres, the bridal party flowers, and flower arrangements for before and after the wedding all the while keeping

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to the budget. We also selected the vases and containers, lighting choices and any other decor they wanted to create that special feeling for their event.

After creating the items, we reviewed what we did, the cost of the wedding and whether we stayed on budget.

In summary, I learned you need to educate yourself on pricing for profit and

always do your best. There is always more to learn about design techniques and trends, keeping up with new ideas in floriology.

I also want to thank the Michigan Floral Association and the Floriology Institute for the MFA Past President's Scholarship that allowed me to attend this class. ✿

WUMFA



What WUMFA Means to You

BY DENISE BARNETT, WUMFA PRESIDENT



Wow. When I heard I was going to have to put together a leadership report as part of my responsibilities as

WUMFA president, my first thought was “What have I gotten myself into”? You see, WUMFA is nearing its 100th anniversary, and has been led by many experienced floral professionals over the years. There are big shoes to fill following in the footsteps of Patty Malloy, AIFD, CFD; Diane Schulte, CF, WMFM, and Bob Larson, AIFD, to name a few.

Luckily, we all know that it takes a village whether it’s running our businesses or being a volunteer leader in our industry associations. And with the fabulous, committed professionals on our board and committees we’re gearing up for another prosperous year.

So, what does that mean to you?

1. WUMFA is about education and advancement of the floral industry.

From the annual conference to the summer education series to the Certified Florist program, there are many opportunities for you and your team to learn skills and talents. Be sure to watch

for the WUMFA email blasts and check the website for the latest offerings. Mark your calendars now for April 6–8, 2018, when we’ll be back at the Chula Vista Resort for the annual conference.

2. You are a vital part of our organization’s success.

It’s easy to let others plan and organize and sometimes that’s all our busy schedules will allow. But for those looking to further their WUMFA membership experience, getting involved offers a host of opportunities to learn, grow and connect with industry professionals, both statewide and nationally. If the thought of working side-by-side with some of the pros we see on YouTube, at the AIFD symposium and in magazine features sounds super cool to you VOLUNTEER with WUMFA! There are many opportunities based on the amount of time you have to give.

3. We want to hear your comments, concerns and feedback.

WUMFA is a membership organization. Your input is what keeps us moving forward, growing and improving. The best way to reach me is via email at denise@snapdragon.com and I promise to make every effort to get back to you within 48 hours (I keep Sundays for family, so cut me a little slack there!)

So, with all that being said, here’s one last big thank you to the 2017 board of directors and committee volunteers. Your time, energy and expertise are what makes WUMFA an organization I’m proud to serve. ✿

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WUMFA SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

CeCi Scheuber, manager of Bank of Flowers, Pewaukee, Wisconsin, is the recipient of a scholarship from the Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Florists Association.

She commented, “Earning this generous scholarship from the Wisconsin & Upper Michigan Florists Association was so exciting. I’ve been involved in the floral industry since I was 15, and recently realized it’s my true passion. I’m thrilled to use this scholarship to further my education in the floral world and work toward my “little girl” dream working my way up in the industry. I’m so appreciative of this opportunity, and look forward to connecting with fellow florists, locally and beyond.”

To apply for WUMFA Scholarships go to <http://www.wumfa.org/education/scholarships/>.

For MFA scholarships go to <http://www.michiganfloral.org/education-center/mfa-scholarship-program/>.



My Designing Adventures

BY KEVIN YLVISAKER, AIFD, CAFA, PFCI



Kevin on stage.

Last year I had the experience of a lifetime working in Poznan, Poland and Moscow, Russia, presenting shows for Smithers Oasis. To take on such a task required the help of Smithers Oasis staff in the USA, Germany, Slovenia, Poland and Russia. This could never have become a reality without all their support.

My adventure began as I boarded a United flight in Chicago headed for Munich, Germany. Once in Munich I realized it was Oktoberfest week and there were many festivities in the airport. Well,

of course, I had to take advantage of this. It was 9:00 a.m. and I had a five hour layover so enjoyed bratwurst, pretzels and beer. Next, I boarded Lufthansa for Poznan, Poland.

For anyone traveling between EU countries it's a breeze. You don't go through customs once you have cleared in the first arrival country so I just got my bags, walked out and met my Smithers Oasis Poland contact and interpreter, Lena Stryjska. The drive to the hotel was breathtaking, I couldn't stop looking at the beautiful architecture and landscape.

The city of Poznan is one of the oldest in Poland. My hotel, a mansion built in 1802 as a private home, was converted into guest rooms and is located near the city center. Lena took me on a wonderful walk of the city where I saw everything from beautiful churches to an outdoor ballet rehearsal. It was such a nice introduction to Poland.

My show was for "All Saints Day" which is in November and not celebrated much in the U.S. so homework was involved. In Poland all the graves are covered with a full thick granite or marble piece the full length of the grave. At this holiday, flowers are placed full length on the slab with lots of candles. Mum plants are popular as well. This is one of the largest floral holidays in the country. The photos I saw of the displays were just fantastic.

To prep for the show Lena took me to the flower market. The hard goods are in two huge warehouses with hundreds of vendors. We located my sponsor and selected Smithers Oasis product and continued to shop for more supplies.

I headed off on my own a few times just pointing at things I needed which was actually fun. Supplies selected, we headed across the parking lot to a larger building housing hundreds of fresh floral and plant vendors. I had given Lena a procurement list in advance so she knew where to go but I was able to select "treasures" as we passed them.

There were two levels to this building. The top was all import vendors and the lower was Polish growers. Most imports come from Holland as it's so close so I got to select flowers we only dream of using here. The Polish level was super interesting. First of all, everywhere I looked there were heather plants. I found it's the number

one plant sold in the country, used in gardens, cemeteries and floral designs. It came in colors I had never seen. My other surprise was all the cut anthurium. Another local greenhouse crop and a favorite of many. After a full day of shopping hard goods and flowers were taken to another warehouse where we prepped for the show.

In both Poland and Russia I shared the stage with a local designer. As many of us know, European countries have a huge appreciation for flowers; and are amazing floral design competitors. Greta, the Polish designer, was prepping in the same room and I couldn't stop watching the incredible work she was doing. What an educational opportunity for me.

I was brought in to show what the U.S. typically would do for funerals so the contrast between Greta and myself was just perfect. I had such fun and wonderful assistants and the language barrier was no problem as drawing sketches and making hand gestures worked just fine.

During the day I was brought wonderful Polish food which of course I couldn't stop eating. Pierogis (dumplings), Zurek soup (rye flour soup with potatoes), Bigos (sauerkraut and meat stew), Rosewater cookies and the list goes on and on.

Between prep days and the show Lena treated me to sightseeing; castles, mansions, parks and palaces. Her knowledge of the history of Poznan made me feel as if I had hired a private tour guide.

The all-day Sunday show was held in the lower level of the fresh building which had been totally cleared of vendors. There was a huge stage, video projection and theater lighting, a total transformation from a few hours before. There were 600 florists in attendances which took me back to the "good old days" of U.S. floral shows.

Concluded on page 22

Pozan flower market.





Keeping up his strength with a sumptuous Polish meal.

Continued from page 21

Something I never expected was Lena as commentator for the show. When we took the stage Greta was on one side, I on the other and Lena in the middle. She asked me design questions, then translated and described the product. After Greta spoke, Lena would again ask questions and describe the products.

Also something different was the hard goods wholesaler was there on a microphone to tell where the product came from, prices, etc. It's interesting to mention that after the morning show the crowd broke for lunch consisting of coffee, water and a Polish pastry; that was it. They don't expect to be fed like we do in the U.S. Who knew?

On a design note I was asked many times why I was using bright colors in sympathy designs. I explained we design to celebrate the life of the deceased and if bright colors work then that's what we do. The contrast between my work and Greta's was very distinct as her designs were very pastel and mine monochromatic or bright colors.

Another interesting design difference is that there are no easels to be found anywhere. All the Smithers Oasis sympathy product has fold out wood bases and are placed on the floor or ground. Wreaths are laid flat on the ground. So here I come along with about six easel designs and the hunt for a display began but we did fine.

The next morning up early and off to the train station in Poznan, a three hour train ride to Warsaw. It was so nice to see the landscape and villages as we made our way. Once in Warsaw we checked into our hotel and went off to visit the Lazienki Royal Museum palace and gardens. It was just beautiful with all the sculptures. Then we headed to old Warsaw and dinner.

I came to Poland with a list of Polish foods I wanted to try. I did pretty good knocking food off my list but on this last dinner Lena had a surprise and ordered everything left on my list. At first I was embarrassed as plate after plate came out but I got over that and did my best to eat as much as I could. We walked off our feast in old Warsaw and it was breathtaking.

The next morning Lena got me to the Warsaw airport and I boarded Polish Airlines for Moscow, Russia. Clearing customs in Moscow was fast, no problems. Waiting for me was Smithers Oasis Russia rep and interpreter Zhenya Taranunkha. It was early evening when I arrived so he got me to my hotel and off to dinner.

As you can expect the meal started with vodka, the norm prior to each meal. In many cases the vodka menu was larger than the food menu. After dinner we headed to Red Square. It was surreal to be there and pass through the gates. Inside was the Kremlin lining the entire right side incorporating Lenin's Tomb. In front of me stood St. Basil's Cathedral built in 1555 by orders of Ivan The Terrible.



Smithers Oasis rep Zhenya and Kevin in front of St. Basil's Cathedral.

This is what most of us think of when we think of photos of Moscow and I still can't believe I was there.

Because it was nighttime, everything was lit and absolutely beautiful. We were treated to a huge laser light show projected onto the Bolshoi Ballet building again surreal. After all this excitement I was ready for bed.

Up early and off to the wholesaler sponsoring our event. I was presenting with Russian designer Roman Steinhauer doing events and Christmas designs. The wholesaler is huge and in several buildings. Unlike Poznan this wholesaler was a solo operation. I first was to pick out plants amongst hundreds of different varieties. Then off to the fresh flower cooler which went on and on. We prepped in the hard goods building where the show was to be held. Again, none of my helpers spoke English but

we managed to communicate and I couldn't have been happier.

After the second day's prep, Zhenya and his wife planned a surprise "motor scooter" tour of Moscow for me. I walked into the parking lot where there was the biggest Honda and a huge seven foot man, Viktor, suited up and waiting for me. Not a scooter at all. After suiting up I hopped on the back of his motorcycle with the most amazing Bluetooth sound system in my helmet and off we went.

One detail Viktor failed to mention was he was a stunt driver and we flew through traffic with no hands; at one point he stood up and put his hands in the air. My adventure went on for two hours and after my initial shock, it was a blast. We ended the long day with dinner at the Tchaikovsky restaurant.

The show was all day Friday with 400 florists in attendance. This show had four video screens and again commentators from the wholesaler and my Smithers Oasis rep, Zhenya.

A few design notes. They don't use glue pans in Moscow, but still use glue guns. After all my talk about glue pans I think they'll soon be in Russia. The Europeans use a lot of wax and use wax pots to dip many things from accessories to construction materials. Roman did amazing competition level designs again compared to my "saleable" U.S. designs and the crowd loved it.

After the show we headed for dinner and vodka because I needed to be back at the Moscow airport at 2:00 a.m. I was headed to Amsterdam then to Detroit and then to Milwaukee. So within two weeks I was on four airlines, one train and in eight airports.

When in Moscow I was told I was the first American designer to do this type of show in both Poland and Russia which I'm glad I did not know in advance. The pressure would have been too much. What an honor.

I again say thank you to all the many, many people who worked so hard to put this together and to Smithers Oasis for their constant worldwide support of our amazing industry. ✿

A Hands –On Class Instructed by: John Hosek AIFD, CF, PFCI

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Sunday, July 23, 2017 – Milwaukee, Rojahn and Malaney Wholesale
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Sunday, August 27, 2017 – Green Bay, Bill Doran Co.

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INTHENEWS

IFE Hosts Annual Show, Announces Awards

BY BARBARA GILBERT, EDITOR



Posing for the camera are Lenny Walker, Kennicott Brothers; Gail Pabst, Roses & More, Inc., and Laura Shinall, Syndicate Sales.



Iron Designer Cory Rader and his winning design. (Picture courtesy of Bruce Wright, Flowers & magazine)

The International Floriculture Expo was again held this year at Chicago's McCormick Place. Among the highlights, in addition to the displays of flowers, plants, supplies and industry services, were the presentation of several awards.

John Simko, president of Sunshine Bouquet, was honored at the flower naming ceremony.

The flower designated in his honor was a blue spray delphinium bred and grown by Ball.

The Iron Designer competition featured 10 designers who had 20 minutes to create their arrangements. This year's winner was Corey Rader from Fresh Blooms, in house designer for DV Flora. The event was dedicated to Bobbi Ecker Blatchford, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, who won the inaugural contest.

The Merchandising Award of Excellence went to Cheryl Overland, Hy-Vee floral manager in Albert Lea, Minnesota, for her



Long time IFE exhibitors Kim Tozier and Mark Thompson of Hiawatha Evergreens.



Representing Alexandra Farms were Maria Paula Cordoba, left, and Sandy Saenz.

"Stop Texting: Have a Conversation" idea while Syndicate Sales won the Innovation Battlefield competition. ✿

Peony Hotline Names Winner

Lake Forest Flowers, Lake Forest, IL. has taken first place in the Peony Hotline Snap, Share and Win contest. The winner received 50 peonies of their choice, while both runner-ups got 20 stems each

Second place went to Gaby Bras Floral Design, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, followed by another runner-up Ryers Flowers & Greenhouse, Munger, Michigan.

Pictures of all the designs are available at www.peonyhotline.com. ✿



First place



Runner-up



Runner-up

MFA Annual Golf Outing A Day of Fun and Networking!

Wednesday, August 2, 2017 • 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. • Eldorado Golf Course, Mason, MI

This year's MFA golf outing again will be held Wednesday, August 2, 2017, at Eldorado Golf Course in Mason, Michigan. The day will begin with check-in and range balls at 8:00 a.m. followed by a 9:00 a.m. shotgun start, with lunch at the turn. All golfers will meet at the clubhouse following the round for an awards ceremony. The event is a 4-person scramble format. Don't worry if you don't have a foursome. We'll pair you up with some fun golfers. All players will receive prizes. This is a day of fun and networking so don't worry about your scores or skills.

Cost

\$80.00 per golfer, \$300 per 4-person team. Includes 18 holes of golf, cart, lunch, game holes and prizes.

Golf Outing Sponsorship Opportunities

Eagle Sponsor – \$1000 includes 4 tee signs @ \$100, 1-4 person team @ \$300, \$300 donation and designation as a major sponsor in *The Professional Florist* magazine and on the MFA website.

Birdie Sponsor – \$500 includes 2 tee signs @ \$100, golf for two @ \$160, \$140 donation, and designation as a sponsor in *The Professional Florist* magazine and on the MFA website.

Par Sponsor – \$250 includes one tee sign @ \$100, \$150 donation and designation as a sponsor in *The Professional Florist* magazine and on the MFA website.

Bogey Sponsor – \$150 includes one tee sign @ \$100 and \$50 donation.

Tee Signs – \$100 each, includes company name and logo.

For more information and registration forms go to the MFA website, www.michiganfloral.org or call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110.

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**Birdie Sponsors: MHI Self-Insured Work Comp Fund
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"Come join us for a day of fun and networking with fellow floral industry members. Hyacinth House is proud to be a sponsor of this event. I look forward to seeing you at the course."

–Jim Schmidt, Hyacinth House,
2017 MFA Golf Outing chairman

"We look forward to this event every year. It's a great time to visit with our customers outside of the flower shop."

–Sharon Novasel, Regency Group



Posing for the camera at last year's golf outing are from left, Tim Galea, Norton's Flowers & Gifts, Ypsilanti, Michigan, and Bill and Jim Schmidt, Hyacinth House, Lansing, Michigan.

INDUSTRY INFO

Registration Open for Management Institute

Registration is now open for the 2017 WF&FSA management institute scheduled for August 1 - 4 at the Embassy Suites Denver Downtown. There will be three educational sessions, a "road trip" through Denver and surrounding areas, and multiple networking opportunities.

For registration information go to www.wffsa.org.

Scatena Retires from FloraCraft Corporation

Jim Scatena, who has been president and CEO of FloraCraft Corporation for more than 20 years has retired. Lee Schoenherr, owner and chairman of the board, will be assuming the duties of president/CEO for the immediate future.

"It has been the most rewarding experience of my entire business career," Scatena said. "Spending each and every day working with the greatest co-workers, suppliers and customers to 'Make It Fun!'"

FloraCraft is the world's leading fabricator and

supplier of foam products for the craft, floral display and special event industries.

Endowment Announces Annual Dinner in Florida

The American Floral Endowment's annual fundraising dinner will be held on Thursday, September 7, 2017, at The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida, in conjunction with the Society of American Florists' annual convention. This is the Endowment's largest fundraising event. New funds and memorial tributes will be announced along with recognition of donors reaching new giving levels. An update on AFE's latest efforts through research, grant and scholarship projects is also on the agenda.

For more information go to www.endowment.org.

Society of American Florists Hosts Convention September 6-9

The Society of American Florists will hold its 2017 convention, September 6-9, at The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida. The convention's educational lineup

covers a variety of other topics from floral design trends and social media marketing, to care and handling and pricing, online advertising and customer service. New this year are late afternoon hands-on floral design workshops and "BYOD", bring your own device, tech workshops for participants to study and practice niche subjects in a small setting.

Get details and register at safnow.org/annual-convention.

NAFA Schedules October Meeting

The National Alliance of Floral Associations has scheduled its annual meeting, October 21-23, 2017, at the Courtyard by Marriott in downtown Chicago's River North.

This conference is open to executive committees and board members of local, state, and national floral associations. The conference will open with the annual designer of the year contest. You must be a winner of your state or regional floral design competition to compete.

Visit www.aboutnafa.org for complete details.

NOTHING RHYMES WITH ORANGE



Designs pictured were done at the MFA Region Six regional meeting held in Traverse City, Michigan.

Flower Trends: Pantone Greenery

BY DEREK C. WOODRUFF, AIFD, CF, PFCI



Long before the announcement of “Greenery” as the Pantone Color of the Year, the trend to reconnect with nature was hot in the floral design world. It started with farm style weddings incorporating bunches of mixed greenery, and has since trickled through bouquet work, corporate stylings, and into the everyday arrangements of florists.

The combination of many different types of greenery, designed wildly and merely accented with flowers, is all the rage today. But outside of the traditional way of using fresh cut greenery, there are other ways of being expressive with foliage, succulents, and other plants.

Research shows that the rise in Millennials moving into smaller dwellings in urban areas and having limited budgets is fueling the trend of bringing greens indoors into tight spaces. Terrariums and unique planting systems are the most popular, but this demographic loves getting the most bang for their buck when it comes to fresh cut greens and flowers. Designing lavish bouquets of different greenery and long-lasting flowers can be quickly accented with a succulent plant or perhaps even a tillandsia (airplant) or two that will keep the greenery look going long after the cut materials have gone away.

In addition, brides on a budget are working with creative designers to come up with garland alternatives to avoid the usual hefty price tag. Using unique materials

such as floral mesh in combination with stems of greenery can give a simple, implied garland design that goes together much quicker and uses less product. By dropping in some fresh blossoms and adding candlelight, it results in a simply gorgeous



tablescape ready for a farm-to-table meal.

Another fun way to combine unusual materials for weddings includes using an old school flower tool such as a bouquet holder to create an over-sized, greenery-focused, cascading bouquet. By creating a hand-tie of large greenery stems around the handle, it allows brides to have the bigger scale they are looking for without the bulky handle they aren't. Using small greenery stems and flowers in the caged foam of the bouquet holder provides a water source without all the bulk of a full on hand-tied bouquet.

Rentals are another great way to help build an event on a budget. Consider starting the wedding season by planting a number of rustic boxes with succulent plants that can be rented out as centerpieces for all kinds of events. Once the event is over, these lavish plantings come back to the store to be cared for until the next round of events. Used again and again, these living rental pieces keep labor costs low and margins exceptional.

Increasing your offerings of plant materials, large and small, is the key to success with this trend. From everyday arrangements of mixed greenery, to the addition of small plantings for plant loving consumers, your customers will keep coming back to your establishment week after week.

Don't forget to educate your consumer as well. Teaching them the proper care of their plants and flowers will place you as an expert in their eyes and will give you a strong foundation with this client base for years to come. Embrace Pantone Greenery, a trend that is past, present, and future. ✿

Derek Woodruff is the owner of the Floral Underground in Traverse City, Michigan and is noted for his cutting edge floral designs.

DESIGN TIP

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

BY DEANA GRESS, CF, NORTON'S FLOWERS AND GIFTS, YPSILANTI/ANN ARBOR, MI, 2017 MFA ACADEMY WINNER

There are so many different things you can do for the holidays. I particularly like a natural look when it comes to Christmas arrangements using pine cones, branches (natural or painted), lotus pods, cinnamon sticks, birch bark, etc. Birch bark is one of my favorites and it can be used throughout the year in almost any design.

Soak the bark in extremely hot water to soften it, so it's easier to separate the layers but leave some layers a little thicker than others. Then cut the bark into different widths, wrap them around different size dowels, tape them in place and let them dry.

Secure the bark in a spiral on the outside of the vase. Lay the vase on its side and start from the bottom. Cut the bark on an angle so that it goes to the left or right (your choice). Attach the bark with U-glue dashes while rolling the vase onto the bark. End at the top and cut off the excess bark.

After filling with water, place branches in the vase. Poke a smaller one through those to lay on the rim of the vase. White birch branches were used here but natural brown ones look good also.

Now start adding your evergreens. Use one type at a time. Make sure to weave stems down through the birch branches as this will help secure them.

After placing the different types of greens, add birch bark coils. You can add a lot of them or just a touch. But you will notice that there are different sized widths here. Some of them can stand up on their own because the layers are left thicker. Other ones that are flimsier just wrap around the branches. Tape them to 18 gauge wire to hold in place.

Now for pine cones. Wire the cones using a 22 or 24 gauge wire. Group in threes, but don't cluster them. Take one and lay it over the wire of another and twist that wire together; take the third one and lay it over the two twisted wires. Then twist all three

together so when you hold the wire they will hang in a line. Attach an 18 gauge wire poked into the vase through the greens. Now leave them dangle straight down or curve them up. I have done both techniques in this arrangement. ❁



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

Instructor: Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF

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These comprehensive courses will introduce beginning students to the exciting field of floral design. Principles and elements of design, proper mechanics of construction, care and handling of fresh materials and use of color are the focal points. For those desiring to become a Certified Florist, this class is a great first step. Time will be divided between lecture and hands-on design. Students will have completed designs to take home each day in the one week course and each week in the 12 week course. There are 36 hours of classroom instruction time in each course with no exams. The limited enrollment of eight in each class will ensure that students receives personal attention. The Wednesday class will meet for 12 weeks beginning September 20 except the week of November 22 for Thanksgiving.

**Bring your own tools including pruner, scissors, and wire cutter.
A floral knife will be provided.**

Intermediate Floral Design

One Week Course

October 9-13, 2017

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Twelve Week Course

Thursday Evenings

September 21, 2017 - December 14, 2017

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

Instructor: Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF

Member \$1250 • Non-Member \$1500

Includes all flowers and supplies.

These courses build 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. The 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. Students will have completed designs to take home each day in the one week course and each week in the 12 week course. The Thursday class will meet beginning September 21 except the week of November 23 for Thanksgiving.

The limited course enrollment of eight in each class will ensure that each student receives personal attention. There are 36 hours of classroom instruction time. Since this is a personal enrichment course there will be no exams.

You must bring your own tools including a floral knife, pruner, scissors, and wire cutter.

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Your instructor will demonstrate three differently styled designs with identical materials. Then class attendees will choose one style to create and take home at the end of the class. Learn care and handling and helpful mechanics.

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MFA Scholarship Committee Seeks Donations for the 2018 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 the 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.

The Michigan Floral Association is not responsible for statements or opinions published in *The Professional Florist*. They represent the views of the author and are not necessarily the views of MFA or its staff.

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