

Volume IV 2015

the professional florist

**Making
Your Holiday
Ordering More
Efficient, Less
Stressful**

**The
Opportunity
of a Lifetime**

**Unwrapping
Simple Tricks
for Profitable
Corporate
Decorating**

**Five Minute
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- Leadership Report**
- 4 It's Christmas in July for 127 MFA Members!**
By Rod Crittenden, MFA Executive Vice President
- Funeral Directors Visit MFA Booth at Annual Convention in Lansing**
- Holiday Features**
- 6 Christmas Greens**
- 7 Making Your Holiday Ordering More Efficient, Less Stressful**
By Jackie Burrell, AIFD, CF, CFD
- 9 Big Shop in a Small Town**
By Samantha Stump
- 11 Neville On The Level – Get Your Glitter On!!**
By Neville Mackay, CAFA, PFCI, WFC
- Member Profile**
- 12 135 Years and Going Strong**
By Barbara Gilbert, Editor
- Continuing Education**
- 14 Come On, Let's Get Wired!**
By Leanna Gearhart-Theye, AIFD, CF
- 15 The Opportunity of a Lifetime**
By Lea Kuklinski, CF
- Designer Spotlight**
- 17 An Elegant Holiday Happening**
By Enrika Karalius, AIFD, CFD, Royal Petal, Crestwood, IL
2015 MFA Designer of The Year
- Industry Info**
- 18 SAF Releases News on Marketing Program**
SAF Supports Research on Pollinator Health
Maine Florist Develops Wedding Flower Calculator
Dutch Flower Catalog Available as Digital App
- WUMFA**
- 19 WUMFA Stresses Importance of Education**
By Patty Malloy, AIFD, CFD, WUMFA President
- 20 Unwrapping Simple Tricks for Profitable Corporate Decorating**
By Denise Gehrke, AIFD
- 22 WUMFA Educational Opportunities**
- Tech Tip**
- 23 Five Minute Facebook Marketing Tip**
By Gail Pabst
- CF Report**
- 24 Design Style, CF News**
By Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF
- Design Tip**
- 25 Holiday Home Decorating**
By Doug Bates, AIFD, CF
Flowers by Vogt's, Sturgis, MI, 2015 MFA Academy Winner
- 27 Professional Education Center**
- 28 In Memoriam**
- 28 Business Card Ads**
- 30 Classified Ads**



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LEADERSHIPREPORT

It's Christmas in July for 127 MFA Members!

BY ROD CRITTENDEN, MFA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



Christmas comes every July 1 for MFA members who get their workers' compensation insurance coverage through the MHI Fund. July 1, the renewal date for their compensation coverage, is when they find out how much of their paid premium is returned from previous years.

This year's profit distribution of \$2,140,000 is one of the largest in the fund's history. It represents an average return equal to 45 percent of a member's annual premium. As a member-owned program, all collected premiums not used for claims and administrative expenses are returned back to members. Since the fund's inception in 1995 the total profits returned to members is over \$25,000,000.

The fund now has a 20 plus year proven track record of out-performing most standard insurance carriers. It offers members substantial profit returns and aggressive claims handling which in turn provides members with the most cost effective workers' compensation option year after year.

Fund members also appreciate the stable yet competitive up front pricing. The competitive pricing, along with selective underwriting, is designed to save members money on the overall total cost of their workers' compensation coverage over the long term. A focus on proper claims management and accident prevention also helps to maximize the member's annual return. Each claim settlement is reviewed by the MHI board of trustees which is comprised of fund members.

If you're not using the MHI Fund for your workers' compensation coverage I would highly recommend you apply today. Call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110 to request an application. ❁

Funeral Directors Visit MFA Booth at Annual Convention in Lansing

The Michigan Floral Association was again represented at this year's Michigan Funeral Directors Association annual convention in Lansing, MI. For the fourth year in a row the MFA set up a booth at the meeting.

"Our goal each year is to talk with the funeral directors one on one about leaving the phrase 'In Lieu Of' out of obituaries and to reinforce the importance of flowers at the funeral service," declared MFA Executive Vice President Rod Crittenden. "We've had good success with this every year. Now I'd like to ask you to go one step further and take this goal to your hometown funeral directors' door. Help spread the word, that flowers are important and 'In Lieu Of' is unnecessary in all obits.

"I'd also like to extend a big thank you to Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, CAFA, CF, CFD, PFCI, Blumz...by JR Designs, Detroit/Ferndale, MI, for supplying the beautiful floral designs for our display and helping man the booth."

Please visit the Michigan Floral Association website at <http://www.michiganfloral.org/flowers-for-funerals-are-important/> and download the PDF handout and deliver it to your local funeral directors. ❁



Michigan Funeral Directors Association Executive Director Phil Douma, left, stopped in the MFA booth for a visit with Michigan Floral Association Executive Vice President Rod Crittenden.

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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.

Stop the Madness!

Making Your Holiday Ordering More Efficient, Less Stressful

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



There are three important questions to ask yourself and your staff after a major holiday or big event.

- What went right?
- What went wrong?
- What could we do better?

Then **WRITE IT DOWN YOUR ANSWERS** so you have notes for the next year. Every holiday and event is different but a few notes will help you remember when you start planning for the next time. After a major holiday week I always try to jot down:

- What was the weather like?
- Did we have funeral work that week?
- Who was the extra staff and what hours did they work?
- Who did deliveries, what did they drive, and about how many deliveries did we have?
- What flowers were ordered and from whom?
- What plants were ordered and from whom?
- What was left after the holiday so you know what was overbought?
- What things did we run out of and what will we need for next year?

Your notes don't need to be lengthy; just enough to jog your memory. Let's face it we aren't getting any younger and there are just too many things to try to remember by yourself.

When ordering flowers and plants for a holiday, wedding or event, I put the name for the event at the top of a blank sheet, list the wholesaler we are using, the name of my shop, and the date that I want it delivered.

I list the quantity and type of flowers I wish to purchase. This is where you need to be clear. Are you looking for seven bunches of sunflowers or do you really want 70 stems of sunflowers? You need to remember that some things are packaged differently based on the grower.

We fax these sheets to the wholesaler with a cover page that says how many pages they should have received plus the cover page and ask them to fax back to us to confirm they received it. It doesn't matter if you fax, call or email the orders, just get them in and make sure they are confirmed. If you call the order in, jot down who you talked to and the date. If you order off a specials sheet, save the sheets so if there is a price difference you have a reference.

Note on the order or event form that the flowers have been ordered. We then put these sheets in with the daily orders for

the day they are scheduled to arrive and use the sheets to check in and pull product for the event.

When I have multiple weddings or events, I send in separate sheets for each event so that when the product comes in I can make sure to separate the flowers for the appropriate event. At holiday times I try to group like things together on the same page and always write a separate sheet if I am looking for some hardgoods or plants.

Make sure you get your flowers early enough to allow time for them to open at the appropriate time. Don't get lilies for Saturday's wedding on Thursday.

For weddings and special events, check with your wholesaler to make sure the product is available. It's hard to get heather in July and peonies in October; sure everything is pretty much always available but are you or your customer willing to pay off season prices?

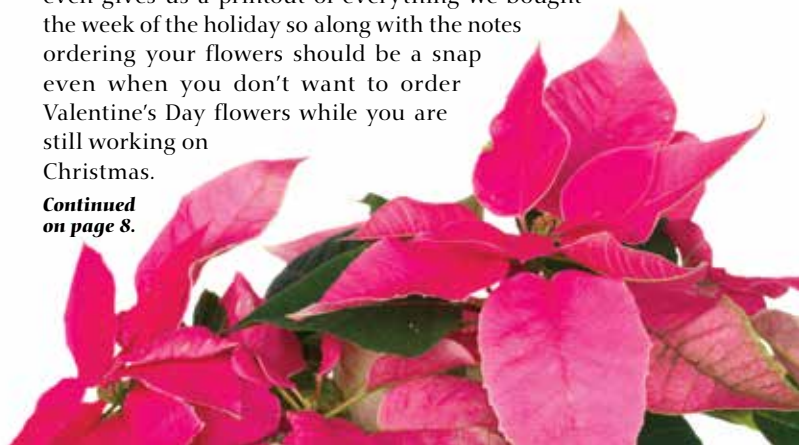
These are great habits to get into. I save my holiday sheets from year to year and use them when ordering for the next year. I will even jot notes right on those sheets about product quality, if we have some left, if we bought more, if we didn't receive it or were shorted... I'm getting older and I need all the help I can get!

When to Place Your Orders

Now we need to talk about when to place your orders. Most wholesalers would love it if you placed your holiday orders about four weeks out and special event or weddings at least three weeks out. The absolute minimum for placing a special order should be 10 days before you want it delivered to your shop, if possible. You have to remember that every florist is looking for red roses at Valentine's Day, white spray roses for proms and beautiful poinsettias for Christmas.

The earlier you order the better because then you are more likely to receive what you want at a better price. Most wholesalers put out price sheets weeks before the holidays and one of mine even gives us a printout of everything we bought the week of the holiday so along with the notes ordering your flowers should be a snap even when you don't want to order Valentine's Day flowers while you are still working on Christmas.

Continued on page 8.



HOLIDAYFEATURE

Remember when you get product off the truck the week of the holiday you are going to pay market prices which could be anywhere from 25–50 cents a stem to a \$1.00–\$2.00 a bunch more expensive. Sometimes delays in ordering can't be helped; but on a day to day or holiday to holiday basis earlier is best for your bottom line.

Another way you can help lock in prices is to have weekly standing orders. If you know you are going to use 25 red roses, 10 bunches of assorted mums, one bunch of snapdragons, two bunches of baby's breath, 10 bunches of leatherleaf, etc., every week why not make it a standing order? You'll save yourself some time and money by having a standing order.

A standing order is a great idea because it always comes to your door at the same time whether weekly, every two weeks or whatever arrangement you make. Generally you get a better price than buying directly off the truck. It also helps the wholesaler with his buying. You can usually change your order with a two week notice.

You can double some items at holiday times at the same standing order price (you need to check with your wholesaler on which items these may be) You also can customize your own box of Esmeralda mums. The only real drawback I have found with a standing order is that you need to take it every week.

Some wholesalers offer seasonal standing orders, or monthly quarter box orders you can select the delivery date on or even

weekly Monday morning specials. I love the Monday morning special sheets because it's a great place to pick up a new item to try.

You can do all the right planning and buying but if you don't pay attention to your care and handling when the product comes in you'll lose product, thus losing profit. If you can't get the flowers cleaned and re-cut right when they arrive, at least put them in some water until someone has time to process them.

Make sure you are using floral preservative correctly and that you are not overcrowding your flower buckets. Don't leave your plants or flowers in plastic sleeves too long and make sure plants get watered if needed when they come in. Don't leave any product where it might freeze or get too hot.

Let your wholesaler know immediately if there is a quality issue. Take pictures if needed and send them to the wholesaler so they can pass them on to the growers.

Clean your coolers and buckets on a regular basis. Get rid of any debris on the floor or old product that could make ethylene gas. Don't store fruit or vegetables in your flower cooler and do regular maintenance on your coolers to make sure they are running at the proper temperature and humidity. All flowers in cooler should be re-cut and put in fresh water every third to fourth day.

These tips and attention to detail are some things that will help ensure that your business runs as smoothly as possible. Efficiency = more profits! Which one of us doesn't want that? ✿

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Big Shop in a Small Town

BY SAMANTHA STUMP,
THE PLATINUM PETAL,
WELLINGTON, OH

Sometimes in my small town, a village in fact, it seems like Christmas trends go by decades rather than years. The ornaments that still hang on my mom's tree are those that she put together with Styrofoam®, "rick-rack", and straight pins in 1970-something.

In the 80s we hung homemade wreaths made of calico Christmas material and fiber fill and put chunks of wood painted to resemble anything we could think of in shadow boxes. Then in the 1990s my mom began to "collect" Santas and our house was filled with anything resembling a man in the red suit. Slowly she has stopped putting all the statues in one place and intermingled them with her decorations all over the house.

Which brings us...slowly...kicking and screaming... to the present...the trend of decorating the whole house.

No longer is anyone putting up a Christmas tree next to stockings clinging to a nail and calling it finished. In my small town, people are decorating everything! The living room, the dining room, the kitchen, even the bathroom. I, myself, confess to saving the "Christmas" towels to use only in December and dutifully wrapping my everyday dishes in tissue and packing them away to make room for my gingerbread china.

So, the challenge for a small town shop is to "drag" our customers into each Christmas season honoring their "Santa" collection while convincing them to update their decorations. We do this by creating vignettes or venues so people

can see how the pieces they already have can go with the new pieces we want them to buy. We also are sure to place fresh and permanent flower arrangements in every setting. Flowers are our focal point, so they are essential to each area. My customers love to look and touch our displays while trying to picture them in their own homes.

We are heading into only our third Christmas season and what have we learned? If people are holding onto things for years and years, how do we get them to buy new and (gasp!!!!) different? Of course, we have no choice but to create the time honored red, white and green designs and wreaths for the door, but we don't stop there. We are sure to include



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HOLIDAYFEATURE

some really new and different items and designs.

What we found is that the first year people saw those new things and marveled at them, but didn't take them home. But then, our second Christmas, people remembered and came back inquiring about something they had seen the year before. At first this was frustrating, but when we took the time to really think about it, we learned something.

The first year people went home and tried to picture our designs mixed in with

their traditions. We gave them options that had not been around in our town before and they just needed to see how their "old" stuff fit in with our "new" stuff. Our challenge is to create items that showcase new trends and techniques while making them "believable" and comfortable for our customers.

Essentially, holidays are about tradition and the feeling we get while celebrating. I believe holiday season decorations are among the most important items we sell. If you think back, you can think of something

that was only out at Christmas time when you were a child; chances are you remember that feeling of anticipation and joy that inevitably accompanied that piece. What a responsibility for the flower shop!

We are not just creating designs and venues, we are helping to create tradition, feelings and memories. As we head into another Christmas season we know that our job is to watch the trends and make new things available to our clients while at the same time honoring the spirit of the holiday for each of them. ✿

Floral Industry Gathers at 2015 International Floriculture Expo

BY BARBARA GILBERT, EDITOR

The 2015 International Floriculture Expo was held recently at McCormick Place in Chicago. The show was held along with the United Fresh and the FMI Connect shows. In addition to the trade show there was a full day of floral educational sessions, and several design demonstrations. Among those featured on the program were Loann Burke, AIFD, CFD, PFCI; Rene van Rems,

AIFD, J Schwanke, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, and keynote speaker, Susan E. Packard, co-founder of HGTV.

Many products were on display in the trade fair including cut flowers, bouquets, containers, plants, Christmas greens, balloons, ribbons and other basic supplies. The 2016 show will again be held at McCormick Place, June 20-22.



Approximately 200 exhibitors showed off their wares at the expo.



Jose (Joey) Azout, president of Alexandra Farms, and Maria Paula Cordoba, sales manager, greeted visitors to their booth.



Representing Hiawatha Evergreens were Kim Tozier, assistant sales manager and Mark Thompson, general manager.

Get Your Glitter On!!

BY NEVILLE MACKAY, CAFA, PFCI, WFC



Wasn't it just yesterday we were putting the leftover "Holiday Didn't Sell" items away, and now we're thinking of dragging them back out to sell amongst all our shiny new offerings?

And, let's be honest, there's still glitter from last season stuck in places in your store, and when I

say places in your store, I mean strewn in every corner from front to back, also including your car, home, bed, cat, computer...

Planning for the upcoming holidays when the weather is still lovely outside isn't easy for most of us but, with a little preparedness, things will go smoother when the time comes. One of the easiest things to get done ahead of time is receiving your holiday merchandise and get it unpacked and priced.

Many suppliers will ship in August and September (they want to get it out, too!) and even offer holiday dating for payments, so take advantage of this when you can. You can not only see what it is you ordered, often months ago, but can see whether you may want or need more. This is also a good time to get the design team fired up about all the new goodies to work with. Many of the items you preorder can often go out for sale earlier in the season, so this is a perfect time to set up your schedule.

At our shop, we like to put some holiday goodies out one at a time, allowing folks to mumble and grumble that it's "out too damned early!", (yet they are still asking for it!). This allows us to tell folks that we are getting a lot more in, so keep coming back. We try to put our stock out in about three or four swipes, so it isn't too much to handle all at once because it can and is a pain to try and squeeze everything in and around, right? We can keep things fresher this way. This also goes for our window displays, as we tend to "transition" them into full-blown Ho-Ho-Holiday mode.

Try, and I really mean try, to get some holiday permanent designing done ahead of time if this is something you sell a lot of at your store. I know many of you are frowning now, but that'll cause more wrinkles, so calm yourselves. Get your designers to have fun while it's not as busy; see what they can create using what was left from displays last year, offer a prize for the best or most innovative; maybe a permanent centerpiece? lol.

Go to design shows. There is nothing better to inspire a person about the next season and get them wound up like a cheap watch than a good ol' design show. Wholesalers bring in some fantastic designers with wonderful ideas, using new products and offerings.

I present at many shows across North America, and love to see the inspiration that people get from them; not only at what I do, but from others in attendance and from within themselves. Remember, wholesalers usually have special offers at shows, so take advantage of these.

Get ready for the "Excuse me...do you know that you have glitter on your face?"

I remember doing one particular show a few years ago with a holiday theme, that seemed to really be a glitter-themed event. The designer I worked with, my friend and brilliantly talented Paul Jaras, along with our friend and co-worker, Susan Clarke, all went out for supper at a local restaurant after a full day of sparkle and pine cones.

A sweet little lady who served us came to our table and asked me why we were covered with glitter. I, of course, explained that we were, in fact, strippers or used to be that is, and were teaching a class in the neighborhood. She seemed to be OK with that, I guess, and proceeded to get our tea and coffee.

Preorder your plants, greenery, and flowers if at all possible! You can either go through your own records, or, like many of us who don't keep such specific records, contact your suppliers as they will have a record of what you got last year. You may see that you ran out of cedar for example and had to reorder late in the season, so maybe this year you can up the order a bit and save a few pennies.

You may want to take advantage of a little known but really great way to get the word out: Social Media! Look, I know you must get sick to death when you hear people talk about what they saw on Pinterest, Instagram or Facebook, but think about it...they are looking! Take a photo or two of your holiday goodies as you unpack them and post what you're up to. People may groan when you show holiday gift ideas, but let them know you are getting ready for an exciting holiday season ahead.

Anyway, here we go again, and before we know it, we'll be sticking to the floor and drinking pine needle-infused tea. Look, you may as well give in, so dig out the glitter and give yourself a little pre-coverage, just to beat the rush. ✿

Neville MacKay, CAFA, PFCI, WFC, is a design director for Smithers-Oasis North America, Atlantic Canada representative for Flowers Canada retail and president of My Mother's Bloomers, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, www.mymothersbloomers.com.



MEMBERPROFILE

135 Years and Going Strong

BY BARBARA GILBERT, EDITOR

In the late 1870s, Louis Wasserman decided to leave Germany and come to the U.S. to seek his fortune. He and his wife Amelia settled in Muskegon, Michigan, where he practiced his profession as a tailor. In his spare time he grew flowers in a small greenhouse. Then his wife decided their future lay in flowers and in 1880 Wasserman's Flowers became a reality. Louis continued to grow flowers while Amelia ran the shop.

This was before Henry Ford brought out his Model T and before electric lights were commonplace. Flowers were delivered by horse and buggy. According to Angie Wasserman-Nelund, Louis and Amelia's great, great grandchild, who now runs the business with her brother Troy, "In the olden days they had a horse from the fire department. Every time the fire bell rang he took off. We found some very old sales slips from an event the store did for one of the area's lumber barons. The cost for three centerpieces of roses and fern came to a grand total of \$5.25." When Louis eventually put in the first electric cooler, people came to the store just to marvel over this modern convenience.

Louis and Amelia's son, William, took over the business in 1925 at a new location in downtown Muskegon. While times were hard during the depression, the flower shop managed to survive. Flowers were a luxury item but were not rationed during this time.

Angie and Troy's grandfather, also named Louis, took over the business in 1940. He was followed by the fourth generation, Dennis, in 1970. The shop was moved to its present location on Lakeshore Drive in 1973 due to urban renewal downtown.



Troy and Angie

In 2013, the fifth generation, Angie and Troy, bought the business which is now celebrating its 135th year.

Angie, Troy, and their parents all attended Michigan State's horticulture program. She is the designer/manager. Troy is the buyer sourcing fresh product and attending gift shows. There are 12 employees including one full time; the rest are part time and drivers. Well known designer and wedding specialist Skeeter Parkhouse has been hired as event coordinator.

Troy comes up with creative ideas to boost business. He has set up twice a week flower giveaways on Facebook. The only requirement is that you are a friend and like and share the post. The winner is picked at random from those who qualify. He also is planning a blog showcasing their wedding work.

This year a special promotion for Mother's Day was featured on their website and was very effective. The arrangement had a natural look with curly willow and butterflies. The shop also participates in the Holidays in Lakeside event in December along with their holiday open house. The event in which many stores participate takes place on the first weekend in December with the open house the week before.

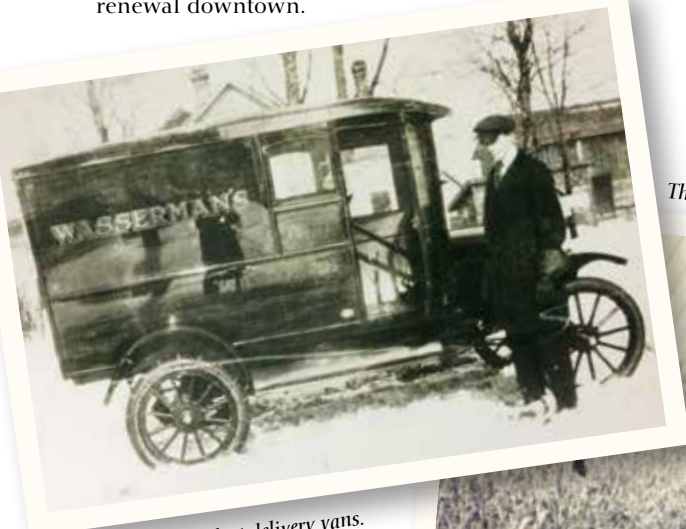
The shop prides itself on fresh product and a creative design team in addition to some up to date innovations. There are many gift items including jewelry by local artists, gardening items, wall decor, lakeshore and cottage items and Pure Michigan merchandise. While flowers are 90 percent of their business, the gift lines have taken off and helped the bottom line.

To expand their product lines, they started selling packaged gourmet wraps, sandwiches, salads, and ice cream. "We want to provide a reason for people to linger and shop. The store has

become more of a destination. Customers can come in

grab a sandwich, shop for fresh flowers, sit outside and enjoy our gorgeous view of Muskegon Lake," commented Angie.

To support this marketing plan, a year-long renovation was completed this year. The remodeling included new flooring and removing a cooler to give the shop an open feeling. An old picture was blown up and put on the



One of the first delivery vans.

The old greenhouse where the business began 135 years ago.





The newly renovated front of the store.

wall to show some of the history of the shop when it was downtown. Outside the greenhouse in the front of the store was demolished and a pergola and tables were put in for the customers. New products and the remodel have helped draw in new customers as have design classes which have been a big hit.

Customer service plays a large part in their success. Being so established in the area they have a very close connection with their customers. Troy Wasserman is proud of the family tradition of customer service and dedication. They know their customers very well and always try to deliver the products and services they have come to expect.

Angie believes they are successful because of better economic conditions and the things they have done to improve the shopping experience. "People seem more willing to spend money these days especially in a comfortable and exciting environment. People come



The store's new look.

in to shop and pass along their experience by word of mouth.

"I truly believe that flowers are the best gift. We are selling emotion and I love to help my customers express their feelings with a beautiful flower arrangement. My brother Troy is really an entrepreneur and loves the creativity and challenge it takes to constantly keep the shop's look and products fresh and exciting for our customers."

Plans are underway for the 135th year celebration. Every Saturday in August will be filled with special events. There will be a family fun Saturday, a trunk sale, a health and wellness day with a chef preparing gluten free selections, a square foot gardening teacher and a farm to table chef. One Saturday will be dedicated to local artists showing and selling their products.

Both Angie and Troy are looking forward to their 136th year and keeping alive a family tradition that has only improved throughout the years. ❁

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NEW FOR 2015

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Come On, Let's Get Wired!

BY LEANNA GEARHART-THEYE, AIFD, CF, HORROCKS MARKET, GRAND RAPIDS, MI



Some might think that wire work is a passing trend, but a trip to your local wholesaler will show it is here to stay and most have devoted an entire aisle to it. Wire is now available in all shapes, colors and sizes with a variety of different textures.

If you think wire is only for corsages and boutonnieres, you are missing out many opportunities to increase your sales by using it in everything from daily orders to wedding and funeral work. This is not to mention the add on sales in your store. No need to worry about your customers returning; they will return repeatedly to see what cool things you are making and purchase more wire and flowers. It becomes an easy addiction and why should the craft stores get all of the repeat business?

Having a string of wired flowers hanging in a display area in your store will create a lot of interest, comments from customers, and is sure to be a hit.

After an enjoyable lunch, we learned how to manipulate wire using different styles and techniques. There was also a study in macramé and crochet. We took a new package of wire and used macramé techniques to make a contemporary hoop which can serve as a basket.

Everyone did a great job of playing, learning and contributing to the class. In my opinion the best part of any class is the give and take. I always learn something from the other participants, whether I'm taking or giving the class. I would like to thank them for "gifting" themselves with some creative, learning and play time.

If you are interested in getting started with wire work, pick out a few different types and take them home. It is easy to watch television and play with different shapes. Use things like bottles, vases and cookie cutters to give you even shapes. Lay the wire flat on a table to make curls and swirls.

You can straighten out anything you don't want to keep by using a slightly damp towel and running the wire straight through it in your hand. This technique will allow you to use the wire over and over. Start to look at designs thinking about where wire could be used in place of things like curly willow, bear grass loops or midollino.

The more you practice, the more comfortable you will be using it. The more you use it, the more people will buy it. The more people buy the more you can see your profits expand. It really is worth taking some extra time to "Get Wired". ✿



The wire class, front row, left to right, Gloria Durham CF; Leanna Gearhart-Theye, AIFD, CF; Jackie Burrell, AIFD, CF, Dian Hoskins, CF, and Debbie Patterson. Behind her is Geoffrey Rentovich CF, and Dave Pinchock CF.



Wire comes in many different colors and textures.

The first task is to get comfortable with it, which is what a group of designers did when they attended the all day "Let's Get Wired" class in Haslett, Michigan. In the class we worked with all the different types of wire allowing for time to play and explore, something that we rarely take time to do.

There were six main categories with different techniques for each. We started with wire leaves. We had fun shaping them and then applying anything from aspidistra leaves to hot new trendy fabrics.

From there we moved into stringing and weaving ideas for everything from everyday arrangements to event and display work.



A wired boutonniere.



Wire owls in a baby shower arrangement made to match napkins. Black mega beads were used for the eyes.



An everyday arrangement with crocheted wire.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Opportunity of a Lifetime

BY LEA KUKLINSKI, CF, FRUIT BASKET FLOWERLAND, COMSTOCK PARK, MI



The opportunity of a lifetime... how often has that happened to you? I suppose it depends on how each of us determines opportunity. Your opportunity may not be mine, but for me it was through the industry in which

I live my passion, the floral industry.

As with most opportunities, it caught me by surprise. For several years I have had the pleasure of volunteering at the MFA convention. I've enjoyed a variety of teachable moments either as a student, competitor, or leader, more often all three, always sharing or learning something new.

So that opportunity of a lifetime came at the 2014 Great Lakes Floral Expo in Grand Rapids, a dinner to honor the best of the best. It was at this awards ceremony that I was blessed with a scholarship by Bloomnet to attend a five day course at the Floriology Institute in Jacksonville, Florida. The award was presented by Mark Nance, president of Bloomnet. I was dumbfounded. This is a scholarship decided upon by the past presidents of MFA. Imagine being deemed worthy of such an honor.

I was soon filled with overwhelming information about this scholarship. I had some decisions to make. A year's worth of classes to choose from and I could attend just one. This was the hard part since I wanted them all. So I chose the one I knew would benefit me the best.

I decided upon "Principles & Elements" with Jackie Lacey as the instructor. Any time or class with Jackie is a gift in itself. He has such extensive experience at so many levels. Jackie's style of instruction is so encouraging, humbling and inspiring.

Our class was very diverse. We had floral designers and shop owners from zero experience to 5th generation family owned shops. They came from the Bronx, Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Georgia, South Carolina and, of course, Michigan.

Jackie is so comfortable to be around. He freely shared many tidbits with us all as well as the basics. We learned great techniques about body flowers, wedding work, sympathy and everyday floral, keeping in mind the subject "Principles & Elements". What I gained in those five days of instruction have been very valuable to me.

Bloomnet and Napco were the perfect hosts for the whole event. Nicole in the office arranged everything from flight plans and shuttle service to accommodations. Meals were provided, with a personal chef on staff.

We enjoyed a tour of Napco's showroom and warehouse where every employee seemed like a personal friend. The receptionist even researched my request to find out where I could purchase some Honeybell oranges. She found another employee who grew them and generously shared a half dozen with me. Now that's family!!

My sincerest thanks to everyone involved in my opportunity of a lifetime. It was so very generous of Bloomnet to offer this trip and especially see the value in ongoing education. I started my career in 1979 and I am always open to learning more. It is so important to keep educating ourselves in our ever changing industry. My final thanks to MFA for choosing me! ✿

Shape
the Future of the Floral Industry

"As a retail florist,
It is important to me that the floriculture industry continues to grow. I am proud to support the American Floral Endowment and the important work they do to fund research and scholarships for the benefit of the entire industry."

Leticia Anderson, Country Florist of Waldorf, Waldorf, Maryland



Support the future of the industry you love with a tax-deductible contribution today.



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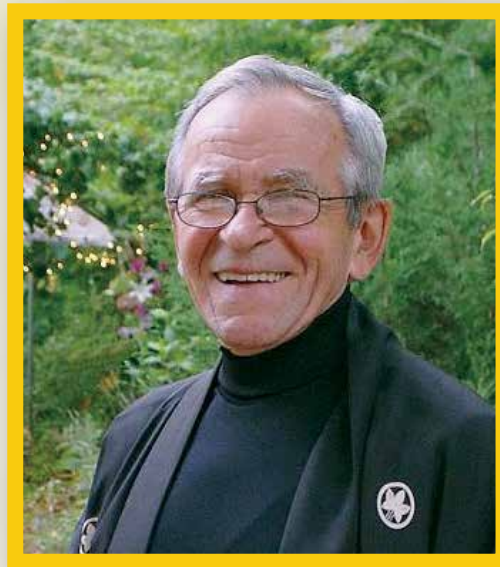
The Michigan Floral Foundation Will Honor

Bob Friese, AIFD, CFD

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

At the Hall of Fame Awards Dinner

University Club, Michigan State University



Robert (Bob) Friese, AIFD, CFD, has shared his artistry and knowledge of the floral industry for over 50 years.

He was honored for his tireless and continued support of AIFD as a leader, mentor, supporter, volunteer and friend with the 2014 Award of Distinguished Service. He also was awarded the MFA "Lifetime Achievement Award" in honor of his great support of the association. He has taken an active part in the GLFE each year, taught classes at the conference and at his home studio on behalf of MFA, and designed for the Hall of Fame banquet honoring Red Kennicott. As director of education at his Chicago school of floristry, he helped allied and trade associations in Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin. He has hosted "Nature's Creative Edge" at his home in Fruitport, MI, for many years. Thousands visited the event every year and thousands of dollars have been raised which he has shared with AIFD National as well as the North Central Chapter. That money has gone to scholarships to attend the AIFD symposium as well as other educational opportunities. As a first class teacher and mentor, Bob has influenced many who have gone on to become successful designers and leaders in the floriculture community.

Tickets for this event are available by calling the Michigan Floral Association at (517) 575-0110. Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities are also available. Don't miss this exciting evening.

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.



MichiganFloral
FOUNDATION

DESIGNERSPOTLIGHT

An Elegant Holiday Happening

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

For a classic look, decorate your client's home or office with a lovely Christmas tree created with a glittery cone adorned with permanent botanicals and ornaments. Begin with the cone partially covered with a champagne colored burlap ribbon, secured with a glue gun. Place the cone into a ceramic container, ready to decorate. The vertical line of the cone emerges from a multi-textured base of cream/grey birch bark poinsettias, snowy fern and Christmas ornaments in champagne gold, clear glass, bronze and pearl white. This all around composition is accented with natural wool wire, natural reindeer moss, and beaded garland. A small companion piece highlights the holiday mood. Display on a console table in the entry for an elegant greeting in neutral tones. ✿

Sponsored by



Nordlie, Inc. of Warren, Flint,
Grandville, Traverse City, MI;
Cleveland, Dayton, OH; Tampa, FL



INDUSTRY INFO

SAF Releases News on Marketing Program

New consumer data, a seasonal media blitz, a new spokesperson, a promotional stunt, and a pair of posters highlight the Society of American Florists' nationwide marketing and public relations programs.

Key components of the campaign include:

Research Feeds Media Blitz. SAF conducted an omnibus survey to gauge consumers' perceptions about flowers in a variety of situations. The results will be promoted through a strategic blitz of media activity.

Professional design psychologist Dak Kopec, Ph.D., will serve as the campaign's primary spokesperson in interviews and contribute to *AboutFlowers.com*.

Major national, regional and digital news outlets will be targeted. Teaser alerts will be sent in advance of each release to build "buzz" and media interest. SAF also will tout the results through social media. SAF members can follow the SAF social media channels *Facebook.com/AboutFlowers* and *Twitter.com/FlowerFactor* to see in "real time" the messages that are going out to consumers.

Pay it Forward Flower Stunt. Florists share the joy of giving flowers each time they make a delivery, and university research proves flowers make people happy. A promotional stunt in October will spotlight that pleasurable moment with an orchestrated "flower bomb" on the streets of New York City (think flash mob, with flowers), where people will randomly be presented with flowers. Recipients will be encouraged to "pay it forward" and post pictures on social media.

SAF will distribute a press release promoting the event to nationwide media, and top-tier broadcast media outlets will receive flowers in an effort to garner press coverage of the event, highlighting key survey findings. To encourage members nationwide to follow suit, starting in August, SAF will provide members with step-by-step advice on how to implement a similar effort in their local market.

New Local Marketing Kit. The Society of American Florists will release its Local Marketing Kit in August. The kit includes two new posters featuring floral arrangements created by Carol Caggiano, AIFD, PFCI, A. Caggiano Inc., Jeffersonton, Virginia.

"Mood Changer" reinforces the positive impact flowers have on emotions, as proven by Rutgers University research. Hot pink roses, 'Green Trick' carnations, green cymbidiums, orange ranunculus and succulents are casually grouped in a glass cylinder lined with variegated aspidistra.

The second poster, called, "Table for Two. Party of Six. Celebration of the Year," features three monochromatic centerpieces against a black backdrop.

In "Table for Two," Caggiano created casual groupings of reds – roses, tulips, mini gerberas, and mokara orchids – flanked by two loops of lily grass in a textured silver mercury glass container. Yellows dominate the "Party of Six" arrangement. Callas, roses, ranunculus, pompons and cream carnations are casually grouped in a glass pedestal lined with fresh moss. "Dusty Miller in the arrangement gives the yellow an upscale personality," Caggiano said, "and sprigs of oncidium orchids give an air of height with openness."

For "Celebration of the Year," Caggiano designed two tight bunches of purple callas, and placed the bunches stem-to-stem, evocative of an hourglass shape. She then collared the callas with cymbidium orchids and purple phalaenopsis, and submerged them in a tall clear glass cylinder.

sustainability of this important segment of agriculture. That is why all sectors of agriculture, including row crop, specialty crop, beekeepers, and related agricultural industries have come together to express support for the allocation of these funds and exhibit our shared interest in pursuing this research so that we may all base our decisions on sound science."

The Bee and Pollinator Stewardship Initiative's launch of the website *growwise.org*. is supported by SAF, AmericanHort, and the American Floral Endowment. The initiative's website provides a go-to resource for information about bee and pollinator health, whether bee colonies are really still declining and the positive impact the industry can play in promoting bee health. It also cites bee research being conducted by HRI and AFE. Go to the website to download a brochure and "frequently asked questions," designed for growers, landscapers, and their customers.

Find out more about pollinator health and the floral industry at endowment.org/bee-donate or contact Lin Schmale at lschmale@safnow.org.

SAF Supports Research on Pollinator Health

The Society of American Florists joined dozens of groups calling on Congress to increase funding for important research on pollinator health.

A letter asked lawmakers to support increases in President Obama's fiscal year 2016 budget, including a \$7 million increase to the USDA's Agricultural Research Service budget for the Pollinator Health Initiative and \$500,000 increase for the National Agricultural Statistics Service to further analyze honey bee colony losses and pollination costs for the Pollinator Health Initiative.

"For over a decade, beekeepers have been suffering from higher than typical overwintering losses," according to the letter. "These losses and the unpredictability of their severity have threatened the

Maine Florist Develops Wedding Flower Calculator

Erlene LeBorgne, a florist-turned-technology-consultant in Portland, Maine, has developed the Wedding Flower Calculator for members of the Society of American Florists.

The calculator helps brides make realistic budget plans. It includes categories, such as bridesmaids, pew flowers, cake toppers and toss bouquet. Under each category, brides enter the quantity of what they want and a total pops up, showing them what they can get using less expensive flowers, moderately priced flowers or high-end products.

SAF members can download the calculator for free from safnow.org/business-service-discounts #ThePricelsRight, and can customize it by entering their shop's information and flower prices, then put it on their websites or email it to customers.

Dutch Flower Catalog Available as Digital App

The Dutch flower catalog will soon be available in a digital version. The aim of the catalog is to support and facilitate the international trade and sale of ornamental flower and plant products.

Bloemenbureau Holland stopped producing product catalogs for cut flowers, pot plants and outdoor plants in 2013 as a result of a policy change following a reorganization.

The production and development of the app is being coordinated and implemented by Coöperatie InfoFlowersPlants U.A. The InfoFlowers app can be downloaded under the name InfoFlowers at Android and Apple stores.

Among the catalog's features are:

- The product information is independent and not company-related.
- No registration required before use.

- The products shown are readily available on the market.
- The photos and information are easy to share digitally.
- The search function is quick and accurate.
- The photography is of high quality.
- Flower names are available in many different languages.
- An update of the range shown is available in the app every month.

The InfoFlowers app is possible thanks to a grant from promotion fund Stimufflori, among other supporters in the ornamental flower and plant sector. Apps for indoor and outdoor plants will be launched later on.

For further information, contact Charles Lansdorp, cell +39 (0)348 441 5927, charles@infoflowers.info or Lucas Jansen, cell +(0)62 226 1489, lucas@infoflowers.info.

WUMFA Stresses Importance of Education

BY PATTY MALLOY, AIFD, CFD, WUMFA PRESIDENT



I am happy to begin my term as president of the Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Florists Association with the support

of an outstanding group of people on the WUMFA board.

There are so many talented florists and wholesalers giving their input and creative thoughts about various ways to keep our great organization abreast of the constant changes in the floral industry. One of those ways includes providing current and trendsetting design workshops and seminars to WUMFA members throughout the year.

There are so many choices for learning about new design techniques through trade magazines, wire service design shows, and of course YouTube. But yet, I feel one of the best ways to learn is by doing. This is where attending the annual WUMFA convention and one or more of the educational workshops offered allows attendees to participate in an exceptional hands-on experience.

We had some wonderful national designers provide training at our spring convention last March. And plans are underway with an experienced team of convention committee members to present another fabulous learning

opportunity at our next annual convention April 1-3, 2016. Be sure to mark this date on your calendar for "must do events to attend" next spring. It promises to be fun, exciting, and educational.

Another way to stretch and grow your design talents is to try something different by entering design contests whenever possible. The convention offers that opportunity in a number of categories from the floral design student category to the professional florist category.

WUMFA has announced three education sessions in August and one in September. See page 22 for the class dates and locations. Other opportunities might include the Wisconsin State Fair in West Allis August 6-16, 2015, and the spring Milwaukee Art in Bloom events just to name a few. There is also a new art in bloom venue: Fabulous Florals and Fine Art in the Chippewa Valley, located in northwestern Wisconsin, is set for January 15-17, 2016. All of these events offer a chance to think outside the box and generate some creative arrangements for the fun of it. It also offers a chance to take a break from the ordinary everyday design styles and try something new and different.

If there is a particular design subject you would like to have offered through WUMFA educational opportunities please let us know. Feel free to contact us on the website at www.WUMFA.org or better yet, think about volunteering to help out in any number of committee member opportunities also found on the website. We are waiting to hear from you! ✨

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SAVE THE DATE
April 1-3, 2016
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**Welcome
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WUMFA

Unwrapping Simple Tricks for Profitable Corporate Decorating

BY DENISE GEHRKE, AIFD, PFCI, CREATIVE DESIGN MANAGER, WAUKESHA FLORAL & GREENHOUSE, WAUKESHA, WI



As designers we can all appreciate a beautiful display when we see it. Maybe, we even appreciate it a little more, because we

know how much work has gone into it. Over many years at Waukesha Floral & Greenhouse, I've been very fortunate to design multitudes of seasonal decorations. Hundreds of thousands of lights, and miles of garland later here are some behind the scenes tips and tricks to increase profits with corporate decorating this holiday season.

Christmas is the #1 consumer spending holiday. It comes once a year, but for florists it lasts for months. Preparation for corporate installations doesn't begin in November or December. It begins when your existing installations and decorations are being taken down in January.

When it comes takedown time, there are a few things you can do to make your installation the following season go a little more smoothly. Make sure all decorations get properly labeled. Ten months later you're not going to remember which end of the garland went at the top of the stairway. Labeling can be done quickly and easily with white aisle runner tape and a black marker.

Remove lights if possible, especially on garlanding. More than likely, they won't work the next year anyway. Take notes now when it is fresh in your mind. Write down which decorations become worn, need to be replaced, or updated. These notes will also come in handy when you are writing proposals for the next year.

When it comes to selling for the holidays,



Assembling Christmas trees before they go on site.

you don't need to tell the customer exactly what they will be getting in décor. It is not necessary to say there will be "12 snowflake ornaments, 24 candy canes, and 15 red poinsettias". Better to describe the decorations as "a mix of snowy white, including silver accents with a pop of red".

Make broad statements of theme, color, and style to explain the look to your customer. This doesn't limit you to having to source some products that may be unavailable. In your proposals, if you are unsure of budget, include some additional ideas above what was discussed. Most likely your customer will not accept the first proposal as you wrote it. The option to let them delete things makes them feel like they are saving money and sometimes, the customer's budget is really higher than what you may have expected.

After you have a signed agreement in your hands – let the reindeer games begin! Installing Christmas trees and décor in corporate locations is much different than setting up trees in your shop. In your store, you encourage your customers to shop off



Corporate Christmas party decorations.



Traditional Christmas decorations at a local church including a decorated 15 ft. tree, wreaths, and fresh white poinsettias.

your trees. On corporate accounts, especially businesses with high public traffic areas, you need to secure every decoration and ornament to the tree, wreath, or garland. You can save lots of time by using zip ties to bundle items together, and attach them to the greenery as one unit.

Sometimes on larger installations, it is necessary to prep trees and decorations before you get on site. Attach the unbreakable ornaments and silks beforehand with wire or zip ties. Then, when on site add the “finishing touches”, also known as the fragile glass ornaments or snow.

Preparing your trees beforehand can save a lot of time. After you have attached all of your non-breakable items, wrap the tree or wreath in shrink wrap, or heavy duty plastic, and rebox garlanding. Don't forget to label where it is going to be installed. This will allow you to transport safely from point A to point B. Knowing the logistics of where you are installing is essential if you are preparing Christmas trees at your shop. You cannot fit a 9 ft. pre-decorated tree on a rolling stand into an elevator.



Festive decorations at the entrance of a large office building.

Pre-decorating a tree in two sections and assembling on site is sometimes necessary. If you are new to corporate decorating, be prepared, the public loves to watch and ask questions. If your customer doesn't mind, have a few business cards on hand to give to people who are interested in your services, want to visit your website, or have additional questions.

Have you ever gone to gift shows, looked at some of the Christmas items available, and wondered, “Wow! Who is going to use that?!” Whether it's the black glittered snowflakes, orange phalaenopsis orchids, or a cotton candy pink Christmas tree, there is a perfect place for everything. We just need to think outside the box. Christmas decorations don't all have to be red and green.

It is with your corporate accounts that you have more opportunity to create something different. When you are in discussions for the initial proposal, you will more

than likely be doing a walkthrough of the building at the same time. Point out that you can customize their decorations around their everyday décor. Maybe there are orange stripes in the carpeting, then you could recommend their decorations in oranges and browns. Add in a touch of metallic gold or copper, and suddenly you are the one sourcing out orange orchids. I've done this combination, and it's stunning in the proper surroundings.

One of our customers goes on African safaris, and when you walk into his business, the foyer looks like you are entering a jungle. Yes, animals and all, including lions, an elephant, and a grizzly bear. We had a lot of fun designing their décor. This was the perfect location for cheetah fur poinsettias, and zebra print monstera leaves. You have provided personal service by creating a custom, one-of-a-kind decorating scheme based

Continued on page 22.

Top “12 Tricks” for the 12 Days of Christmas Decorating

1. Take notes at installation and takedown on decorations that need to be replaced or updated. This is also the best time to jot down ideas and additional new decorations and ideas for the following year.
2. Sell the custom work, rent the standard holiday stuff and props.
3. Shift your props around to different accounts to make things fresh.
4. Plan on a prelit tree working 2-3 years before it needs to be replaced or fixed on a commercial account.
5. Use zip ties to bundle items together on trees, wreaths, and garlanding in high traffic areas to save time and ensure they are secure.
6. Invest in great quality rolling tree stands. Don't purchase the cheap rolling stands.
7. Stock your toolbox for any situation. Run through all the items you could need before you leave the shop. Bring your own high quality safety rated ladders. Use a shop apron with large pockets so you can have your hammer, scissors, zip ties and wire cutters on you, keeping your hands free to hold onto the ladder, while still having the necessary tools.
8. Charge by the hour for install, takedown, and off site removal. Consider writing extra man hours into your proposals, to cover the “unexpected” things that can occur on site. Charge market prices for storage of customer owned materials, and charge for the entire 12 months. If you are renting space anywhere else, it is for 12 months.
9. Bring Band-Aids, and always a small first aid kit.
10. Snacks and drinks to keep up morale and energy.
11. Make sure your insurance covers damage or injury resulting from your decorations or decorating off site.
12. Charge what you're worth. This is about the only time of the year that there's enough business to keep everyone jumping. You are the professional and your decorating skills are worth it.

WUMFA



Holiday enhancements to an otherwise "boring" hallway.

on colors and things your customer loves. Your corporate customers love it when their customers are raving about the awesome Christmas decorations.

More than 90 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas, Kwanza, or Hanukkah. It is the most celebrated season of the year. This is very important to keep in mind when designing holiday décor for public locations. Religious items and homeowner style tchotchkes are not appropriate for most decorating in the corporate world. Sell more of an upscale, professional style which imple-



Deck the walls with seasonal wall art.

ments your creative floral skills. By doing this, you provide more of an appropriate holiday look for all faiths and traditions.

Corporate Christmas decorating is a 12 month process, and is no easy task. It is truly a labor of love. There is not a month that goes by where we don't discuss decorating for our corporate accounts.

From pricing to proposing the work... making lists of items needed... sourcing, shopping, and ordering those items... scheduling seasonal decorating staff... receiving holiday items and assigning them to an account... unpacking and creating your custom holiday decorations... re-packing and labeling finished items... transporting them... installation... takedown and wrap-up... to storage for the year, holiday decorating is truly a year-long process!

And, the earlier in the year that you can procure what is needed for upcoming jobs, the better selection you have at the gift shows. Most important, have fun with your decorating. It is a lot of work but there is nothing better than looking at a beautiful 15 ft. tree you and your staff just created, and having your customer be amazed and delighted.

Best wishes to all for a successful and profitable holiday season. Always remember, it really is "the most wonderful time of the year!" ❁

WUMFA EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

FUN WITH FOLIAGES AND MORE

This course will inspire you to look at foliage in a new way. Turn your arrangements from ho-hum to awesome using new techniques. The focus of this class will be on using ordinary foliages or foliages you may not have had a chance to use, care and handling of foliages, and new products that will assist you in creating the mechanics. The class will be divided between lecture, demonstration and hands-on creation. Design will involve adding foliage techniques to everyday designs.

Join us for this inspiring workshop!

Bring your own tools. Knife, bunch cutter, wire cutter, scissors. Includes all flowers and supplies.

Members: \$40.00 • Non-Members: \$55.00 • Students: \$35.00

MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2015 – 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Rojahn & Malaney Company,
1005 N. Edison Street, Milwaukee, WI.

Instructors: Doug Jaeger, CF, and Diane Schulte, CF, WMFM.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2015 – 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Bill Doran Company,
1255 Bellevue Street, Green Bay, WI.

Instructors: Kathleen Johnson, AIFD, CF, CFD.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2015 – 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Chippewa Valley Technical College,
West Campus Education Center,
4000 Campus Road, Eau Claire, WI.

Instructor: Patty Malloy, AIFD, CFD.

For availability call (517) 230-7730.

CERTIFIED FLORIST CLASS

This class is open to participants in the online certification program. This series of courses will allow participants to construct a variety of design styles. Techniques covered will include sympathy, wedding and everyday floral work. Basic design competency and experience are required to register for this class. You can sign up for one, two or all three offerings. If not enrolled in CF program, you will need to complete the CF education registration application.

Bring your own tools. Scissors, wire cutter, needle nose pliers, florist knife and bunch cutter. Includes all flowers and supplies.

Members: \$300.00 • Non-Members: \$450.00

Kennicott Brothers Co., 4831 W. State Street, Milwaukee, WI

Instructors: Kathleen Johnson AIFD, CF, CFD
and Diane Schulte CF, WMFM.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2015

9:00 a.m.-12 noon - Current design styles and techniques
12 noon -1:00 p.m. - Lunch on your own
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Design styles and techniques continued
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. - Dinner on your own
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. - Sympathy design techniques

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2015

8:00 a.m. -10:30 a.m. - Sympathy design techniques continued
10:30 a.m. -12 noon - Wedding design techniques
12 noon - 12:30 p.m. - Lunch on your own
12:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. - Wedding design techniques continued

Sign up now. You won't want to miss this class.

TECHTIP

Five Minute Facebook Marketing Tip

BY GAIL PABST



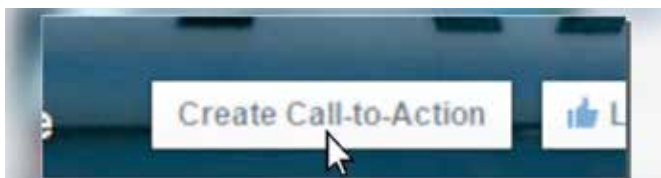
Here is a really quick social media tip that will probably take you five minutes to complete...

adding a Call-to-Action button to your Facebook business page. If you have already added the button to your page, great. Now

is the time to take a moment to review your button selection, maybe a new call-to-action is in order.

Facebook added a Call-To-Action button to business home pages in late 2014, early 2015. Your page should now have it. It can be found on your business page cover photo, to the right of your profile name.

Once you click on the Create Call-to-Action, you will find a dropdown with a number of different options on where to send your page visitors. This button allows a business to redirect the visitors to their own website, a special promotional site or page, or even another site within Facebook.



Buttons to take a look at include...

Shop Now – This is one of the most popular for small businesses because it sends the visitor directly to the website shopping page.

Contact Us – An excellent button for potential brides to set up a bridal consultation.

Sign Up – Great for adding new email addresses to your list. Having a class or seminar? Use this as a link to that sign-up form.

Watch Video – Just updated your shop? Is it looking awesome? Has new product just arrived? Take a video and put it up to tell your story. It's that easy!

What's the smartest Call to Action for your marketing objectives? You will have to decide. Remember that it only takes five minutes to change your selection so do it often and have fun. ✿

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.

Join Your Fellow MFA Members 'Fore' the Annual Golf Outing!

Wednesday, August 5, 2015

The 2015 MFA golf outing will be held Wednesday, August 5, 2015, at The Emerald Golf Course in St. Johns, MI. 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 snacks, libations and 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 score or skills.

COST: \$80 per golfer, \$300 per 4-person team; includes 18 holes of golf, cart, lunch, game holes & prizes.

Golf Outing Sponsorship Opportunities

Eagle Sponsor – \$1,000, includes 4-tee sign @ \$100, 1 4-team @ \$300, \$300 donation, and designation as major sponsor in *The Professional Florist* magazine and on the MFA website.

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

Par Sponsor – \$250, includes 1-tee sign @ \$100, \$150 donation, and designation as a sponsor in *The Professional Florist* magazine and on the MFA website.

Bogey Sponsor – \$150, includes 1-tee sign @ \$100, and \$50 donation.

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

A big thank you to the 2015 MFA Golf Outing Sponsors

Eagle Sponsor:

Hyacinth House

Birdie Sponsor:

MHI Self-Insured Work Comp Fund

Par Sponsor:

BloomNet • Vanco Payment Solutions

Tee Sponsor:

Chrysal USA • Country Lane Flower Shops

David Chapman Agency • DWF Flint

FloristWare • Teleflora

"Hyacinth House is proud to be a sponsor of this event. I look forward to seeing you at the course."

**-Jim Schmidt, Hyacinth House,
2015 MFA Golf Outing chairman**

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

CFREPORT



BY CINDY CHING, AIFD, CF

Design Style

New Convention

Summer is the time to get ready for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. All flower shops should have several vignettes that do not offer just a wreath or mantelpiece. A set of three to five pieces will suggest to your customers that they buy more than one décor piece. Here, beautiful mixed metals smoothly transition from harvest to holiday season. Make it a goal this year to make a least five vignettes in different styles and watch them sell. Having a display calendar is important, too. You should plan this calendar a year at a time, schedule the major displays, and fill in the gaps with simple theme displays that educate customers and give them opportunities to buy. See pages 123 -133 in your CF manual for the principles and elements of display. ❁

*Reprinted with permission from Flowers & Magazine.
Photography by Liam Schatten.
Floral design by Bert Ford, AIFD, PFCL.*



CF News

A record-breaking number of students took the annual FFA, Student Certified Florist test this year at Michigan State University, Two hundred and fifty took the FFA portion, and 48 did the Student Certified Florist test. We are proud congratulate 24 Student Certified Florists. We hope they will continue their education and become a Certified Florist. They are:

- **Lapeer County Vo-Tech Center:**
Jade Land, Katie Smith, Jessica Knust, Lauren Scott, Kayleen McMurray, Madison Fricko, Alexandra McGill, Amanda Denney, Emily Campbell, Sable Topper, Ashley Chapin.
- **Jackson Area Career Center:**
Danielle Moore, Samantha Parshall, Leslie Urbanek.
- **North Huron Schools:**
Abby Fischer.
- **Oakland School Tech Center SE:**
Jaclyn Hecker, Mia White, Mariah Thomas.
- **Pankow Schools:**
Alexandra Brandimarte, Hannah Frazho, Samantha Wrone, Alaina Harris.
- **Muskegon Area Schools:**
Jessica Thomas, Taylor Belknap.

Next CF Steps to Certification class is October 1, 2015, and next CF testing date is October 11, 2015, at Michigan State University.
Make October 11 your date to become a Certified Florist!

DESIGN TIP: Holiday Home Decorating

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

Many florists offer in-home decorating for the holidays, which is a great idea that gives us the opportunity to create truly custom designs for our most discriminating customers. But while you're hauling out the holly to deck their halls, be sure to spend some time on the outside of their home(s) as well. Opportunities for additional sales can be right outside the front door.

And while filling outdoor containers with evergreens, dogwood, ilex berries, and pine cones may seem like a natural suggestion, be sure to look for other areas



to suggest coordinating pieces: Lampposts, garage doors, side gates, even the mailbox can be dressed up for the most wonderful time of the year with very little effort.

Remember, our customers look to us as floral professionals. It is our responsibility to suggest the items to create the look

they want in their homes. Spend some time thinking about what you can offer your customers and the outdoor designs you could create for them. With a little planning and decorating suggestions, you and your customers are sure to enjoy the happiest season of all. ✨

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)**

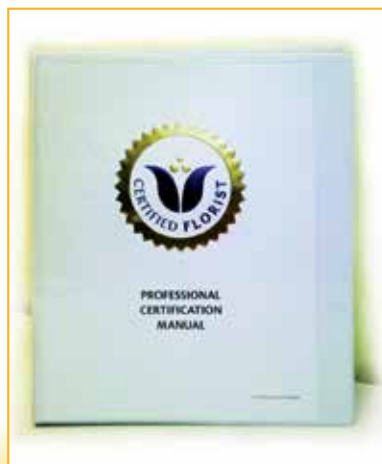
Consumers today are offered more and more options for purchasing flowers and are looking for your credentials or certification to help them justify spending their money with you. Let them discover you are a Certified Florist when they look into your business!

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



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MFA Professional Education Center

NEW! NEW! NEW! **Introduction to Design...Express Style**

Member \$1000 • Non-Member \$1,250

36 HOURS OF CLASS TIME

One Week of Class, Monday through Friday, August 3-7, 2015

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

Instructor: Cindy S. Ching, AIFD, CF

Includes all Flowers/Supplies • Lunch on your own

This course does in one week what the standard Introduction to Design does in twelve weeks. Forty hours of class time, four hours more than the regular class. It 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. All materials are included in the course fee and students will have a completed design to take home each week. Topics include: vase arrangements, symmetrical triangles, asymmetrical triangles, and horizontal centerpieces, round designs, hand-tied bouquets, corsages, and boutonnieres. Since this is a personal enrichment course there will be no exams. The limited course enrollment of 12 will ensure that each student receives personal attention. To download an application form, go to www.michiganfloral.org. Call (517) 575-0110 for more information. **Bring your own tools, a knife will be provided.**

Introduction to Design

Member \$900 • Non-Member \$1,000

12 WEEKS OF CLASS

Wednesday Evenings, September 16, 2015 - December 9, 2015

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

Instructor: Tim Latimer, CF

Includes all Flowers/Supplies

This comprehensive course will introduce beginning students to the exciting field of floral design. Focal points are the principles and elements of design, proper mechanics of construction, care and handling of fresh materials and use of color. 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. All materials are included in the course fee and students will have a completed design to take home each week. Topics include: vase arrangements, symmetrical triangles, asymmetrical triangles, and horizontal centerpieces, round designs, hand-tied bouquets, corsages, and boutonnieres. The class will meet every Wednesday for 12 weeks beginning September 16th except week of November 23rd (Thanksgiving). There are 36 hours of classroom instruction. Since this is a personal enrichment course there will be no exams. The limited course enrollment of 12 will ensure that each student receives personal attention. To download an application go to www.michiganfloral.org. Call (517) 575-0110 for more information. **Bring your own tools.**

Intermediate Floral Design

Member \$900 • Non-Member \$1,000

12 WEEKS OF CLASS

Thursday Evenings, September 17, 2015 - December 10, 2015

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

Instructor: Tim Latimer, CF

Includes all Flowers/Supplies

This course builds upon the foundation of the basic design course. The focus will be on the information presented in the Certified Florist (CF) Manual with the goal of preparing students to take the CF examination. Students who do not wish to take the CF exam will still be welcome. The CF manual is the text for this course. You may purchase this manual at: www.michiganfloral.org or call (517) 575-0110. This manual is recommended but not required. All other materials will be included in the registration fee. Time will be divided between lecture and hands-on design. A sample test will be given on each topic. Lecture topics include: care and handling of flowers and plants, product identification, customer relations/sales, delivery, marketing, accounting, display, intermediate floral design. Design topics include: vased arrangements, bridal bouquets, corsages, boutonnieres and sympathy. Designs will incorporate the contemporary techniques of grouping, layering, basing, framing, and many more. Each week you will take home your designs. The class will meet for 12 weeks beginning September 17 except the week of November 23rd (Thanksgiving). There will be 36 hours of classroom instruction. Since this is a personal enrichment course there will be no exams. Limited enrollment of 12 will ensure that each student receives personal attention. To download an application go to www.michiganfloral.org. Call (517) 575-0110 for more information. **Bring your own tools.**

Steps to Certification

Member \$149 • Non-Member \$199

Thursday, October 1, 2015

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

Instructor: Cindy S. Ching, AIFD, CF

Includes all Flowers/Supplies • Lunch on Your Own

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.**

2016 Great Lakes Floral Expo

SAVE THE DATE

March 4-6, 2016

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel/Devos Place

Grand Rapids, Michigan

For More Information

Go to www.michiganfloral.org



INMEMORIAM

DONALD R. LONGJOHN, Gun Lake, MI, has died at the age of 76.

A graduate of Michigan State University, he operated Longjohn Floral Shoppe and Greenhouse in Kalamazoo, Michigan, for 52 years. The shop, which he founded with his parents, was well known for its Christmas open houses.

Mr. Longjohn was a member of the North Side Business Association, the Kalamazoo Valley Plant Growers Cooperative and the Michigan Floral Association.

He was preceded in death by wife Brenda, his parents, an infant brother, and a sister. Surviving are three children,

Donald (Mary) Longjohn, Julia Longjohn and her husband, Jeff Compton and Brent Longjohn, all of California; two granddaughters; three sisters, a brother, Gerald (Marjorie) Longjohn, and many nieces and nephews. ✿

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Save the Date: August 5, 2015
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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.

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.

Florist for Sale. Owner Retiring: Established 10 years in the City of Grosse Pointe. A reputable, turn key operation, with basement storage. A must see. \$125,000.00. If interested contact Donna (313) 881-2899.

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.

**Download an application today
at www.michiganfloral.org.**



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the professional florist

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MISSION STATEMENT

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

Coordinated Christmas Designs



At **Kennicott Brothers, Vans & Nordlie** there's no such thing as the "same old greens." Our 2015 catalog showcases not only NEW items for your retail space, but several *different design lines* to suit your customers' tastes.

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