



Volume IV 2010

**The Interflora
World Cup**

**In Memoriam:
Lucille Belen**

**Roses
are Red...
a Bridal
Update**

**A New Rose
Named for
Bobbi Ecker**

**Spotlight
on DWF Flint**

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Holiday Trends 2010

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Volume IV 2010

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LEADERSHIPREPORT

Gearing Up for Glitz & Glam

BY ALICE WATEROUS, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI, MFA PRESIDENT



Call me crazy, but I never get tired of Christmas and the other winter holidays. There is so much variety. This is the time when you can go bright, glittery and be little (or a lot) overdone! It's an opportunity to go way out of your comfort zone, since holiday décor is up for a limited period of time. What's not to love about that?

As you consider the upcoming December holiday season, the real question is – what trends work for my business?

Floral professionals across the globe are routinely searching for the next great thing. As you review the hot new looks, naturally, you evaluate what will appeal to your community/customer base. We have all gotten stuck at some time with what we thought was the coolest thing since sliced bread. You know, that merchandise your staff thinks came from a show-

room that was serving margaritas while writing your order. But that doesn't mean we always have to play it totally safe (no guts no glory).

Michigan Floral Association wholesaler members are a great place resource when planning for this important time. I hope you take the opportunity to attend several of the many holiday open house shows traditionally held by our wholesaler partners. The ability to peruse their inventory and purchase in the quantity that works for your business is a great advantage.

Many MFA wholesaler members make a huge investment in holiday merchandise, open houses and in-store displays that give you a ton of ideas for your stores. As you attend these wholesaler shows, the fresh perspective given by guest designers is always inspiring. So get out of your same four walls and go see what's happening!

It's a stretch sometimes, to go beyond the traditional red/green, silver/white, or cream and gold in our holiday displays. However, every retail shop should have at least one display that is a bit "edgy." If your store always looks roughly the same for the holidays, well,

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Holiday Open Houses/Design Shows

MAYESH WHOLESALE – Romulus, MI – Open House: Monday, August 30, 2010
Begins at 12 noon with a Design Show at 7:00 p.m. Featuring Christmas Greens

SAGINAW VALLEY FLOWER EXCHANGE – Saginaw, MI – Holiday Open House: September 10, 11, 12, 2010

VANS FLORAL PRODUCTS – Grand Rapids, MI – Fall/Christmas Show: Tuesday, October 5, 2010
Featuring John Hosek, AIFD, CF, PFCI

LEADERSHIPREPORT

let's just say it – BORING! If you want folks to come in, they need an “experience,” something that makes them go WOW or even OMG (as long as it isn't that “Margarita” merchandise!) Making your shop memorable will surely make you the place to shop when customers want something beautiful and unique.

If you (perish the thought) have things that were packed away from last season, look for a few new items that will fill in and make it all look new. Maybe your investment will be some really great ribbon, some splashy big ornaments, some classy containers and some fabulous faux greenery (things they won't see anywhere else.) You may be surprised to find your customers like the look of a tree in a non-traditional color such as chocolate brown, vanilla cream or black liquorice. At least, they'll take notice.

An ongoing trend by many successful retailers is to schedule ‘Do It Yourself’ events, where customers can create a wreath, centerpiece or swag for the season under the guidance of your professional design staff; a terrific way to ‘connect’ those folks to your business.

As we speak of trends, I hope you all are utilizing, in addition to a professional Web site, a Facebook presence and other social networking opportunities. What a great way to communicate to current and prospective customers. While you're thinking Facebook, check out the MFA group page – you can jump onboard to keep in touch and share ideas with your fellow industry professionals. ✨

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Grand Rapids, MI

INMEMORIAM

Lansing's Leading Lady

Longtime leader Lucille Belen leaves a lasting legacy

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

On June 2, 2010, community and floral leader Lucille Belen, AAF, passed away at age 97. Belen recently was inducted into the Michigan Floral Foundation's Hall of Fame on April 29, 2010, for a lifetime of floral achievements.

Her life in the floral industry began in 1936, when father, Christopher, and mother, Elizabeth, a nurse, founded Belen's Flowers in Lansing, MI. Belen worked with sister, Virginia, in the shop until her death in 1963, and brother, Frederick, until he moved to Washington D.C., to become a lawyer. He later became Deputy Postmaster General of the United States, designing and implementing the zip code system used by the Postal Service.

While working in the shop, Belen took courses at a floral school and served as a court reporter. She also served as executive secretary for the Public Utilities Committee, and spent one summer in circuit court working with divorce cases.

"That pretty much turned me off to marriage," Belen said. "I was overwhelmed by the number of divorce and domestic abuse cases."

In 1950 Belen founded the Belen School of Floral Design in Lansing, offering a one-week course held annually that became known nationwide.

"It was one of the first floral schools," said Rod Crittenden, executive vice president of the Michigan Floral Association. "She wrote the book on floristry. Lucille was a huge supporter of the industry and education. She always thought of others first."

The state of Michigan approved and accredited the school and official certificates were given to students upon completion of the course. The school ran successfully for 40 years.

"One of the greatest compliments I ever got was from a Wisconsin woman whose boss sent her to Belen's because he said it was the best floral school there was," Belen said. "People came from California, Florida, the East Coast, Canada, all over."

And Belen worked all over Lansing, serving on the City Council for 37 years. Four of those years were spent as chairwoman on the county board of supervisors. She was the only woman among 45 members at the time. Upon retiring from the Council, the ballroom in the Lansing Center was named in her honor. Belen also served on the foundation board at Lansing Community College (LCC) and the board at Ingham Medical Hospital.

"I could see first hand that there was a shortage of nurses," she said.

So she started the Lucille Belen Scholarship for aspiring nurses attending LCC, still given out every year. During the 20 years she spent as the chairwoman of the health committee on the Ingham Medical Board, she raised money to fund the Ingham Regional Medical Hospital on Greenlawn in Lansing. The outpatient wing in the hospital was named in her honor.



Lucille Belen, AAF, at her Michigan Floral Foundation Hall of Fame induction.

Belen also donated money to Hospice care, and the Lucille Belen Legacy Society benefits the Hospice House of Mid-Michigan in Lansing, where she also built a rooftop garden for patients to enjoy.

Belen funded the restoration of the historic Turner Dodge House in Lansing, and planted a garden there in honor of her parents, because "they were the ones who started the flower shop," she said.

Belen saved the Women's Hall of Fame House in Lansing from being torn down, negotiating rent for \$1 per year and funding the house restoration. The Elizabeth Belen Gallery is attached to the house, named for Lucille's mother, who was the area's first female state lawmaker and nurse who helped fight the 1918 flu epidemic. Belen credited her mother for her avid belief in community service.

"My mom always donated money and time to non-profit organizations in Lansing," she said. "She taught me to always help people."

Belen continued to donate money and time by fundraising and assisting with zoning for Thomas M. Cooley Law School, and fundraising for construction of the Michigan Historical Society Museum, both in Lansing. She also was instrumental in preventing the Lansing Board of Water and Light from leaving the city. She was a board member of the Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA). She was a member of the Lansing Zonta Club, the Lansing Women's Club, the Lansing's Women's Literary Club, the Capital Regional Communications Foundation and the Ingham County Jury Commission.

INMEMORIAM

[She is] a shining example of a true public servant. Her passing marks a time to reflect on her enormous contributions to our community. She was a pillar of strength and courage, and she didn't mind ruffling a few feathers now and then to get things done."

— LANSING MAYOR VIRG BERNERO

People often urged Belen to run for Lansing Mayor, but she said she "wanted to stay with flowers."

"Florists take care of people at times of great emotional need," Belen said. "People get to know you well, and you get to know them well. My favorite part of working in the floral industry is waiting on the customers. I like people."

And no doubt, people liked Lucille. In addition to the Michigan Floral Foundation's Hall of Fame, the Michigan Floral Association also honored Lucille in 1973 with Retailer of the Year; in 1994 with the Lifetime Achievement Award; and in 2005 with the Special Recognition Award. In 1973, she won the Paul Krone Retailers Award. In 1975 the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce awarded her for her tireless community



From left to right: Rod Crittenden; Alice Waterous, AIFD, CE, CFD, PFCI; Kathy Petz, AAF, CE, PFCI; Lucille Belen, AAF (seated); Jim Schmidt; Jeanette Gaudreau-Ballien.

service; to date, Belen is the only woman bestowed this honor. She has four awards from three Michigan Governors. Her shop has received awards from Teleflora and FTD. In 2001, she was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. She received the Greater Lansing Fine Arts Council Award, where she worked as an advisor, for her campaign to save the trees on the Lansing Capital grounds, an honor she said she was most proud of.

"They were going to cut down trees to make parking lots, and I couldn't let that happen," Belen said. "A group of us hugged the trees to stop the bulldozers and it worked."

Lucille's nephew, Frederick Belen, said until the end, she still loved talking about the trees and felt pride in the accomplishment. She was a strong supporter and donor to fine arts, serving on the board of the Lansing Symphony, and

enjoyed frequent trips there and to Lansing's Boarshead Theater and Michigan State University's Wharton Center for the Arts in East Lansing.

On August 1, 2005, Lucille sold Belen's Flowers to Linh Kostamo, who had then worked at Belen's for five years. But she never lost her love of flowers. On her endless outings, Belen "always wore a flower," making the corsage her trademark.

"People would always ask why I'm wearing one, then I'd tell them about my shop," she said. "I'm always very happy with flowers."

Former Lansing Mayor Tony Benavides said he will remember Belen's signature flower arrangements, with roses, orchids and gladiolas.

"She was very, very concerned about her legacy," Benavides said. "I think that her legacy will be remembered for many, many years. She did beautiful things for the city of Lansing."

Lansing's current Mayor, Virg Bernero, calls Belen "Lansing's leading lady."

"[She is] a shining example of a true public servant," he said. "Her passing marks a time to reflect on her enormous contributions to our community. She was a pillar of strength and courage, and she didn't mind ruffling a few feathers now and then to get things done."

Lucille's funeral was June 12 at Estes-Leadley Funeral Home in Lansing. The Michigan Floral Foundation Board of Directors has established a Memorial Tribute in Lucille's name. Those wishing to honor Lucille by making a tax-deductible donation can do so by mail at P.O. Box 67, Haslett, MI. 48840, or by visiting www.michiganfloral.org/mmf.html. ✨

2010 Michigan Floral Foundation Hall of Fame Awards Banquet

HONORING FRANK DEVOS
Tuesday, October 5, 2010

Be sure to save the date for an evening of fun and fellowship as the Michigan Floral Foundation presents its second Hall of Fame, to be held at Eastern Floral and The Goei Center in downtown Grand Rapids, MI. Anyone interested in attending should contact the MFA office at (517) 575-0110 or e-mail rod@michiganfloral.org. Don't miss this exciting event from your MFA!

About the Michigan Floral Foundation – Founded 2007

The Michigan Floral Foundation has been established to support and advance the floral industry, its members and the communities they serve. The Foundation meets this responsibility through educational opportunities and community enrichment activities.

The MFF will periodically honor outstanding members of the floral industry who have mentored and inspired their fellow industry members. The Michigan Floral Foundation Hall of Fame has been established to record the contributions of those so honored.

The Foundation will support and encourage educational opportunities between the public and design professionals approved by the MFF board of directors. These programs



Frank DeVos

will be available at a reasonable charge to non-profit community organizations.

The Foundation also will make available financial assistance to those seeking to become a Certified Florist, such as providing matching funds when candidates purchase their study materials. The board of directors will furnish applications upon request. Grants will be awarded on a one-by-one basis in accordance with funds available for distribution.



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How can I support the Michigan Floral Foundation?

The Michigan Floral Foundation (MFF) is a 501(c) 3 organization. Every contribution is tax deductible and there are many ways that an individual can contribute to the MFF. They can give a living memorial by contributing a monetary amount in honor of a person's birthday or anniversary or at holiday time. A donation to the MFF can be given in loving memory of a loved one at their passing. One might request the funeral director include the Michigan Floral Foundation as a possible organization to contribute to. A contribution can be given in honor of someone as a way of saying thank you, or make a professional gesture to let them know they are special by acknowledging them in this extraordinary manner.

The intentions have been outlined; our mission statement completed and donations are now being accepted. Every donation is a tax deductible contribution and stays within the State of Michigan and is used within the State of Michigan to help Michigan florists. So when that person you know has everything they could possibly want, think of contributing a living memorial in their honor. Make them feel good while giving to this cause and keep our State's florists educated and successful and keep our floral industry professional. To donate, contact the MFA office at (517) 575-0110, or visit www.michiganfloral.org and click on the MFF logo!

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HOLIDAYFEATURE



Holiday

Top tips from tri

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR



Though hard to imagine now, the holiday season will be here before we know it. The lazy days of summer are the perfect time to plan ways to spruce up your shop this winter. According to The Society of American Florists' "About Flowers," Christmas/Hanukkah is the No. 1 floral buying holiday, with 50 percent of adults purchasing flowers or plants as gifts for the holiday season. (Compare with 24 percent buying at Mother's Day and 20 percent at Valentine's Day.)

Where Valentine's and Mother's Days are often a solid week of sales, the Christmas holiday season seems to last the whole month of December. Christmas trees and decorations, wreaths for the front door, indoor and outdoor garlands and poinsettias are items customers get excited about right after Thanksgiving, and display in their homes all December long. About Flowers found that 54 percent of people buy for themselves, 52 percent for parents or in-laws, 29 percent for wife or spouse, 26 percent for friend/neighbor, 15 percent for other relatives, eight percent for grandparents and children and seven percent for co-workers. Carry a wide variety of price points in your store to accommodate the many aspects of gift giving.

Fifty-four percent of customers said they purchase fresh flowers for home decoration or for entertaining, such as table centerpieces. Many shops are hosting holiday decorating sessions and floral arranging classes with great success.

"At Eastern Floral we've started to promote holiday decorating workshops at our newest location on Butterworth SW," said Eastern Floral President Bing Goei, who has several locations in Grand Rapids, MI. "We promoted one breakfast workshop with a continental breakfast served and also held a workshop in the early evening with wine and hors d'oeuvres served."

Blumz... By JRDesigns in Detroit and Ferndale, MI, also has success with hosting events.

"The use of our event space has been wonderful," said Robbin Yelverton, AIFD, CF, PFCI, co-owner of Blumz. "Hosting gatherings, networking groups, holiday parties and other activities has really increased our presence and visibility in the community."

It wouldn't be the holidays without the presence of poinset-

Helper

ried-and-true Michigan shops

tias. Fifty-three percent of customers said they purchase red poinsettias at Christmas. Hyacinth House in Lansing, MI, sells 30,000 poinsettias in a combination of wholesale and retail sales each year. The shop annually offers retail poinsettias buy-one-get-one-free, and customers start calling in November to check on the sale.

“The secret to the buy-one-get-one-free is that it’s cash and carry,” said co-owner Jim Schmidt. “Our poinsettias are price competitive and the quality is unmatched. It’s not unusual to have customers buying one- or two-dozen poinsettias at a time. It’s an annual event for some retail customers with whole families coming in. Corporate customers plan their holiday decorating and gift-giving based on our buy-one-get-one sale.”

The sale includes all colors and all sizes of poinsettias, and each comes with foil hat. Bows are available for an extra charge, which becomes a lucrative add-on sale. About Flowers estimates 80 million poinsettias are sold at Christmas, with 74 percent of sales red, eight percent white, six percent pink and three percent mixed.

Fifty-percent of customers buy fresh flowers as a host or other gift, 25 percent purchase flowering houseplants other than poinsettias and 24 percent purchase green houseplants.

At holiday time many shops hire extra help. Avoid a holiday headache with these tips from Jeanette Gaudreau-Ballien, owner of Gaudreau the Florist in Saginaw, MI:

“One tip I’ve learned while growing up in the flower business is that my father always hired retired mailmen, policemen and firemen. Who knows better the streets of your town than these professionals? Most, if not all, had terrific driving records, showed up on time and had good work ethics, but best of all, they knew where they were going. If you don’t know any retired postal workers, firemen or policemen, ask an active member of these professions – they always have a name and the retirees are always looking for a little extra money during a holiday.”

And customers are always looking for that little something extra from your shop. Keep up with floral magazines, the Internet and your Michigan wholesalers for the top tips you need for a successful 2010 holiday season.

“Keep your customers close,” Schmidt said. “Take care of your customers’ needs, or someone else will.” ❁

More Holiday Tips

- Host a wreath-decorating workshop or a floral arranging class in Christmas centerpieces.
- Promote your sales/specials on Facebook. Create a printable coupon.
- Add fresh Christmas greens to a dozen roses for a special touch.
- Hang twinkle lights around store windows and trees outside.
- Carry Christmas/Hanukkah cards.
- Decorate a tree in your store and price each ornament for sale.
- Play holiday music in your store – it’s proven to boost sales.
- Have Santa in your shop; keep kids happy while parents stock their carts with your poinsettias and other products.
- Place a basket of Candy Canes at the counter.
- Keep a percolator full of warm spiced punch. Customers love it as they shop and the aroma in the store is great!



WHOLESALE CONNECTION

A Little Sparkle... The top

BY SARAH HAMILTON



The cloud is beginning to lift and people are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. After the heavy hit consumers took from the recession over the past several years, people are finally starting to feel like they can breathe again – and that includes the floral industry.

According to the Society of American Florists, retail florists, wholesale distributors and growers in varying degrees believe the circumstances of their businesses are improving. The mood is lifting and it's beginning to reflect in the floral business.

By no means does this indicate consumers will go on a spending spree this holiday season, but it will be reflected in their holiday decorating taste with glitzier colors and a little bit more sparkle than in years past.

"The trend is to recycle what we have in our families and refreshing it with a touch of new glitz, something glittery like gold, silver, platinum to spruce up the old," said Tricia Tang, general manager for Mayesh Wholesale Florist, Inc., in Bakersfield, CA.

There will not be a lot of excess, but things will be fun and flirty to reflect the general uplifting of people's spirits this upcoming holiday.

Marla O'Dell, vice president of sales & marketing for Berwick Offray, LCC, in Berwick, PA, shared major themes they expect to see this holiday season, and many other wholesale distributors around the country have similar expectations this holiday season.

"This holiday season it is all about maximizing," O'Dell said. "Our customers and retailers alike enjoy being able to use non-iron products so they can incorporate the product into a variety of uses – they are able to maximize their inventory!"

O'Dell shared the major trends that she expects to see nationwide this holiday season:

Hearth & Home

This trend category includes very traditional patterns, which create favorite winter holiday themes. There are many customary holiday colors such as reds, greens and white, but extra flair is added with an accent of gold.

Styles for the 2010



holiday pop with even more metallic woven into a traditional plaid pattern. Again, this is where fun and flirty touches are coming through this holiday season. People are starting to relax a little bit and enjoy themselves.

Another trend under the Hearth & Home category is natural looking products such as jute and cotton. People are still holding onto some of their comforting, down-home roots this holiday.

Plaid Time



This theme crosses over from the Hearth & Home category, but with a twist: the color blue. Almost every wholesale company said the hot color is this winter is blue.

"Major themes in our showroom will be shades of blue this holiday season, especially Russian and champagne gold on cream colored trees," said Carole Rackerby from GM Floral Company in Los

Angeles. "The theme will continue into Mardi Gras with turquoise and bronze making a come back."

Keeping in the tradition of Hearth & Home, the blue theme is being incorporated into the plaid popping up this season. The addition of blue to traditional plaid gives it a patriotic flair, perfect for those honoring the troops overseas.

Blues also accommodate Hanukkah themed arrangements. O'Dell mentioned the importance of maximizing this season. The color blue allows florists to do just that: maximize product. Create winter wonderlands using blue tones for corporate holiday parties, keeping the event politically correct. But by offering the color blue, florists will have product for people who celebrate Hanukkah.

Snow Play

As O'Dell said, "It's recess for Hearth & Home!"

This theme includes very merry ribbons with snowmen, dots and glitter. White and silver is traditional yet modern. The two colors can stand alone, or make a bold statement when paired with green.



WHOLESALE CONNECTION

holiday color trends for 2010

Going along with this theme, Diane Kelk, product manager for Delaware Valley Wholesale Florist in Sewell, NJ, explains the glitz and glam they have incorporated this season creating a similar snow play look.

"This year we saw more crystals, crystal garlands and teardrops being offered," she said. "This works for the holiday and party work. We have added some more glitter and glitzy items for this holiday than we have carried in years past."

Bold, Modern, Graphic



Continuing with the theme of fun and flirty is this trend, which incorporates a mix of styles that creates a modern approach to the holidays.

This particular category takes holiday decorating to a new and adventurous level. Take high-contrast black and white and splash with citrus green and turquoise; softened

tones create depth and warmth within this modern grouping.

This particular combination may only interest the most bold and trendy of customers, but florists may find themselves in a very unique position being able to offer such decorations.

Royal Red

When people think of colors for the holiday season, red is an obvious choice. A spin on the traditional is a combination of royal red and chocolate.

This grouping is both transitional and rich with the combinations of reds and chocolate. Chocolate is still strong in home décor, especially as contrast for reds and greens, the traditional holiday colors. There is a great amount of focus on tabletop décor during



the holiday season. Fabric overlays for color contrast and texture create a table with ribbons, glittered trees and ornaments.

"Red, red, red will be in demand again this year," Rackerby said.

Bubbly Bright

A candy-colored fantasy, berry brights bring to mind sugar coated strawberry, blueberry, plum and orange, which offer high gloss allure and signifies party time. This particular category has a great crossover appeal into the New Year celebrations, which is important to both the wholesale distributor and florist.

"With the products we have selected this year, we have tried to pick items that have and can be used after the holiday, taking some of the risk out of the holiday buying for our customers," Kelk said.

Again, this year is all about maximizing a product; giving the customer something that they can use for multiple events this holiday season.

Forest Frost

Imagine a subdued and quiet alpine setting frosted in gold. That's the look of this holiday theme; a perfect combination of high style and nature. Glamour gold "natural instincts" birds add a burst of color to a traditional subdued palette. ✿



Sarah Hamilton is the director of marketing at WF&FSA, a dynamic business organization dedicated to providing members with the information, services and support they need to remain competitive in today's constantly changing market. The association offers a wide variety of programs and activities to support its mission of enhancing networking and business opportunities for all floral wholesale distributors and suppliers.

WHOLESALEERS. Because it takes more than flowers to grow your business.®

INTERFLORA FEATURE

Flowers Around

John Klingel, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, judges the Interflora World Cup

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

The 15th Interflora World Cup was held March 26–28, 2010, in Shanghai, China. The prestigious floral art competition, held every four years, showcases the highest standard of domestic floristry. Aiming to advance the horticultural industry, this event brought together Interflora florists from 20 countries around the world.

The 2010 theme was kept secret until one week before the event. Designers were required to create a table setting with the theme ‘Green Tea for Two,’ a bridal bouquet themed ‘Oriental Petal,’ a ‘surprise item’ and an exhibit of the designer’s choice with the theme ‘Flowers of the Orient.’ The top 10 florists move on to the finals, where they compete for the World Cup title. Designers used two surprise items in their design, which forms part of the unique floral fashion show.

The six World Cup judges were, Karen Barnes, Interflora UK; Greg Block, Interflora Australia; Yutaka Jinbo, FTD; John Klingel, FTD; Rolf Torhaug, Fleurop; and Nicole von Boletzky, Fleurop. Stein Are Hansen from Norway won first place, Yvonne Roth from Switzerland took second, and Korea’s Chang Sun Won took third.

Judge John Klingel, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, director of The South Florida Center for Floral Studies, spent a week in China absorbing the competition and the culture. He took in the differences between floral designers of the east and west.

“Western designers tend to be less detailed-oriented and work to finish a job quickly,” he said. “It also seems that the oriental culture gives more thought to their work, which really shows in the finished arrangement.”



John Klingel has been in the floral industry for 37 years. He started as a delivery driver at his hometown florist. He won the Society of American Florists’ Sylvia Cup and is the Florida State Designer of the Year. He has served on the FTD Education Team for 10 years. Today he is director of The South Florida Center for Floral Studies. Klingel has written two books under the name of The Frugal Florist. He continues to do freelance floral design work.



From left to right: John Klingel, USA; Greg Block, Australia; Karen Barnes, UK; Rolf Torhaug, Norway; Yutaka Jinbo, Japan; Peter Johnston (Judges Liaison from New Zealand) and Nicole von Brutzky, Switzerland.

The surprise package included a large container and two bicycle wheels in addition to an assortment of flowers. The designer from Norway, who won the competition, created this arrangement. Here, the designer used the bicycle wheel as an armature structure. He inserted the flower stems through the spokes of the wheel. The stems of the flowers were placed into the container. The judges felt that his was the most creative use of the wheel, which helped him score higher than the other contestants.



INTERFLORA FEATURE

the Globe



Placing first in the hand-tied category was Norway with this beautiful design of green anthurium, Phalaenopsis orchid sprays, callas, hanging amaranthus, roses and bromeliads. The design had to represent the future of floral compositions, which would be delivered by the Interflora Mercury Man.



The contestant from England used two bicycle wheels. One was placed at the base of the container and the other was used vertically. This design was more complex and used more of the product, but it just goes to show that sometimes, small and simple is better.

Klingel and the other judges used scoring sheets to rate each arrangement for all of the themes.

"I thought the themes of the competition were wonderful because they inspired creativity," he said. "The designers took full advantage of the ideas and expressed themselves very well through their work."

The work of the first-place winner from Norway was Klingel's favorite.

"His work was uncomplicated and very clean," he said. "In the surprise package, where a very talented designer can show his best work, he kept the design simple and creative. He used the wheel as an armature, building his floral arrangement around the spokes. I thought it was brilliant."

After spending time with florists from around the world, Klingel came home with a fresh perspective on flowers in America.

"In the U.S., consumers are looking for a good value," he said. "This means very fresh flowers and a generous amount



Greg Block, Rolf Torhaug, Yutaka Jimbo and Karen Barnes closely examine a hand-tied bouquet during the final day of judging.

– lots of perceived value. Especially in a down economy, consumers want to see lots of flowers that last a long time for the money spent."

And Klingel will never forget the time he spent in China.

"It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience," he said. ✿

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- John VanderSalm, VanderSalm's Flower Shop, Kalamazoo

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DESIGNERSPOTLIGHT

Holiday Shine

BY DIANE BURGESS
MFA'S 2010 DESIGNER OF THE YEAR
DESIGNER AT BLUMZ... BY JR DESIGNS
IN DETROIT AND FERNDALE, MI

Market trends and holiday themes are chosen for Christmas after extensive research. One such theme for 2010 is "Snowbird." I interpret this as traditional red and white with silver or sparkle as the accent. This trend also has a natural feel to me – with a bit of bling! I combined a variety of items to create this design, including fresh flowers and permanent products, such as the red cardinal, silver ball and white branches. Attention to market trends is very important. Mixing merchandise we already have, such as the white vase, with current themes is economical, and fun! *

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BRIDALUPDATE

Roses Are Red

An awe-inspiring 8,000 roses adorned this Michigan wedding

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

When it comes to life's special occasions, it never hurts to have a florist in the family. So when Michael Ventline, son of Tom Ventline of Oswalt Wholesale Florist in Detroit, wed Stephanie Laube on Oct. 10, 2009, it was a floral affair to remember.

A crew of 12 worked over four days, designing with 8,000 red freedom roses, white hydrangea, white dendrobium orchids, white snapdragons, white mini-callas and white Eskimo roses.



This gold urn held 500 red freedom roses.



Bridesmaids held bouquets of white Eskimo roses, and groomsmen wore red rose boutonnieres.

"We used predominantly traditional design techniques, in keeping with the bride's request," Ventline said.

The ceremony, held at St. Isadore Catholic Church in Macomb, MI, featured seven large and showy arrangements, using a mixture of all the flowers. The reception, at Villa



Each white urn behind the head table held an amazing 500 red freedom roses.

BRIDALUPDATE



The bride and groom amidst the mixture of low and elevated centerpieces on the guest tables.

Penna Banquet Center in Sterling Heights, MI, featured awe-inspiring designs at every turn. Behind the head table stood three large urns each boasting 500 red roses. Along the length of the table sat five arrangements with more red roses and a mixture of white flowers. The low centerpieces on the guest tables were created with 125 red roses each and mixed foliage, and the elevated centerpieces also contained 125 red roses, along with white snapdragons, white hydrangea and white dendrobium orchids. These coordinated with the arrangements on the head table.

The reception also had a 50-foot 'sweets table' with fruits, cakes, cookies and desserts. The table, created by Jerry Stockie of Venetian Designs, held three large ice sculptures with the couples' monogram carved in, brimming with masses of red



These red rose clusters adorned the table holding name place cards and wedding favors – mini bottles of champagne.



The sweets table, designed by Jerry Stockie, was 50-feet long and full of delicious treats for wedding guests.

Five arrangements adorned the length of the head table, with three large urns as a stunning backdrop.



BRIDALUPDATE



Bride Stephanie Laube and Groom Michael Ventline cut the wedding cake.

roses and white hydrangea. The entire length of the table was adorned with more red roses and white dendrobium orchids.

"The table was just spectacular," Ventline said. "It's the largest Mr. Stockie has created to date."

Ventline said the unique ideas for the wedding came from years of experience in the floral industry.

"Many of the decisions normally made by the client were, in this case, left up to myself and the design crew," he said. "Working in the wholesale florist business made the ordering and processing of the flowers relatively easy."

Ventline said retail florists could make their wedding work easier by planning and organizing.

"Start centerpieces in advance of the set-up date and be certain that all the details are in order," he said. "Always allow enough time when setting up to anticipate the unexpected."

A special thanks to the crew who worked this wedding: Norbert Krygier, Sam Emanuel, George Leppala, Bob Masek, Don Cilluffo, Tom Ventline, Nancy Ahearn, Gary Oswalt, Terry Oswalt, Mike Pniewski, Ralph Bellisario, Kim Herbers and Jerry Stockie.

Has your flower shop created a beautiful wedding? We'd love to feature it in *The Professional Florist!* Please e-mail photos and wedding details to mrsheidianderson@hotmail.com. ✿

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A Rose by Any Other Name

Bobbi Ecker has rose named in her honor

On June 24, the first-ever Rose Naming Ceremony was held at the 2010 International Floriculture Show in Miami Beach, Fla. The rose introduced was HI Icon – Bobbi Ecker, in honor and recognition of Bobbi Ecker, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, of Chicago. Ecker is a noted designer, florist and floral marketer whose career has spanned more than 50 years.

Rose naming is an old and venerated tradition in Europe, where cut roses have honored and been named for people of distinction, including nobility and heads of state. In the US, this tradition has been observed in garden roses, honoring people such as Jacqueline Kennedy.

The International Floriculture Show began its tradition by naming this new cut rose in honor of Ecker, noted as a very special person who the industry loves and admires, who has inspired and epitomized everything good and positive in the floral industry, and who, with enthusiasm and creativity, greatly contributes to making this a better industry.

The identity of the person being honored was kept secret until the ceremony, which included the breeder of the rose, the grower who presented the flower to the honoree, and a formal ceremony of the pouring of champagne and ‘baptizing’ the rose.

The breeder of the rose is Pressman,

one of the oldest and most distinguished breeding companies in the Netherlands. The grower of the rose is United Flowers, a division of Pressman, with farms in Bogota, Columbia.

At the ceremony, Ecker toasted the breeder, the grower and hundreds of celebrants in what she called a most exhilarating experience and one of the most memorable events in her lifetime. ✨



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Spotlight On MFA Supporters: DWF Flint

MFA would like to thank the companies who consistently make our association a success. In our award-winning magazine, *The Professional Florist*, we will showcase companies that go above and beyond in supporting the MFA. Through advertising, product donations, support at the Great Lakes Floral Expo and so much more, these stellar companies make the MFA possible. Thank you for all you do! Editor Heidi Anderson talked to Ron Chludil, general manager at DWF Flint.

A brief history of DWF:

Now in its 100th year of serving retail florists, DWF entered a bold new era in 2008 by becoming an employee-owned company. The historic move, which came just months before DWF began celebrating its 100th anniversary, benefits employees for now and into the future. It is designed to share the rewards of ownership with employees who contribute to the company's success through their dedicated service to DWF customers. One of the nation's premier wholesale florists, DWF began in Denver in 1909 as a partnership of growers in Colorado. Today, DWF markets the finest flowers and grower supplies from the world over, through its 14 wholly owned subsidiaries across the nation. But, way back in 1909, the main product was carnations, and the purpose was to cooperatively market production for the partners, all local growers. In 1919, a grower supply division was added, today known as DWF Growers Supply.

As the business grew, in 1922, Denver Wholesale Florists was formed as a Colorado corporation, and the partnership was dissolved. By 1945, DWF was marketing approximately 6 million carnations a year, plus roses and some miscellaneous flowers, for its stockholders/growers. During that same year,



DWF Flint General Manager Ron Chludil in one of DWF's showrooms.

the health of the major partner began to decline, and the company stock was purchased by the 33 flower growers who were at the time consigning their production for sale.

By the mid-70s, DWF's annual sales of carnations were exceeding a whopping 98 million, plus a considerable quantity of other fresh flowers. But, a significant change in the marketplace was emerging. During the late '60s and '70s, carnations and pompoms produced in Bogota, Colombia, began appearing in southeastern US markets. By the '80s, US carnation production began to shift to Colombia. This change in the market led DWF to change its purpose from that of a grower driven organization to a full-service wholesale florist, dedicated to providing the finest product and service to retail florists. Today, DWF is a leader in the floral industry, serving retail florists across the country. Our mission is to provide our customers with the finest product available anywhere. We also have developed and maintain superlative relationships with the top growers and floral supply vendors worldwide, allowing us to offer our customers the very best at the most competitive prices.

What is DWF's mission statement?

Its Customers: By supplying them with quality products and excellent service at competitive prices. *Its Employees:* By offering them challenging work and opportunities for advancement in a safe environment at fair compensation. *The Floral Industry:* By

MFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

demonstrating high business and professional standards and participating in programs that advance the industry as a whole. *Its Vendors:* Through fair and equitable business transactions that assure a win for both parties.

Do you have any special sales or an open house?

In August we will be hosting a program called Flowers for Kids. This program involves the retail florists teaching future customers the impact of flowers; creating flower consumers, one class at a time. In September we will have our annual Fall & Christmas Open House. This event is our way of saying 'thank you' for your continued patronage. We will be providing dinner and deep discounts that will help control your cost of goods.

What do you offer MFA members?

We offer a strong partnership through advertising and donations for education. Our full-service wholesale house on wheels brings you the best the industry has to offer in fresh flowers as well as hardgood supplies.

Are you carrying any new items and/or flower varieties?

We explore new items daily from around the globe, enabling you to set yourself apart from your competitors, giving you the marketing edge you need to succeed.

Is there any current news about your company or staff?

With 23 employees we have a combined total of 390 years in the industry. Our staff of many talented designers can assist you daily on questions of design, techniques and product availability.

Do you have any advice for MFA members in these tough economic times?

Continue to do what you do best. Offer the best the industry can provide so your customers come back for more.

What's new on your Web site?

Visit our Web site for product identification from around the globe, at www.dwfwholesale.com. *

DWF Flint General Manager Ron Chludil started in the floral industry at the age of 12. After seven years working in a retail florist and greenhouse, he joined DWF Flint. Twenty nine years later, he still enjoys the impact flowers have on people. "It's a great industry," he said.



5100 Exchange Drive, Flint, MI. 48507, phone (810) 733-5100

Active Membership Requirements:

An active member must be a registered, established business operating in the floral industry. Active members are eligible to vote for elected MFA representatives, use all MFA services, receive member pricing on all Association functions, receive the informative *Professional Florist* magazine* and all other mailings.

Dues are based on the annual gross sales of your business:

- Up to \$499,999 \$250
- \$500,000 - \$999,999 \$400
- \$1 million - \$2,999,999 \$500
- \$3 million & over \$600

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Signature (Required): _____

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- Retailer Supplier / Manufacturer Sales/Marketing Rep
- Wholesaler Service Provider Supermarket Grower
- Floral School Garden Center

Associate Membership Requirements:

Associate Membership may be held by students or teachers of floriculture and ornamental horticulture, or by any individual working for an active MFA member. Associate members receive member pricing on all association functions, the informative *Professional Florist* magazine*, and all other mailings, but are NOT eligible to vote or hold elective office in the association.

Please check which of the following applies to you:

- Student** Teacher Employee of Active MFA Member

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All Student members.....\$50

* All membership dues include a *Professional Florist* subscription.

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Summer School

Spend some not-so-lazy days with CF this summer

BY KATHY PETZ, AAF, CF, PFCI, CF CHAIRWOMAN

Wondering what to do on your summer vacation? Or how to spend those wonderful long summer nights? I always want to take care of those things I've been putting off for months... cleaning my closets and the basement! My advice? Keep those things on the back burner and instead consider doing something that can make a difference in your business: study to become a certified florist!

In today's economy, customers are becoming even more discerning. Those who have money are making sure they get their money's worth. Reading on your statements or in the Yellow Pages that you are a Certified Florist gives you an important benefit! Think about it: when you need a plumber or an electrician, don't you feel more confident knowing you are selecting someone

who is certified/licensed? Everyone knows that these certifications mean you are a step above your competition. You care enough to study all areas of your industry!

Don't forget to sign up for Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF's "Steps to Certification" class on October 13 (see page 29). We consistently hear that this class was an incredible aid in passing the test. By taking a mock test, you know what to expect, and also know the areas you need to review before the official test on October 24.

So stop putting it off! Now is the time to call Cindy at the MFA office, (517) 575-0110, and ask her to get your Certified Florist materials right out. Happy studying! ✿

Kathy Petz is a national account representative for Teleflora, INC.



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CFREPORT

The Future of the Floral Industry

Five floral teens become student certified florists

BY CINDY CHING, AIFD, CF

On April 16, MFA and FFA hosted a program at Michigan State University for floral students to test and compete in floral design. Student designers created a corsage and flower arrangement in foam to match a picture. They also were tested in floral product identification and took a multiple-choice test on knowledge of the floral industry.

The program is designed to help give students in high school the ability to take a step towards becoming a Certified Florist. Thirty students took the Student Certified Florist (SCF) test and made a fresh flower vased arrangement that was graded and evaluated.

Congratulations to the five who successfully passed to become Student Certified Florists!

- **Brittany Kutschke**
Oakland Schools Tech Center SW
- **Mary Listwak**
Lapeer County Vo-Tech Center
- **Chelsea Mikolowski**
Lapeer County Vo-Tech Center
- **Elaine Minnard**
Olivet Community High School
- **Liz Taylor**
Muskegon High School ✿



Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF is Michigan Floral Association Executive Assistant.



MFA evaluators, left to right: Alice Waterous, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI, Sandi Bostwick, Tim Latimer, CF, Colleen Carr, AIFD, CF, PWV, Libbie Deering, Barb Zuleski, CF, Peggy Long, CF, Larry Princinsky, CF, Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF and Dr. Bridget Behr, CF.

Left: A floral student prepares an alstroemeria stem for her fresh flower vase.

Also this year, we had our first SCF become a Certified Florist! After becoming a SCF, Rachel Foley studied, got on-the-job placement, tested for the CF and passed. This is an excellent step to becoming a designer/manager in a retail flower shop.
Congratulations Rachel Foley, CF!

CF Flower of the Month - Zinnia

Available May-October, with peak supplies during the summer months. Colors: Orange, red, rust, white, yellow, pink, lavender, purple. Size: Flower heads range from one to three inches. Stems are 12 to 36 inches long. Quality Guide: Look for tight buds showing color, centers not developed. Design Tips: The stem of a zinnia is hollow under the bloom. Cut a short piece of wire and push it through the center of the flower and into the stem for support.



CF TIP of the Month

Zinnias make excellent hand-tied bouquets for weddings and can be used as the focal flowers or as filler below the main flowers as a backdrop for the bouquet.

2010 MFA Golf Outing

Wednesday, August 11, 2010

Spend the Day on the Golf Course
with the Michigan Floral Association!

Spend the day on the golf course with Michigan Floral Association! We'll be playing at Eldorado Golf Course in Mason. The day will begin with check-in at 9:00 a.m. at the Club House. We will have a 10:00 a.m. shotgun start. You'll get a hot dog lunch at the turn. All golfers will meet at the clubhouse following the round for a steak dinner and an awards ceremony. Each foursome will play a scramble format. All players will receive prizes, so don't worry about your score or skill level. This is a day of fun and networking! Plan now to attend the 2010 MFA Golf Outing! See you on the links!

Cost: \$60 per golfer – we'll pair you with a fun group. (Includes 18 holes of golf, cart, hot dog at the turn, steak dinner, game holes & prizes.)
\$200 per foursome (put your own foursome together and save money.)

Location: Eldorado Golf Course, 3750 W Howell Rd, Mason, MI 48854,
www.eldorado27.com

"FORE" More Information: call Rod Crittenden at (517) 575-0110,
or e-mail rod@michiganfloral.org.

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Fill out the registration
form and return to:



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ASSOCIATION

Michigan Floral Association
P.O. Box 67
Haslett, MI 48840

Phone: (517) 575-0110
Fax: (517) 575-0115

Plan now to attend the 2010 MFA Golf Outing! See you on the links!

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

How many golfers in your party? (Please list golfers names below.)

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

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Call MFA at (517) 575-0110 for availability.

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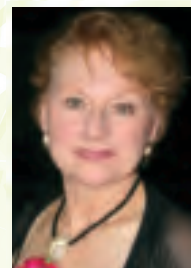
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Learn the fundamentals of fresh care and handling, basic design skills and sound construction in this intense five day, 35-hour class. This class offers great preparation for those desiring to enter the floral profession and for those already in the industry wishing to sharpen their skills. Sympathy, all occasion, wedding and party designs will be covered in this class. All of the latest materials needed for this hands-on experience are included in your registration fee. Your finished projects are yours to keep as well as a notebook full of class handouts. Small class size allows each participant to receive lots of one-on-one attention. Class will run from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day, with a half hour break for lunch, which is included in the registration fee. **Please bring your own tools.** ✿

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- Methods & Mechanics
- Insight & Answers
- A Hands-On Experience

October 13, 2010
10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Member: \$149

Non-Member: \$199

Lunch included in class fee

Instructor:

Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF



MFA Professional Education
Center - Haslett, MI

Cindy guides those who plan on becoming a Certified Florist. You'll get 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, with the all-new CF sections to the written and hands-on! Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of what it takes to pass the prestigious national CF exam. Class will run from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with a half hour break for lunch, which is included in the registration fee. **Please bring your own tools.** ✿

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MFA SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE SEEKS DONATIONS FOR THE 2010 SILENT AUCTION

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 please call Peg Long (Saline Flowerland) at (734) 429-4458 or Jim Schmidt (Hyacinth House) at (800) 777-9945.

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FOR SALE

Inventory for sale, 28 year old business closed. 50 percent is wedding rental inventory, 50 percent flower shop inventory, including shelving. All in good condition. Over 30 percent off wholesale cost, at \$25,000. Everything needed to start a business, or add to existing inventory. Lots, fills five garages. Contact Linda Swift at 616-550-9434. Lake Odessa, MI.

Floral shop just south of Ann Arbor, MI, for sale. Established 1996; only floral shop in town. All inventory, equipment, clientele, and 2003 Ford Econline 250 van included. Main walk-in SRC cooler is 7' x 8' which was purchased new 2 1/2 years ago. Small backup cooler also included. Purchase price \$40,000. Currently in a rented building in the heart of downtown. Rent is currently \$900 per month plus gas/water/rubbish. Contact (734) 497-0473 if interested or for further information. Please leave message if I am not available.

HELP WANTED

Grand Hotel is now hiring for a Florist/Head Designer & Shop Manager. This person is responsible for managing the busy seasonal flower and gift shop at Grand Hotel. Floral experience a must with some management background. For info, contact HR at (906) 847-9201. Mail resume to Grand Hotel, Attn: HR, PO Box 286, Mackinac Island, MI 49757 or fax to (906) 847-9205

Floral designer position available in Frankenmuth, MI: Frankenmuth Florist is seeking an ambitious, creative, full time floral designer for our unique floral shop. Applicant must have some experience in fresh and/or silk design. Please send resume to: Frankenmuth Florist, 320 S. Franklin St., Frankenmuth, MI 48734.

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Rates vary by size.

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