

Volume V 2011

**Betty Ford's  
Funeral Flowers**

**The Power of  
Networking**

**Sending  
Successful  
Signals to  
the Wedding  
Market**

**Up North with  
Cheboygan's  
The Coop**

# the professional florist



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*color*   
assortment  
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some time !”

-Derek C. Woodruff  
AIFD, CFD, CF

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Volume V 2011

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Photo caption: Rene's book,  
Rene's Bouquets for Brides

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## LEADERSHIPREPORT

# Make it a Real Michigan

BY ROD CRITTENDEN, MFA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



**E**ven though school just began, Christmas really isn't far away. The smell of fresh evergreens, the beauty of a poinsettia, the warmth of a crackling fire and cheerful chords of holiday music are all around the corner. These components make for a joyful, traditional and fun Christmas celebration. Including

live trees and plants in that celebration can be helpful to Michigan. However, Michigan Christmas tree and poinsettia growers are at a critical juncture in their businesses because sales are slowly declining. To rejuvenate sales and profitability, the benefits of including live goods in Christmas celebrations needs to be communicated to consumers.

The Michigan Floral Association has partnered with the Michigan Floriculture Growers Council and the Michigan Christmas Tree Association, in cooperation with Michigan State University Department of Horticulture, AgBioResearch (formerly Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station), and Master Tag of Montague, MI. We have received notification that the MDA Specialty Crop Block Grant for \$75,000 that we applied for will likely be funded October 1. The funding will support a project called "Make it a Real Michigan Christmas," which will promote educational messages to support and encourage the purchase of live poinsettias and real Christmas trees.

The potential impact of the investment is to preserve or increase plant and tree sales, as well as people employed in plant production. The project will educate consumers using the key message that buying live products helps preserve or build Christmas traditions while being an economically,



*Photo Courtesy of Teleflora*

## How Can I Participate?

MFA members who currently sell Michigan-grown Christmas trees and poinsettias can take advantage of the "Make it a Real Michigan Christmas" campaign by displaying a campaign banner or using coordinating bench cards and stickers. By displaying these items, you can tell your customers that you feature Michigan-grown products and that you are participating in the program. An extensive public relations campaign is planned to promote these

products. The plan includes public service announcements that will air in November and early December, a media campaign that includes television and radio, as well as participation at high traffic events going into the holiday season. All of these activities will be supported by a dedicated Web site that will serve as a clearinghouse for consumer information regarding Michigan-grown poinsettias and Christmas trees. As soon as the funding is confirmed (October

1 is our estimate), you will be notified by e-mail via the "News From the Michigan Floral Association" e-blast, with a link to log on to the Web site and sign up for point of sale merchandise. The grant will allow for the first 400 who sign up to receive up to \$50 of free point of sale merchandise. Additional materials will be available at cost to the retail outlets. We hope you are ready to help your customers "Make it a Real Michigan Christmas."

## MFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### 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 ..... \$260
- \$500,000 - \$999,999 ..... \$410
- \$1 million - \$2,999,999 ..... \$510
- \$3 million & over ..... \$610

### Member Information:

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Web site: \_\_\_\_\_

Valid Sales Tax ID # (Required): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (Required): \_\_\_\_\_

### Please check which of the following applies to your business:

- 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

All Employee/Teacher members .....\$160

All Student members.....\$60

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

\*\*Must include a photocopy of current active student ID card or enrollment confirmation letter from class instructor.

### Method of Payment:

- Check     Visa     MC     American Express     Discover

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Referred By: \_\_\_\_\_

# Christmas

emotionally and ecologically beneficial choice. The expected outcomes are an increased awareness among consumers about the role Michigan plays in the production of trees and poinsettias, increased awareness of the emotional and environmental benefits of live flowers and plants in the home, as well as the economic contribution these two iconic symbols of Christmas make in Michigan.

How do we plan to accomplish this? The grant will fund an educational-media relations campaign to educate consumers about the benefits of live trees and plants and remind consumers to purchase fresh Christmas trees and poinsettias. This educational campaign will be multi-dimensional and will include public service announcements and a promotional campaign. It will also fund \$50 of point-of-purchase materials (banners, bench cards, and stickers) for participating growers and retailers. A Web site is being developed, with a planned launch date of October 15, 2011, for consumers to gain additional information and producers and retailers to connect to the project. Some of the funds will be used to conduct surveys of growers (to assess impact and sales) and consumers (to assess understanding and awareness before and after campaign). The industry partners are eager to spread the word about the probable funding of the grant and to enlist the support of as many Michigan growers and retailers as possible. ✨

## Welcome

### New MFA Members!

**ACTIVE MEMBERS**

**Norton's Flowers & Gifts** – Tim Galea  
2900 Washtenaw Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
Phone: (734) 434-2700  
E-mail: [service@nortonsflowers.com](mailto:service@nortonsflowers.com)  
Web site: [www.nortonsflowers.com](http://www.nortonsflowers.com)

**Curtis Flowers** – Laurence Gavulic  
5200 Corunna Road, Flint, MI 48539  
Phone (810) 720-3417  
Web site: [www.curtisflowers.com](http://www.curtisflowers.com)

**STUDENT MEMBERS**

Miwa Kameyama  
4825 Doral Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Gloria Durham  
3529 Merritt Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48197



## FEATURESTORY

# The Ford Family

## Eastern Floral's tributes to first lady Betty Ford

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

**F**ormer first lady Betty Ford was laid to rest July 14, on her late husband President Ford's birthday, at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum in Grand Rapids, MI.

And as they had when the President passed away December 26, 2006, the Ford family called their preferred shop for floral tributes.

"President Ford's brother Dick called," said Bing Goei, president of Eastern Floral in Grand Rapids. "He requested a casket spray in pink and white."

Pink roses, white snapdragons, white Dendrobium orchids

and white Casablanca lilies adorned the piece that topped the casket as it went from the Ford Museum to Grace Episcopal Church.

While designs for the President's service in 2007 were largely red, white and blue, a more 'elegant' touch was appropriate here.

"Mrs. Ford was a very unique individual, a woman of great character, a strong person, and she liked her designs the same way," Goei said. "She liked somewhat more contemporary designs – she didn't always like just basic designs. Some of her favorite flowers were hydrangeas and lilies and orchids."

Goei knew Betty Ford's tastes because his shop has filled orders for the Ford family for years.

"President Ford used to send flowers and buy corsages for Betty for different occasions in their marriage," Goei said.

When the Ford Museum opened in 1981, Eastern Floral was instrumental in building a float that was part of the grand

*Betty Ford's casket spray with "Mother," "Grandmother" and "Great Grandmother" scripts. These flowers were ordered by Dick Ford, brother of President Gerald Ford*





# Florist



*Photos Courtesy of Eastern Floral*



*Fresh flowers adorned the guest book table in the Ford Museum. The public was able to sign the book for a week, and Eastern Floral refreshed the flowers every two days.*

opening parade. And every year in honor of the President's birthday, the shop designs wreaths for a ceremony at his tomb. This year, they designed four wreaths: for the White House, the Ford children, Betty Ford and Supreme Court Justice Stevens, who was in town to make a speech for the occasion. Because of Betty's death, the ceremony was private this year, and close family and friends only attended the wreath laying.

"I had the opportunity to speak with [daughter] Susan Ford – she would always be here for the wreath laying ceremony," Goei said. "She expressed her appreciation for the beautiful work Eastern Floral does for her family. It was quite an honor to meet her personally."

The public was able to honor Betty Ford by signing a guestbook in the museum. The Ford Foundation ordered flowers for the guestbook table, for which the shop provided fresh flowers every two days for a week. They also designed a few pieces for local friends of Betty Ford.

"For us, we are honored that we were chosen by the Ford family to be their preferred personal florist," Goei said.

For more on Eastern Floral and The Goei Center, visit [www.easternfloral.com](http://www.easternfloral.com). ❁

*Top left: This white orchid wreath was from the Ford children, honoring their father President Gerald Ford at the private ceremony for his birthday.*

*Bottom left: President Obama sent this red, white and blue wreath for the private ceremony celebrating President Ford's birthday.*





*Ann Gildner, owner of The Coop.*



*The Coop and The Gildner Gallery.*

*Employee Danielle works sales, design and deliveries.*



# Success In

## Ann Gildner's flower s

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

If you are a Michigander, you know this great state offers four distinct and beautiful seasons every year. It's something that Ann Gildner knows and loves. After earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Sienna Heights University in Adrian, MI, she worked as a museum curator at the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio, but eventually moved back to her hometown of Cheboygan, MI.

"I wasn't a city person," Gildner said. "And I love the change of seasons up here. It's just so nice."

With no museums in town, Gildner created her own job. In 1985, fueled by her love of flowers and plants, she rented a spot and opened a flower shop, The Coop. In 1990, she bought a building, and in 2000 completely renovated the second level for her other love, art, and opened The Gildner Gallery.

"Everybody says this is the perfect setting, that they feel so relaxed and calm when they come in," Gildner said. "The plants and flowers and art all accent each other."

The flower shop, a member of Teleflora, offers a full selection of fresh cut flowers and green and blooming plants. A two-door cooler houses a sampling of fresh cuts, all individually priced, for customers who want to create their own bouquets. A four-door cooler holds pre-made mixed arrangements and the classic dozen rose vases. Larger bundles of fresh flowers and delicate stems, such as lilies, are kept in a large walk-in cooler.

Gildner works full-time along with her employee, Danielle. Both work sales, design and deliveries.

"We do everything," Gildner said. "We're Renaissance women!"

A third woman, Andrea, handles the bookkeeping.

A self-proclaimed "plantoholic," Gildner is a Certified Florist with MFA, an FTD Master Designer and became a Master Gardener through workshops at Michigan State University. In the 1990's she taught hands-on plant lessons in Cheboygan, Indian River and Gaylord, MI.

Nowadays, she holds art workshops in her gallery and has a monthly "Bohemian Gathering," where artists and friends of the arts get together and discuss the art world. The Gildner Gallery boasts a variety of art for sale by Gildner herself and 20 other artists.

"We have everything from traditional and realism to oils and acrylic, mixed media, sculpture, wood fibers... the whole spectrum," she said.

Type "Gildner Gallery Cheboygan" into YouTube for a look at the art and flower shop. Teleflora hosts The Coop's Web site at [www.thecoopflowers.com](http://www.thecoopflowers.com), and Gildner uses Constant Contact to send out shop information, sales and specials.

"I know social media is the next big thing so I think about it and I'm working on it," Gildner said. "It's teaching an old dog new tricks, so my younger staff helps. Today, I know



## MEMBERPROFILE

# Any Season

## Floral shop and art gallery

you have to get with the technology, or forget it."

Gildner serves as teacher with her weekly column on the arts for the Cheboygan Daily Tribune, and might soon start writing on the benefits of houseplants.

"They are natural air fresheners," she said. "People come to my home and my store and they breathe better. People don't realize how important natural things are."

An avid grower of wildflowers, Gildner picks petals from her garden and adds them to bouquets in her shop.

"I also like to add fresh herbs for the nice smell," she said. "The customers really like it."

Many of Gildner's customers are repeat clientele; with some, Gildner created their prom corsages and boutonnieres, then designed their wedding flowers, then the new baby arrangements.

"Small business needs return business," Gildner said. "You want customers to remember you and come back. Flower shops need to understand the importance of quality, not quantity."

To hold on to a personal quality often lacking in this age of technology, Gildner hand-delivers 100 fliers around town for floral holidays.

"That way, they see you, and they remember you," she said. "You can't 'delete' personal contact."


Gildner hopes to make more contact with customers in the future by hosting lessons in plant care at her local library.

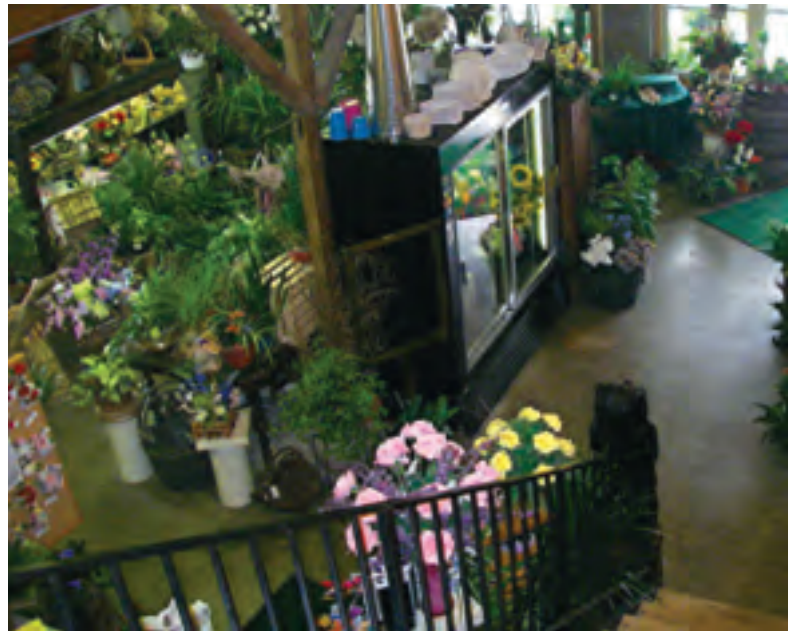
"The more you tell, the more you sell, that's my philosophy," she said. "I'd also love to put in a small greenhouse, and expand my selection of fresh cuts."

Gildner's positive attitude and can-do drive serve her well in challenging economic times. She doesn't think the industry will ever again see the heyday of the '80s and '90s, but she adjusts and adapts to a new normal.

"You have to change with the times," she said. "You can't turn your wheels and never go anywhere. I cannot compete with big box stores. You have to offer several different things - be a specialty store. I have my art gallery, and people come in that way. You have to diversify to stay in this business. It's a tough time, so I pull back and go with the economy. Like the seasons, business will always change."

Something that will never change is Gildner's love for what she does.

"The floral industry, to me, is the best business in the world," she said. "I just love it. It's an exciting job to have, one that doesn't feel like 'work.' I'm very lucky. I'll be doing this for as long as I can." 



*Interior view of The Coop.*



*The Gildner Gallery occupies the second level Ann's building.*



## FEATURESTORY

# The Power of No

Networking is the building up or maintaining of informal relationships with people whose friendship could bring advantages such as

BY BOBBI ECKER-BLATCHFORD, AAF, AIFD, PFCI



**W**hen I was contacted about writing an article on the power of networking,

I gladly accepted the assignment. Casting about for a way into the subject reaffirmed

what I already knew: networking and relationships are different for every person. Each individual has specific needs that may change as time goes by. We gather up steam with each contact and situation. Master networkers are individuals who realize that networking is a life skill, not just something you do when you want something. Building networks takes time, effort and, most of all, sincerity. The networking world is open to everyone without exception as long as your networking values are strong, ethical and transparent. Many of us are so busy that we forget to take the time to build and nurture the key relationships that lead to long-term success.

### The Basic Principles

There are basic principles of networking based on the following three universal laws:

- 1. The law of abundance.** There are plenty of opportunities for everyone – plenty of ideas, clients, customers, jobs and so on. Just because your diary is empty does not mean that there are no opportunities around. Great networkers believe in an abundance of opportunities. Especially in tough economic times, NETWORK!
- 2. The law of reciprocity.** What you give out comes back tenfold. If you give out help, you get back help; give out love, you get back love; give out information, you get back

information. The challenge, of course, is that although for you the giving is instant and in the short-term, the receiving may not happen for some time. Also, what is returned may not come from the person to whom it was given. Great networkers believe firmly that giving returns tenfold.

- 3. The law of giving without expectation.** This occurs when you give without an expectation of receiving something. You do something for someone not to get something back, but because you want to help them achieve their goal.

### The Priority Matrix

For me, one of the most valuable guides in developing networking is segmenting your needs into what sociologists call “The House of Life.” Imagine a window of opportunities with four panes. The panes are labeled as follows:

Work & Career	Social
Family	Personal

Relationships in each area of our lives are important. The Work & Career area is responsible for our security, although all networking connects into each pane of the window of life. With all the demands made by our business, professional and personal lives, it is tempting to assign a lower priority to social business networking to meet new people. This thinking would be wrong, because by not consistently widening our circles of acquaintances and contacts, we may be severely curtailing our chances of success. It's estimated that the average person knows about 250 people. Each of those people knows, in turn, another 250 or so people. This means for each new person you meet, you gain access to a potential pool of 62,500 people separated from you by just two.

### Building Networking Relationships

As we all know, sales are frequently developed through the relationships we create with other people. In the floral industry, our contact with customers opens relationships that stretch far and wide. Every day is an opportunity to connect. Social business networking functions provide the opportunity to expand our contact list, particularly when we create and



# Networking

relationships, especially with  
as job or business opportunities.



nurture quality relationships. The best results come from choosing and attending the appropriate social business networking events. Clearly state what you do and follow up after the event. Business cards are a great way for introductions and to open a conversation. Equally important are follow-up notes or e-mails to provide a continuation of the meeting.

## No Life Story is the Same.

## No Fortune is the Same.

My journey began more than 60 years ago, when I would accompany my dad on our Saturday errands. I didn't understand the notion of relationship economics then, but it became clear to me as I matured. Dad got things done whether we needed a plumber, a bank loan or information on the marketplace. My father was also a casual gambler and when he died in his late 50's, there was a box full of IOU's and jewelry unclaimed from his gambling escapades. After his obituary was printed, much to my grandmother's chagrin, there was a steady stream of gentlemen from all walks of life who redeemed their IOUs. There was integrity and honor in those relationships. My maternal grandparents were in the shoe and leather business. My grandfather built relationships in his business location. My grandmother was the mother of eight children and was active in the business as well. She nurtured relationships (these were Depression days) by having my uncles and I serve as ambassadors for the family and the family business in the community. Under her direction, we provided pro bono services for people in her sphere of influence who might need help. Among the pro bono jobs she would assign us was delivering crocks of specialty cheeses on a regular route for a widow who depended upon the income to sustain her. There were lawns to be mowed, leaves to be raked, errands to be run and assistance of all kinds to others. Although we often balked at carrying out her assignments, there was subtle and meaningful reciprocity from those people in many ways. Through the years, the lessons of service have remained indelibly etched in our minds as her legacy has been passed on to the generations, and our family still benefits from those relationships handed down through the years.

## The Internet: Are You LinkedIn?

## Do You Spoke, Ryze, Jigsaw or ZoomInfo?

Is this the year when you'll get a 'second life?' At last count, more than 300 social networking Web sites exist in nine

distinct categories: Business, Common Interest, Dating, Face-to-Face Facilitation, Friends, MoSoSo (Mobile Social Software,) Pets, Photos, Edge Cases or Social Networking Plus. We do not have the bandwidth to invest in everyone equally, so we must prioritize our most valuable relationships. We may know relationships are critical, but are they cascading down to our respective teams? The evolutions of the Internet will undoubtedly play a role today and in the future for all of us.

## Final Thoughts

In the old black-and-white series, Superman, when he needed to pass through a wall, he would put his palms against it and lean, frowning. Gradually his caped form would merge with the plaster, pass through the lath and two-by-fours, and then reappear in the next room. It wasn't as easy as flying, apparently, but it could be done. Our businesses work in a similar way. Let's envision ourselves at the end of the day, standing in front of the mirror, hands on hips, feet spread with our capes flowing in the wind. We have mastered another day in the floral industry. Superman has nothing on us.

I'll see you at the Great Lakes Floral Expo, March 2-4, 2012, at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel and DeVos Place in Grand Rapids, MI. Let's Network! ✨

*Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford is the owner of The Flora Pros in Chicago. Bobbi is a floral designer, marketing consultant and copywriter. She hides out and works at an idyllic cottage on a Michigan Lake. Contact her via e-mail at florapros@aol.com.*

## RECOMMENDED READINGS ON SOCIAL NETWORKING

- Rod Beckstrom and Ori Braifman  
*The Starfish and the Spider:  
The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations*
- Stephen M.R. Covey  
*The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything*
- Malcolm Gladwell  
*Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*  
*The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*
- Robert Putnam  
*Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*
- Emanuel Rosen  
*The Anatomy of Buzz: How to Create Word of Mouth Marketing*
- Duncan Watts  
*Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age*

## BRIDALUPDATE

# Sending Successful Signals to the Wedding Market

BY ROBBIN YELVERTON, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI



**S**ignals... our world is full of them: flashing caution lights, smells that tell of deadly gases, sounds that trigger reactions to avoid danger and the feeling of bumps on a highway that delineate the lanes of traffic. And those are just the signals that help keep us safe! Our mind is constantly receiving, processing, evaluating and reacting to signals 24/7. The vast majority of these signals are handled without us even being aware. It's no wonder that getting noticed as a wedding and event professional is such a challenge! More than 600 advertising messages a day inundate the average person – talk about sensory overload! So how do you reach your customers? In particular, how do you get the attention of that bride or her wedding or event planner?

- Here are some very useful and effective ways of getting your name and services noticed by those who are in the decision making position for weddings and events.
- Being Noticed by the Professional Wedding and Event Planners/Service Providers/Venues
- Strategic Alliances with Affiliated Vendors. Go out and meet, chat and “get close” to the affiliated vendors that service the weddings and events in your area. Develop alliances or partnerships with them.
- Be the Pro.” Brand yourself as the “go-to” person for professional advice and information through teaching classes, writing articles for local papers, and blogging.
- Membership in professional industry associations, i.e.... ABC, ISES, NACE. Get involved in the professional industry associations. Take on a leadership role and the members will take notice. People want to do business with people who are leaders!
- Host events targeted to the affiliated vendors designed to inform them of the services you provide, skills/talent. Everyone loves a great party – show what you can do and invite the professionals to come and check you out!

### Getting the Attention of the Brides

- Social Media Presence. If you're not on Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube, you are already behind! Get SOCIAL! And if you don't feel comfortable doing it, hire a 20-year-old to do it for you. The majority of brides today are involved with social media. They will notice you. This is especially useful considering most of the brides are probably young enough to be your daughter! Create a Facebook Fan Page, fill it full of pictures of your work and have your happiest clients leave remarks for others to read.
- Host bridal events designed to inform prospective brides of your goods and services. Again, throw a fun party! Focus on your goods and services as it applies to weddings and events. Then invite prospective brides and grooms to attend.
- In-store signage, targeted printed materials, computer “video loop” on display. You should have up-to-date marketing materials that clearly and concisely inform people of the goods and services your company provides. They should look current and attractive. Today's clients are very savvy when it comes to trends, colors and new ideas.



*Photo Courtesy of Teleflora*



- Achievement marketing. Win an award and “crow” about it! Brides and event planners love telling others about the “award winning” florist they are working with!
  - *The Knot* is the leader in the wedding magazine and Web site industry. Be as visible as your budget will allow. Ninety percent or more of brides search the reviews of vendors and service providers on *The Knot*.
  - Wedding Blog on your store Web site. If you are talented in writing, then blog about your wedding and event specialties, the weddings and events you are doing, and new and exciting information concerning weddings and events. If you do not write well, then hire a ghostwriter! Brides and wedding planners are eager for information.
  - Testimonials on Web site and on Facebook Fan Page. A great review is worth its weight in gold! Ask a few of your most pleased brides to go online and leave “glowing” reviews of you and your business. Reviews can be left on Web sites such as Google Local, Yelp, Yellowpages.com, and many other search sites including our store Facebook Fan page.
- Implementing these ideas will send signals that increase your visibility, your “creds” and get you noticed. When that happens, it’s up to you to live up to your image. ✨

*Robbin Yelverton is the National Alliance of Floral Associations Designer of the Year, 2010-2011. He is the co-owner of Blumz... by JRDesigns, Floral & Event Professionals in Detroit and Ferndale, MI.*



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## NEWPRODUCTSPOTLIGHT

# Lion Ribbon: Experience

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

**R**ibbons are a flower shop staple year-round: red ribbons adorn roses at Valentine's Day, narrow ribbons coordinate with dress colors and weave through prom corsages, holiday plaids accent centerpieces at the holiday dinner table, the Christmas tree and swags and everyday green plants are tailored to any occasion with ribbons in endless colors and themes.

*Right now the hottest colors are apple green, turquoise, hot pink and navy. The best-selling ribbon is the new Wired Bolten.*

For more than 100 years, Lion Ribbon has been supplying the floral market with high quality ribbons, floral accessories and packaging products. They offer brands such as Berwick-Offray®, Sea Maid® acetate ribbon, Kwik-Cover® pot covers, Avalon and Castle foils, and Simply Sheer Asiana ribbon, just to name a few, many of which are still manufactured in the United States.

Tom Swientek, who has worked in the floral industry for 33 years, represents Lion in most of Michigan, including the Upper Peninsula, and northwestern Wisconsin, his home state. His first three years were spent with a wholesale florist in Salt Lake City, the next three with Teleflora in Colorado.

"With Teleflora, I covered six states, attended floral shows and met vendors



*Lion Ribbon's Fall and Holiday 2011 collection features hundreds of items from traditional red/green plaids and burlap designs to bold, bright colors and funky swirl patterns that will bring your designs to life. There is something for every taste and every budget.*

that supply the floral industry," Swientek said. "When it was time to transition, I contacted Lion Ribbon. When the Michigan territory opened up, it all fell into place."

For 26 years and counting, Swientek has been supplying shops with Lion's products for everyday, wedding, all floral holidays and special events, including prom.

"Prom season is big for us," he said. "We have developed our own line as well as teamed up with Fitz Design, resulting in an offering of upscale prom products such as wristlets, corsage ribbons, gems, rhinestones, pearl sprays and other bling."

This line is part of an ever-expanding

selection from Lion.

"I can go into a shop today and then again in two months with a whole new selection of great new things," Swientek said. "New colors, new trends, new fads, new products. We'll show you new products several times a year."

Right now the hottest colors are apple green, turquoise, hot pink and navy. The best-selling ribbon is the new Wired Bolten.

"It's a glitzy ribbon," Swientek said. "Great for corsages in a narrow width and special event work in black #40."

For the holidays, burlap is another big new trend, and plaids are also making a comeback.

"In a slower economy, 'comfortable'





## NEWPRODUCTSPOTLIGHT

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and 'traditional' do well," Swientek said. "It's sort of like comfort food. There's a longing for something that feels good when things are kind of crazy in the world."

Trendy or traditional, Lion Ribbon's dedicated sales force is on the road with all the products. They offer a personal experience that often is lacking online.

"We can put the ribbon right in your hands," Swientek said. "You see it firsthand: touch it, feel it, experience it. Because we are the manufacturer, any customer that I work with has the choice to order anything or everything that we make."

Traveling around to all his customers is Swientek's favorite part of the job.

"I love to travel, to get out and see the variety in all the different shops," he said. "Meeting and greeting people, I learn so much from each individual florist. I see the constant change in the floral industry. I know some people long for the 'good old days,' but we've got to look ahead and take advantage of the opportunities that are in front of us now."

To order from Tom Swientek, e-mail [tom.swientek@berwickoffray.com](mailto:tom.swientek@berwickoffray.com) or call (517) 256-7007. Visit [www.LionRibbon.com](http://www.LionRibbon.com) to check out all the products. ✻

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## SYMPATHY COLUMN

# Comfort, Caring and Condolences

## Helping our customers express their feelings through flowers

BY SKEETER PARKHOUSE

**S**ending sympathy flowers and plants is a convenient way to let a grieving family know you care. Flowers brighten someone's sad day, and plants give people something to nurture and care for after the funeral. Here are some ideas I use on a daily basis at Eastern Floral for sympathy customers:

Help your customer choose the appropriate design to send. With more cremations and memorial services being held, a vase of flowers is very nice; it's something that can be used at the luncheon and be taken home afterward, or sent to a nursing home to brighten surroundings after the service. Wreath and easel sprays are a great choice to be displayed at the service and then moved to the graveside at the cemetery.

We as professional florists help the family and other sympathy customers pay tribute to someone's life and convey the proper feelings and warmth. Help them choose the right memorial of fresh flowers or plants by asking questions about the deceased. In doing this, you are helping them say the words that at this time are difficult.

Make designs personable and fitting for the deceased. If they enjoyed gardening, make a beautiful design in a birdbath, which gives the family a memorial to lovingly display in their yard. For fishermen, I have used their fishing poles or fish basket in the designs, or fish ornaments. Sailing is very popular here in West Michigan, and a great keepsake I have done is a sailing-themed tree ornament for each member of the deceased's family to place on their Christmas tree year after year.

Another tribute I have done is to include knitting needles and balls of yarn for the mother or grandma who always knitted, or wood working tools that dad or grandpa had used over the years. For those who were involved in a group or organization, use this as inspiration for the design you are making. This will show people that you care in a time of sorrow, and will

bring back great memories of times spent with the deceased.

These days there are changing trends in how people commemorate the death of a loved one. People grieve in different ways. More and more families are choosing not to have a service in the funeral home or church. Whatever their reasons may be, we as florists must educate our customers that flowers and plants still add a tremendous comfort for the family. By sending designs to the home of the bereaved person and family, you are showing your love and comfort when no visitations are possible.

And let's not forget our four-legged friends. Offer selections to send as a gift of comfort when someone loses a dog, cat or any beloved pet. Pet sympathy deliveries are a way to show you care and understand the loss of their family member. Someone losing their companion is one of the most difficult experiences a pet lover will have. Those without pets may not understand completely, but pets are family members; they greet us at the door, are always by our sides and show unconditional love to us, helping us through those bad days. For a local veterinary hospital in my area, we send out a simple rose in a vase to their clients when a pet passes away, with a 'thinking of you' card.

As floral industry professionals, we help our customers express their condolences in caring and comforting ways. More sympathy business will come your way when people see the designs you create and deliver. Always make sure that you use sympathy cards printed with your shop name so people know who to call in the future, and always put a description of your design on the back of the card for the family.

During this difficult time, when someone doesn't know what to say or is uncomfortable phoning a grieving family, use the tagline that I do each week at my Chamber Leads Networking group: "When words escape, flowers speak." ✿

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*Skeeter Parkhouse is the manager of Eastern Floral in Grand Haven and Spring Lake, MI.*



Photo Courtesy of Teleflora



**BUSINESSCOLUMN**

# Adding On Adds Up to Bigger Sales and Better Service

BY BOB AND SUSAN NEGEN, WHIZBANG! TRAINING



**A** surefire way to increase your sales without spending one red cent on advertising is to get more from the customers already buying something from your store. One of the most effective ways to do this is to add-on to every sale. Done properly, adding-on is great customer service – not a pushy sales pitch. In fact, most of the time you haven't given good customer service if you haven't suggested add-on items! You have two great opportunities to add-on with every customer. Take advantage of them both and watch your sales and customer satisfaction soar.

## Add-on To the "Main" Sale

When I was in the kite business, I would add-on string and a colorful tail whenever a customer bought a kite. If you're in the floral/gardening business, you can sell a selection of fine chocolates, balloons, stuffed animals, cute bookmarks, inspirational calendars and magnets... you get the idea. And don't forget a beautiful vase or planter! Although the technique seems quite obvious, you'd be amazed at how many of us small store owners miss this golden opportunity.

## Add-on at the Register

Your next opportunity occurs after the "main" sale is made and you bring your customer to the register. The area surrounding your cash register should generate enormous amounts of money for you. This is where you put your impulse items, those crazy items that nobody needs but lots of people will buy. Make sure your register add-ons are fun to buy, easy to sell, and perhaps most importantly, have high profit margins. The favorite register add-on in my toy store was a whistling balloon helicopter – blow up a balloon, attach it to the wings, and let it fly with a silly whistling sound. We sold them by the thousands at about a 70 percent margin!

Here are two tips for making register add-ons super sales generators:

- 1.** Don't put too many items at the register as add-ons. If there are too many choices, your customers will frequently be overwhelmed and choose none. Rotate different items until you've found your best bet add-ons and then keep them on the counter and keep them in stock!
- 2.** Make sure everyone on your staff shows every customer an add-on at the cash register before they give the total dollar amount for the sale. A quick demonstration and an enthusiastic endorsement will persuade even more people to buy. The trick is to add-on constantly and consistently until it becomes a habit. It can't be stated strongly enough that if you and everyone who works in your store attempt to add on to every

single sale, you will see significant sales increases. It's the little things done well, and done all the time, by everyone in your organization that mean the difference between constant struggle and the type of success you deserve.

Want more help with teaching your employees the basics of the sales process? Want to learn more techniques to give your customers what they really want – a great buying experience every time they visit your store? Visit our Web site at [www.whizbangtraining.com](http://www.whizbangtraining.com). Want more great tips? Get FREE business building ideas delivered to your "inbox" every week. Sign up for your "WhizBang! Tip of the Week" at our site. ✨

*Bob and Susan Negen have more than 35 years of combined "on the floor" retail business experience. Visit their company Web site at [www.whizbangtraining.com](http://www.whizbangtraining.com).*

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## INDUSTRYNEWS

# Teleflora Promotes Jeff Bennett to President



**T**eleflora, the world's leading floral service, has promoted Jeff Bennett to president. Bennett, who had been the company's executive vice president, sales and member services, replaces Shawn Weidmann, who is leaving the company to pursue another opportunity.

"We are delighted to have found a new president within the company," said Tom Butler, Teleflora chairman. "Jeff has been with Teleflora for seven years and has the familiarity and understanding of the needs of the business, Teleflora's member florists and the issues facing the floral industry."

Butler added that Bennett is a natural choice to head the company, thanks to his proven operations and leadership skills.

"Jeff has done a tremendous job leading our sales force, florist customer service and Stems & Bunches program," said Butler. "He is committed to continuing to developing programs and services that help make member florists successful while remaining the only major wire service that doesn't offer drop-ship."

For more than 75 years, the Teleflora brand has been recognized for its ability to help retail florists run successful businesses. A key element of this strategy has been Teleflora's dedication to driving consumer demand for beautiful floral arrangements that are artistically hand-arranged, hand-delivered by neighborhood florists. This effort is unique in the industry and drives significant demand and business as consumers seek and rely on the expertise of professional florists.

Congratulations, Jeff, on your new position! ✻



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## DESIGNERSPOTLIGHT

# No Meshing Around

BY DEREK C. WOODRUFF, AIFD, CF, CFD  
MFA'S 2011 DESIGNER OF THE YEAR  
OWNER OF  
THE FLORAL UNDERGROUND  
IN TRAVERSE CITY, MI



**E**volution: any process of formation or growth; development. As I think back to when my career began in the floral industry, when customers would select loose flowers to be “wrapped to go,” I was instructed to cut the appropriate piece of cellophane, wrap it up and tie it off with curly balloon ribbon. And don’t forget to curl the ends! When I started my own business a few years ago, I wanted to do things a bit differently. My wrapped bouquets have evolved from cellophane and balloon ribbon to brown meat-wrapping paper and bind wire. The coolest thing is that I can scribble the sender’s message on the brown paper with a crayon! Today, it’s all about the mesh! This loose bouquet has been wrapped in a folded piece of orange mesh cut from a roll that is available from Nordlie, or check with your wholesaler. There are colors available for every scheme. To hold it all together, use a piece of decorative packaging tape. To evolve, we must think outside the box! ✱

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Photo by Al Cooley Photography – [www.myspace.com/squashooter](http://www.myspace.com/squashooter)

## MFASUPPORTERS

MFA Professional Partners

# Spotlight on MFA Supporter: Lakeshore Candle Company

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

**J**on Haveman's wife, Krista, had a favorite candle. An ordinary man might have bought his wife a candle or two for her birthday or their anniversary. But Haveman's no ordinary man. He thought so much of the candle company that when it came up for sale, he bought it.

In 2006, Haveman relaunched the company as Lakeshore Candle Company, and moved the operation to Zeeland, MI, near the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. He is growing the company by adding new customers and expanding the product line.

"We produce a high-quality candle at a reasonable price point," Haveman said.

The company has more than 300 SKUs in candles, room sprays and bath salts. The made-in-America, hand-poured products are steadily gaining popularity with independent retailers, including garden centers and floral shops.

*Lakeshore Candle Company launched its 46th scent, Holly Berry, a festive blend of berries, vanilla and a touch of cinnamon. Complementing the candle's festive name, all candle packaging, and the candle itself, boast a vibrant holiday red color.*



"Our candles are very colorful and vibrant, just like the beautiful fresh flowers in a local flower shop," Haveman said. "We also have great scents that pair well with fresh flowers, like Lilac, Sweet Bay Magnolia, Butterfly Orchid, Heather & Hyacinth, Night Blooming Jasmine and Sweet Pea."

The company continually invests in new fragrance formulas and test-markets each one with its friends and customers before rolling them out nationally. The candles' unique scents have received rave reviews from retailers and customers, who also praise the candle's high-quality composition and use of eco-friendly materials. The "green" elements and high-quality craftsmanship create an exceptional burn time and provide owners with a clean burning experience, sans heavy soot.

Haveman's business principles include buying locally and following environmentally-sound manufacturing processes. The raw materials that go into Lakeshore Candle's products are sourced mainly in the Midwest. (Some jars and tins come from off-shore sources.) Soybeans from Iowa, fragrance oils, colors and product labels are supplied by local businesses. Unlike some of its competitors, Lakeshore Candle makes its own wicks, a key element for even burning and fragrance distribution.

"Thinking local and thinking green are very important to us," Haveman said. "We work hard to use as many local and U.S. suppliers that we can. It makes sense because it's the best sustainable plan we have, and it's the right thing to do. Spending money closer to home creates jobs for people closer to home, and in turn, those people have more money to spend. Somewhere along the line they will want to buy a candle, and we would like to think it will be a Lakeshore Candle."

Not only are Lakeshore Candle's products green, but so is the factory in which they are made. Soon after buying the company and setting up shop in a rented space, Haveman realized he was going to need a larger facility. Haveman built a 17,500-square-foot manufacturing and distribution center two years ago to accommodate future growth. The building's energy-saving features include overhead radiant heat, which warms the space more efficiently than other methods. Insulation helps reduce energy bills, and controls automatically shut off lights and heating/cooling equipment when the factory is not occupied.

Lakeshore Candle's best-selling product is an over-sized votive candle featuring a unique basket-weave design that is built into the wax using proprietary methods – this candle has a 25-hour burn time. Larger candles are available in three container styles: a glass jar, an elegant glass tumbler, and the Click-Clack Tin. The candles provide exceptional burn times,



## MFASUPPORTERS



*The Lake Retreat line is comprised of nine candles, each with a summer-inspired name, such as Beach Bum, Summer Fun, Dune Grass and Blue Water. All candles are set inside a simple and classic 10-ounce glass casing, and are decorated with colorful and attractive foil label designs.*

which range from 40 hours to more than 140 hours.

New products that debuted in early 2011, like the new Bird of Paradise fragrance and the Lake Retreat line, are helping Haveman achieve growth every year since the company started. Currently, Lakeshore Candle is enjoying its highest rate of growth ever.

"As our customer base continues to increase, it allows us to obtain more feedback from customers and build upon our business with new product line introductions based upon customer requests," Haveman said.

Lakeshore Candle helps retailers make attractive and appealing displays in their stores by providing point-of-purchase sales aids, including hutches, tables and tent cards. Like the candles themselves, the display furniture is made in Zeeland.

"We are offering a display table program that works great in a floral shop," Haveman said. "It's a two-level table with six fragrances in three sizes, six-ounce and 10-ounce tumblers and votives. You buy the product and get the table for free. The great thing is it has a built-in space for a floral arrangement that lends well to floral shops."

Haveman has expanded his showroom to 700-square-feet in Atlanta's AmericasMart, home to the gift industry's largest and most prestigious to-the-trade wholesale market. The company also exhibits at gift markets in Chicago, Las Vegas, Columbus, OH, Dallas, Minneapolis and Philadelphia. In 2010, Lakeshore Candle made its debut on the tradeshow floor at MFA's Great Lakes Floral Expo in Grand Rapids, MI.

Haveman's immediate focus is to grow the customer base of Lakeshore Candle.

"We work hard to understand and serve our customers," he said. "We strive to offer a product with proper displays that help it turn in the store. We also offer a great candle that burns clean and has a good scent throw at a value price."

In the longer term, Haveman says he wants to build Lakeshore Candle into a medium-size company, one that is not too large.

"It's important to stay close to the customer," he said. "After all, they drive the sales and are a source of inspiration for new products."

For more information on Lakeshore's products, call (888) 752-2655, sign up online at [www.lakeshorecandlecompany.com/Resellers.aspx](http://www.lakeshorecandlecompany.com/Resellers.aspx), or e-mail [sales@lakeshorecandlecompany.com](mailto:sales@lakeshorecandlecompany.com). \*



*The Lakeshore Candle Company in Zeeland, MI.*



*The Lakeshore Candle crew, left to right: Chris Deboer, production manager; Diane Richards, national sales manager; Jon Haveman, president; Krista Haveman, customer service and Pam Kintner, customer service.*

## MFAEVENTS

# Congratulations to the MFA Golf Outing Winners!

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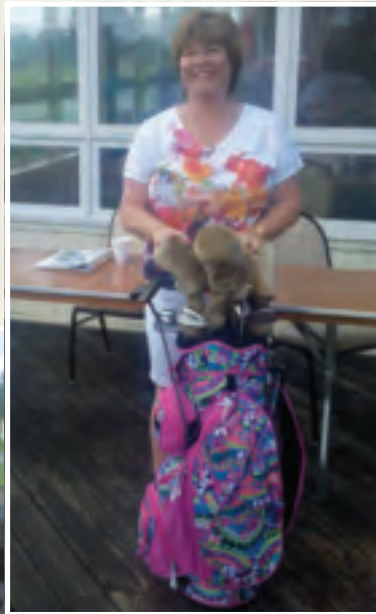
Steve Grinnell  
of David Chapman  
Agency  
and  
Rod Crittenden  
of MFA  
(score of 70)

### Third Place:

Marc Brenner  
of Ludema's  
and  
Jim Schmidt  
from Hyacinth House  
(score of 72)



*We had beautiful weather for the outing this year, 75 degrees and partly sunny!*



*Jeannie Kapusto from Art Craft Display with her snazzy new golf bag.*



*Jim Schmidt, 2011 Golf Outing Chairman and co-owner Hyacinth House, delivering clubhouse décor and door prizes. 2011 Golf Outing Sponsors signs.*



*Steve Grinnell of David Chapman Agency and Brent Mains of Mains Importing getting ready for the big day!*





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## MFABENEFITS

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### 1. Michigan Horticulture Industries Self Insured Workers' Compensation Fund (MHI Fund)

The MHI Fund is a member-owned workers' compensation program that exists for the exclusive benefit of the floral industry and offers substantial savings to its members. Most members would agree that one of their biggest benefits is the profit return they receive. This year alone, the State of Michigan authorized the Fund to distribute \$1.8 million back to its members, bringing the total returned to \$17 million since the Fund's inception in 1993. Right now, more than 70 percent of the members are receiving returns equal to 45 percent of their premium.

### 2. Business and Personal Lines of Insurance & Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Group Plans

Insurance, both business and personal, is a necessity. When working with your agent, make sure you request them to quote your policy with Auto Owners and use the Michigan Floral Association as your preferred group. You can also use your MFA membership for access into the MHI Work Comp Fund and many Blue Cross / Blue Shield programs. Steve Grinnell is our preferred agent at David Chapman. Steve would be honored to have the chance to quote your business and personal insurance needs.

### 3. Unbeatable Credit Card Processing Rates/ Midwest Transaction Group

Midwest Transaction Group has a long history of providing the membership some of the lowest processing rates in the industry, the partnership is best known for the personalized customer service it provides. Every member call to our office is handled by a live, friendly person – regardless of the time of day or the day of the week. With the MFA processing program, terminal supplies are free as is the PCI compliance support we provide. There really isn't a better program available, which is probably the reason it just celebrated its 10th birthday!

### 4. MFA SuperFleet Fueling and Vehicle Maintenance Program

SuperFleet and MFA have a no-charge fuel discount program that offers you all the same features and benefits that are usually reserved only for companies with large fleets. You see, as a group, your association purchases enough fuel to qualify as a large fleet and therefore qualifies for volume cost savings. MFA members are currently saving more than \$400 every month on their fuel spend collectively, while reaping the benefit of security and tracking to ensure legitimate fuel consumption by employees. *Save 10-cents per gallon as a new SuperFleet account at Speedway's and 5-cents per gallon at Marathon's for your first 90 days!*

### 5. Arrive Alive® Cut Flower Bouquet Hydration Wraps

Arrive Alive® is hydrophilic foam designed to provide water and nutrients to cut flowers for transporting, storing or displaying purposes. The foam is biodegradable, completely sterile, has a neutral PH and exhibits uniform hydrology. The highly porous foam maintains a 60/40 air to water ratio, directs more than 90 percent of all water and nutrients to the cut flowers and retains hydration. The basic concept of this product is that cut flowers are wrapped in the Arrive Alive® pad, sleeved with a polyethylene bag, and secured with a rubber band.

### 6. TRANSPORTER 10® Delivery Systems

The All-In-One Delivery System – TRANSPORTER 10® ensures that your beautifully created arrangements arrive in the same condition as when they left your shop. No more broken stems, cracked containers or spilled water! Engineered with graduated openings TRANSPORTER 10® floral vase blocks hold everything from bud vases to vases with a 10 inch diameter. With a variety of styles to choose from, there is a size to fit every need. TRANSPORTER 10® assures peace of mind knowing that your deliveries will reach their destinations looking as good as they did on your design table.

### 7. Sandwich Boards/ Changeable Sidewalk Signage

MFA's patent-pending SignTrax system allows users to change from a graphic panel to a message board, and back again, in seconds. The SignTrax system also allows for inserting optional clear plastic over the sign faces. These covers protect the letters and graphics from the weather and also from pranksters who might rearrange the text. Our SignTrax system includes our exclusive built-in locking mechanisms. A standard padlock (not included) locks the sign panels, and clear covers, in place for added security. SignTrax message boards include:

### 8. Custom Printed Business Forms

Royal is a national supplier of custom forms and business supplies with distribution to all 50 states. They produce and distribute a variety of continuous, snap-a-part, register and laser forms, demand style point-of-sale invoices and many varieties of promotional products. Specialties include laser cut sheet shells and stock forms for many types of software packages. They can also handle your short run cut sheet, letterhead, and envelope imprinting. Royal has the qualifications and the desire to take care of your business form needs.



## MFABENEFITS

### 9. Collection Services

Since 1938, I.C. System has been helping clients achieve their collection-related goals. Their experienced personnel, proven processes, and leading-edge technology combine for high recovery rates without alienating your customers. They have collected billions of dollars for clients, and the number of times our practices caused a client to pay a legal judgment is zero. I.C. System is a full-service agency with 30,000 clients representing nearly every industry. Expect unparalleled service and recoveries to greatly improve your bottom line.

### 10. Business Consultants and Freelance Designers

The MFA has Professional Partnerships established with many reputable business consultants and freelance designers that are

available on a contract basis to help your business. These professionals have hundreds of years of combined experience and have proven track records. We'll be able to find someone to help guide you through your business challenges or help pull together that extra special once in lifetime wedding or event.

These programs are offered and in place to help make all MFA members more profitable! They do this in various ways from direct savings on insurance premiums, to discounts on products and services offered to active members of the Association. All members should use these products and services to their advantage. There is strength in numbers! If you're not currently using any of these, make sure to check into them and start saving real money. ✨

**For more information on the benefits listed, please contact the MFA office at (517) 575-0110, visit [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org), or e-mail [rod@michiganfloral.org](mailto:rod@michiganfloral.org).**

# MFA Professional Education is On The Road!

## MFA partners with retail shops and wholesalers to bring education to you.

Michigan Floral Association brings you a new way to get education to your employees with less expense and hardship. Here's the idea: **you can have a hands-on workshop right at your own store or wholesale house.**

## The workshops available are Wedding, Sympathy, and Flowers-to-Wear/Gluing.

Simply choose the class and instructor (**visit [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org) for a complete 2011 class schedule and instructor lists**). The classes are 3 hours long and could be held in the evening or during the day. You can do this for yourself or partner with a neighboring shop to maximize the opportunity and lower your expense.

MFA will send you a class confirmation letter and the class handouts in advance, as well as a list of the products needed for each student. You will be responsible for ordering and paying for the products needed for the class. The cost for a class of up to 10 MFA members is just \$300 total, and for non-MFA members is \$450 for up to 10 people. You also will be responsible for providing all flowers/supplies for the class and all instructor travel fees. **Our goal is to get education to the retail flower shops in order to keep you at the forefront of floral design.**

## Visit [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org) for a Complete 2011 Class Schedule and Instructor Lists.

**Reserve a session at your shop or wholesale house today!**

Simply fill out the class reservation form and return to the MFA office.

The MFA office will schedule your class/instructor and notify you.

### Session Reservation Form Class enrollment limited to 10.

Shop Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Session Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date you would like to hold a session: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

\$300 covers up to 10 MFA members  \$450 covers up to 10 non-MFA members Charge to:  MasterCard  Visa  American Express

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code on CC Bill: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF PAYING BY CHECK:** Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **Registration Fees are Non-Refundable**

**Please return this completed form to the MFA office.**

**MAIL:** MFA – PO Box 67 Haslett, MI 48840 • **FAX:** (517) 575-0115 • **E-MAIL:** [cindy@michiganfloral.org](mailto:cindy@michiganfloral.org)

## CFREPORT

# Chairwoman's Report: Certified Florist Fall Update

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



I am happy to report that things are moving along well in making online testing available for the written portion of our exam. We are working with Michigan State University and hope to have things “live” in the fall!

I have heard that many of you use the CF Manual for training purposes of new employees – what a great idea! If you are not using it yourself, check it out... you could not find a better training tool. And keep the manual out on a bookstand in your store/greenhouse. Customers love to look for their favorite flowers and plants. Remember to make copies of those pages as handouts for interested customers. If a customer calls with a

question on care and handling, imagine how impressed they will be to get a copy of one of these pages on e-mail or in the mail. Talk about great customer service!

CF was well represented recently at the July OFA Conference. MFA Executive Vice President Rod Crittenden manned the booth, while MFA President Alice Waterous, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI, did a hands-on workshop. Many florists from around the country showed interest in our program. Thanks, Rod and Alice, for making CF look so good!

Our next testing will be at MSU on October 23. A preparation class will be held at the MFA building on October 12. Hope to see you there! ✿

*Kathy Petz is a senior national account director at Teleflora.*

## CF Flower of the Month

### WAX FLOWER

***Chamaelucium uncinatum, Chamaelucium pheliferum  
and Chamaelucium ciliatum***

Wax flower is a delicate, airy filler for arrangements in vase or floral foam designs and works particularly well in bridal bouquets, nosegays and corsages. The flower comes in pinks, white, lavender and white in the “sterling range,” *C. ciliatum*.

They are available December through May in the domestic market, but are readily abundant June through November in the international market and the “sterling range” in September, October and November.

All wax flowers last well up to seven to 12 days. Its delightful waxy star shape is about half an inch across clustered along flexible woody stems. *C. pheliferum* flowers are smaller and have tighter clusters. The sterling range flowers are even smaller and cluster similar to heather. All stems height can range anywhere from 18- to 48-inches. All the stems are covered in long needlelike foliage.

Upon arrival of your flowers, check that half the buds are fully open and the remaining ones show full color and are firm to the touch. Check that the foliage is not dropping or flowers excessively shattering, which are signs of ethylene damage or the product is past its prime.

Make sure to follow the care and handling section of our Professional Certification Manual for basic care. Cut two to three inches off the ends and striping all lower foliage that may go under the treated water, and allow the newly cut stems to drink up to eight hours before refrigerating at temperatures between 34 and 36 degrees. It is essential to change the preservative solution every four days and use clean buckets. Wax flower is extremely ethylene sensitive, so be careful with its storage placement in conjunction with other flowers in the cooler.



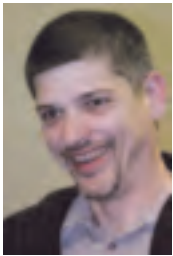
Waxflower  
*Chamaelucium pheliferum*  
(kam-e-LAW-si-um fel-IF-er-um)

Waxflower 'Sterling Range'  
*Chamaelucium ciliatum*  
(kam-e-LAW-si-um si-lee-AY-tum)



# CF Testing... Don't Be Afraid

BY TIM LATIMER, CF



**I** haven't taken a test since high school." "I'm just not good at taking tests." "I've heard that the CF test is very tricky and confusing."

Do these statements sound familiar? I hear these frequently used reasons for not taking the CF test. The truth is, if you're well prepared, you will be able to successfully complete the CF exam and join the

group of certified florists.

So where do I start? Before you get bogged down with thinking about taking a test and become overwhelmed about how much there is to know, start with reading the CF manual. The manual covers a lot of ground, so take it in small doses. You won't be able to absorb it all in one sitting. Find a few minutes each day to read a few pages – it's not a race. Reading a few pages each day in a relaxed atmosphere is the best way to become familiar with all the information.

Now that you have read the entire manual one time and have a basic understanding of all the information, it's time to read it again. The study guide that accompanies the manual has sample questions for each chapter. Read a chapter and then see if you can answer the sample questions. If you are unsure of the answers it's OK to look them up! Looking up the answers is a great way to learn. Remember to take this at a relaxed pace, you aren't being timed. You will learn so much more when you aren't under pressure to get it all done at once.

Now that you have read and re-read the manual, and answered all the sample questions, you are ready to schedule a time for testing (contact the MFA office). When you have a time scheduled for testing, schedule some study time as well. If you plan study time each week, it will happen. If you don't have study time scheduled it is too easy to put off and before you know it the test date is here and you need to cram.

Here are some study tips that should help you:

1. Short periods of study over a long period of time are far more effective than trying to cover it all at once.
2. Don't try to study when you are tired or hungry. You will be much more successful studying when you are alert and relaxed.

## FLORAL TIP

Packaging is required on most flowers to help them travel safely to their destination and protect them in all kinds of weather. When wrapping is used, it is so important to make sure it's not only functional, but also attractive, as any fine gift should be, and that it advertises your business.

### CONGRATULATIONS NEW CERTIFIED FLORISTS!

**Theresa Andre, CF** – Amanda, OH

**Juan Tracy II, CF** – Flowers at the Falls, Idaho Falls, ID

**Rhonda Stibbe, CF** – Aurora, IL

3. Study is best done in a quiet environment.
4. Study groups help. It is always easier to be motivated when you work in a group. Sign up for testing with a friend or two and encourage each other. Quiz each other on the information.
5. MFA offers a "Steps to Certification" class. Taking the class might be just the thing to build you confidence! (see information below)

The important thing to remember is: you can do it. If you are well prepared there is nothing to be afraid of. I hope to see you at the next CF testing! ✨

## Professional Education Center

### Steps to Certification

Do's and Don'ts • Methods & Mechanics  
Insight & Answers • A Hands-On Experience

**October 12, 2011**

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Member: \$149

Non-Member: \$199

(Lunch included in class fee)

Instructor: Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF, CFD

MFA Professional Education Center in 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 4:00 p.m. with a half hour break for lunch, which is included in the registration fee. **Please bring your own tools.**

**Call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110 for more info!**

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

### HELP WANTED

**Floral designer position available:** 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.

**Floral designer position available in South Lyon.** Bakman Floral Design has a position available for an ambitious, very creative, experienced floral designer, must have wedding design experience can be full or part time. Please send resume to: Bakman Floral Design 22880 Pontiac Trail, South Lyon, MI 48178.

**Wholesale job opportunities:** Nordlie, Inc., Michigan's largest wholesaler, has excellent opportunities for high energy staff in numerous capacities. Inside sales, route sales, designing, or merchandising – stop by our Warren, Flint, or Grandville stores. Full benefit program. Contact any one of our store managers: **Tom Figueroa AIFD, MCF;** Warren; 586-755-4200. **Cathy Davison;** Flint; 810-767-8883. **Leslie Walton / Deb Durrant;** Grandville; 616-534-6883.

### SEEKING DONATIONS

**MFA Scholarship Committee seeks donations for the 2012 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.

To place a classified ad, call Rod at (517) 575-0110.  
Rates vary by size.

## A Beautiful Advertising Opportunity



To place an ad call  
Rod Crittenden at (517) 575-0110

## 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. (see page 27 for more on this class)



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 \$584.67 (includes tax & S/H)**

**\*Cost for manual only is \$384.67 (includes tax & S/H)**

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

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

### The CF Manual consists of the following chapters and books:

1. Care & Handling
2. Product Identification
3. Customer Relations/Sales
4. Delivery
5. Marketing
6. Accounting
7. Gluing
8. Lighting
9. Basic Floral Design (this topic is covered using two books that are included with your manual purchase.  
*Florists' Review Design School* and  
*Flower Arranging... Step by Step Instructions for Everyday Designs*)
10. Study Guide & Evaluation Forms



**Visit [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org)  
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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.



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Van's #292088  
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PLAIN  
Opening: 4.25"  
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PLAIN  
Opening: 3.375"  
12/Case



**3950AST**  
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7.28" PETITE VASE TRIO  
PLAIN  
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12/Case



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Van's #292087  
8.5" GARDEN URN  
PLAIN  
Opening: 4"  
12/Case



**3104CLR**  
Van's #292294  
8.5" GATHERING VASE  
PLAIN  
Opening: 4"  
12/Case



**3007CLR**  
Van's #295787  
8.5" MARILYN VASE  
PLAIN  
Opening: 3"  
12/Case



**3005CLR**  
Van's #292216  
9" RIO BUNCH VASE  
OPTIC  
Opening: 2.75"  
12/Case



**3002CLR**  
Van's #292192  
9" RIO VASE  
OPTIC  
Opening: 5.375"  
6/Case



**3003CLR**  
Van's #292194  
9.25" RIO CACHE VASE  
OPTIC  
Opening: 7.25"  
6/Case



**3020AST**  
Van's #292230  
10" BOKAY VASE TRIO  
PLAIN  
Opening: 3.75", 4.625", 3.875"  
12/Case



**3905CLR**  
Van's #292086  
10.25" GARDEN URN  
PLAIN  
Opening: 4.75"  
6/Case



**3008CLR**  
Van's #292217  
10.5" RIO VASE  
PLAIN  
Opening: 5.5"  
6/Case



**3929CLR**  
Van's #292297  
12" CONICO VASE  
OPTIC  
Opening: 6.5"  
6/Case



**3004CLR**  
Van's #292202  
13.25" MING VASE  
PLAIN  
Opening: 5.5"  
4/Case



**3605CLR**  
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PLAIN  
Opening: 6.5"  
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PLAIN  
Opening: 3.25"  
12/Case



**3967CLR**  
Van's #291722  
6" BUBBLE BOWL  
PLAIN  
Opening: 4.25"  
12/Case



**3553CLR**  
Van's #293002  
8" BUBBLE BOWL  
PLAIN  
Opening: 5.25"  
4/Case





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**SAVE THE  
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