



Volume I 2010

**MFA'S 2010  
GREAT LAKES  
FLORAL EXPO  
NAVIGATION**  
A Course  
Set for Profit,  
Education and  
Success  
March 5-7, 2010

Professional  
Partnership Benefits

Nature's  
Creative Edge  
2009

Florists Own  
the Wedding  
Flower Business  
...and it is Big Business

# the professional florist

# Happy 90th Birthday MFA!



DIAMOND AWARD  
WINNING PUBLICATION  
MSAE

REASON NO. 7

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FOR PROFESSIONAL RETAIL  
FLORISTS NATIONWIDE.



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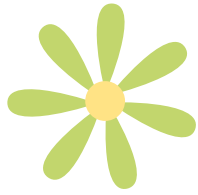
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# the professional florist

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## Michigan Floral ASSOCIATION

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# LEADERSHIPREPORT

# Happy 90th Birth

BY ROD CRITTENDEN  
MFA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



The year 2010 marks a milestone in the history of your Michigan Floral Association; it's our 90th birthday! Our industry has seen many changes since the beginning of the MFA in 1920, but after 90 years we still focus on two of the core principles that this Association was founded on: Education and Professional Partnerships.

The MFA Mission Statement: To Provide Education and Professional Partnerships which help to enable members of the Michigan Floral Association to position themselves at the forefront of the floral industry.

Education is the reason the Association was founded 90 years ago and remains today as one of the Associations' primary purposes. Back in 1920, a group of recent graduates from the horticulture program at the then Michigan Agricultural College, currently Michigan State University, gathered and formed the Michigan State Florists' Association. The purpose of this new Association was to provide a forum where growers and florists could gather with professors from the horticulture department.

They would discuss issues, concerns, failures and successes with the idea that this would benefit the individuals as well as help to grow the industry.

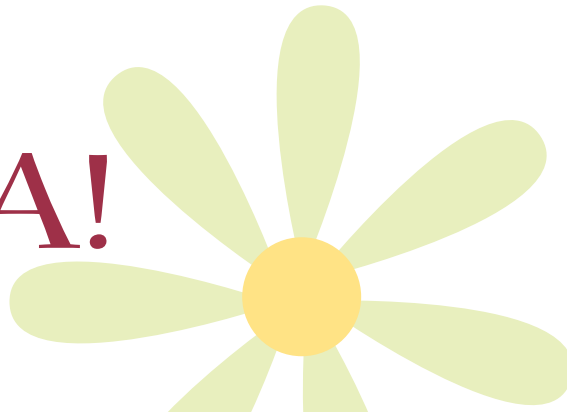
The Association has seen many changes over the last 90 years, including the name change to Michigan Floral Association (MFA) in 1992. Today's changes include the creation and implementation of the Certified Florist (CF) program, the MFA Professional Education Center at the Association headquarters in Haslett, MI, the annual spring conference (The Great Lakes Floral Expo – see pages 15 through 22 for information on this year's Expo), regional meetings, and the bi-monthly publication *The Professional Florist*, which is mailed to all Association members. Education remains high on the Association's priority list.

Professional Partnerships is the second part of our mission statement and we take it very seriously. We strive daily to improve relations and communications with Seed Hybridizers, Growers, Transportation Companies, Importers, Wholesalers, Business Service Providers, Media Outlets (Television, Radio, Print), Consumer Marketing and more! We are the collective voice of our members to the floral industry, government and to

Your MFA magazine has come a long way!



# day MFA!



the public. In today's world we are relatively powerless as one, but when we unite and stand together we can make positive changes that benefit us all! You can learn more about Professional Partnerships as you read through the rest of this issue. Be sure to look into our No. 1 financial reason for belonging to the MFA – the MHI Workers Comp Fund. Read more about this program, which is owned by the members and has returned more than 13.9 million in premium to the membership, on page 7.

One other very important service that your MFA provides is Government Advocacy. Your Association has constant contact with both State and Federal Government. I am a member of the Capital Club, an elite group limited to the top 50 state trade association executives. We meet every other week and monitor the actions of the State and Federal branches of government and the decisions they make which affect our members businesses.

Just last month, on Dec. 1, 2009, after heavy voice of concern from the Agricultural community, Governor Granholm signed Executive Order (EO) 2009-54 that satisfies the bulk of the agricultural communities concerns, restoring the important

agricultural policy authorities to the Commission including authorities over Right to Farm and the GAAMPs process. EO 2009-54 essentially reverses the decisions made in EO 2009-45 issued the first week in October 2009. EO 2009-45 would have dissolved the Commission on Agriculture and given all the power to the Governor to set policy and procedure for the Department of Agriculture as well as hire the Director for the department.

The MFA, along with other commodity groups, have a strong voice in Lansing. It's a great example of what can happen when we all work together; we have a powerful unified voice that is not ignored.

As you can see, even after 90 years, your MFA is still working to keep its members informed and at the forefront of the floral industry. With your continued support we look forward to serving you for many more years to come.

Please feel free to contact me at anytime if we can help you with your business. I can be reached at (517) 575-0110 or e-mail: [rod@michiganfloral.org](mailto:rod@michiganfloral.org).

Wishing you a healthy and prosperous 2010! ✿



## MFABENEFITS

# Professional Partnership Benefits

A first-hand look at the education and insurance benefits for MFA members

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR



### What is the MFA?

The Michigan Floral Association (MFA), founded in 1920, is a full-service trade association representing florists, growers, suppliers, wholesalers, educators and students. Located in Haslett, MI, MFA provides education and professional partnerships, which help to position the members of MFA at the forefront of the floral industry. It is the sponsor of the

Certified Florist (CF) program; creates and hosts The Great Lakes Floral Expo; conducts educational seminars throughout the year at the Professional Education Center located at the association headquarters; partners with local wholesale houses around the state to produce design seminars and product reviews, publishes the award winning *Professional Florist* magazine; hosts the MFA Web site, [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org), and interacts with state and federal government agencies.

### MFA Mission Statement

To provide educational and professional partnerships which help to position MFA members at the forefront of the floral industry.

### MFA Education Benefits

Membership in the MFA comes with educational benefits that are priceless. From the annual Great Lakes Floral Expo and the Professional Education Center to the Certified Florist program and The Professional Florist magazine, learn more about these benefits and the professionals who serve as chairperson of each committee. The MFA uses a committee structure to accomplish these projects. The MFA president appoints each chair.

## Benefits of MFA's Great Lakes Floral Expo



BY CHAIRWOMAN JEANETTE GAUDREAU-BALLIEN  
Owner of Gaudreau the Florist in Saginaw, MI

While Christmas shopping this winter, something I usually only allow myself to do, I asked my staff if there were any items they thought might sell that I hadn't considered. I normally don't do this, but my staff had taken

more of an interest after educating them with articles and design shows. The items they selected were items that, in my opinion, would not sell to my customer base. I had no reason or facts to back up my opinion; I just felt I knew my customers. I

allowed my staff to purchase the items to see if they would sell. All of the items I allowed them to purchase sold out weeks before Christmas – and customers were asking for more! How many times have you heard another florist say, "that will never sell in my shop," or, "my customers will never pay that." How do you know? Trends change and our customers' tastes change. Keeping up with the trends and the design techniques available to florists is essential to a successful business.

That's why attending the 2010 Great Lakes Floral Expo is important – the education value alone pays for the weekend. The networking with other florists and industry vendors is essential. Meeting people, putting faces with names, talking about common floral-related issues... hearing other florists' suggestions and ideas are so beneficial. The line-up for this year's design and business sessions are a group of amazing and talented individuals that can't be missed. You owe it to your business and to your employees to invest in your business. This is the year, now is the time, and Grand Rapids is the place! I hope to see you there.

## Benefits of MFA's Certified Florist Program



BY CHAIRWOMAN KATHY PETZ,  
AAF, MCF, PFCI  
National account director at Teleflora

The Michigan Floral Association has so many wonderful benefits that can have a positive effect on the bottom line. Each one has an important impact on the success of each florist. Near the top of the list is the Certified Florist (CF) Program. In order to have

the CF designation, an individual must study our manual, which educates in a multitude of areas including:

- Care and handling of plants and flowers
- Product identification
- Basic floral design
- Merchandising and display
- Advertising and promotion
- Sales and customer service
- Delivery
- Basic accounting and business procedures

Wouldn't you all love to have employees who are knowledgeable in all of these areas? Well, you can... just hire a Certified Florist! There are many reasons that the Certified Florist program is such a great member benefit. Advertising that your shop has a

## MFABENEFITS

Certified Florist on staff is kind of like saying you have “The Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval” It means you have a more educated staff; you have something that your competition does not have. When an individual earns the title of Certified Florist, it sets them (AND YOU) apart from the competition. It means they care enough about their advancement to study the manual and take a difficult test that not only contains design, but also a written section which includes questions from all of the areas listed above.

It is important to recognize that anyone who has the CF designation takes it with them where ever they go. National Certification is now a reality: it has been grandfathered in, and the former MCF graduates, as well as those testing now, are automatically nationally certified. If you move to another state, florists there will know that you are a ‘step above’ anyone else who might be applying for a position. For a shop owner, hiring a Certified Florist means hiring an employee with the perseverance and personal respect to work for this certification. This is an employee who should be able to be a right-hand in a multitude of areas!

Many shops purchase this professional manual as a resource tool and tell us that it has been an invaluable resource in answering customer questions in the area of care and handling, etc. It is especially helpful for new employees.

As chairperson of the MCF/CF committee, I encourage you to examine all of these areas and see how our Certified Florist Program can benefit you, as an owner or employee. Please feel free to contact me or any other committee member who would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

## Benefits of MFA's The Professional Florist Magazine



BY CHAIRWOMAN CONNIE ADAMO  
Owner of Connor Park Florist in Detroit

One of your MFA member benefits, *The Professional Florist* magazine, is published bi-monthly and keeps us all current on trends and happenings in the industry, both regionally and nationally. It is the magazine to voice your opinions or show off an event that your shop completed, or just to let others

know what has been happening in your shop or area. *The Professional Florist* is a great calendar of events. It is a place to watch for upcoming educational classes, for details on the Great Lakes Floral Expo weekend and best of all, it details the many benefits MFA members can take advantage of. *The Professional Florist* is a 36-page, four-color magazine and is published six times per year. It serves the membership of the Michigan Floral Association, Wisconsin Upper Michigan Florists Association, Illinois State Florists Association, State Florists' Association of Indiana, Colorado Retail Florists Association and the Tennessee State Florists Association with timely educational editorial and promotes professional partnerships. Readers always are welcome to contact me at [connerpark@aol.com](mailto:connerpark@aol.com), Editor Heidi Anderson at [mrsheidanderson@hotmail.com](mailto:mrsheidanderson@hotmail.com), or Rod Crittenden at [rod@michiganfloral.org](mailto:rod@michiganfloral.org) with any suggestions or to submit an article or photos of your special events work for the magazine.

## MFA Insurance Providers

As members of MFA, you have access to top-of-the-line insurance providers and discounts for your business. Many members already utilize these services, but for those of you who don't, following is detailed information to help you better your business.

## Benefits of Workers Compensation



MICHIGAN HORTICULTURE  
INDUSTRIES SELF INSURED  
WORKERS' COMPENSATION FUND  
(MHI FUND)

DAWN FELDPAUSCH,  
MARKETING REPRESENTATIVE  
REGENCY GROUP ADMINISTRATORS  
1690 Watertown Place, Suite 500,  
East Lansing, MI 48823,

(800) 686-6640, ext. 246, [www.regency-group.com](http://www.regency-group.com),  
[dfeldpausch@regency-group.com](mailto:dfeldpausch@regency-group.com)

**Question:** What makes your company and services a benefit to MFA members?

**Answer:** 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. Many sectors of the horticulture industry are eligible to participate in the MHI Fund including retail florists, wholesale florists and greenhouses. While it has several distinct advantages over other workers' compensation programs, most members would agree that one of their biggest benefits is the profit returns they receive. This year alone the State of Michigan authorized the MHI Fund to distribute \$1,530,000 back to its members, bringing the total returned to \$13.5 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.

Also, a variety of safety resources and loss control programs, specific to the floral industry, are available to help members to further reduce their premiums. The MHI Fund works with loss control specialists who provide sound guidance and cost-saving solutions on maintaining a safe workplace. In addition to safety, workers' compensation claims are handled with great scrutiny. The MHI Fund controls costs by fighting fraudulent claims and requiring claims settlements to be authorized by the MHI Board of Trustees, comprised of Fund members.

Keeping the total cost of workers' compensation down means more money returned back to the Fund members and lower premiums. The MHI Fund proves to be a true member benefit!

## Benefits of SuperFleet



TOM FARNHAM, ACCOUNT MANAGER  
(989) 615-2736

SAVE between .03 and .05 cents per gallon of fuel using the free MFA-SuperFleet program! SuperFleet and The Michigan Floral Association have developed a state-wide Association Fueling Program for all members. In this program we will offer you all the same features and benefits that

## MFABENEFITS

are usually reserved for only companies with large fleets. You see as a group, your association purchases enough fuel to qualify as a large fleet and therefore qualify for volume cost savings. MFA members currently are saving more than \$400 dollars every month on their fuel spend collectively, while reaping the benefit of security and tracking to ensure legitimate fuel consumption by employees.

With SuperFleet you can also benefit from recent enhancements to the program, such as online management with 24-hour access to establish daily limits such as amount of transactions, dollars or gallons per day limits, as well as time of day limits on a per card basis. These tools are valuable for tracking company fuel purchases and ensuring against fraud, all at no charge!

The SuperFleet card is accepted at more than 1,200 locations in Michigan at any Speedway, Marathon, or Rich Oil location. Please contact Tom Farnham at the phone number above for more information.

## Benefits of Auto Owners, Business, Property, Liability, Life & Disability Insurance



STEVE GRINNELL  
DAVID CHAPMAN AGENCY  
5700 W. Mt. Hope Hwy., Lansing, MI 48917  
(517) 321-4600  
[www.davidchapmanagency.com](http://www.davidchapmanagency.com)

Steve Grinnell and the David Chapman Agency have been providing coverage through Auto Owners Insurance Company to MFA for the past six years. All lines of coverage, including automobile, property, liability, business interruption and personal insurance are offered. In addition to the Michigan Floral Association discount of 10 percent, members may also be eligible for up to 15 percent more in discounts for having multiple policies through Auto Owners.

Steve can provide coverage for you regardless of your location in the State of Michigan and can also provide coverage in 26 states. If you desire to work with a local agent, Auto Owners is represented by more than 2,000 agents in the state and has 12 claims offices in Michigan to ensure prompt service should you have a claim.

By obtaining insurance through David Chapman Agency, MFA members get access to plans they couldn't get as individuals. And in turn, the association has more buying power. The agency also helps MFA to increase non-dues revenue, which creates less pressure on individual members. Members are kept up-to-date on an ever-changing market. Many plans are available and those who have insurance elsewhere have the option to switch to the David Chapman Agency.

## MFA Service & Product Providers

Many MFA members already take advantage of these stellar service providers, Midwest Transaction Group and Hold Plus Systems. Join the ranks of your fellow florists who benefit from cost-effective methods and superior service. And check out the money-saving Office Depot discounts; all the office supplies you need with the MFA price you want!

## Benefits of Credit Card Processing



CHARLIE CREAMER  
MIDWEST TRANSACTION GROUP  
410 S. Cedar St., Suite E,  
Lansing, MI 48912  
(517) 492-2222  
[www.midtrans.com](http://www.midtrans.com)  
[ccreamermidtrans.com](mailto:ccreamermidtrans.com)

Michigan-based Midwest Transaction Group has been working with the MFA since August of 2000. Members are not only extended preferred processing rates but they are treated to the industry's highest level of customer service. Every phone call is handled by a live, friendly person – 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Members are also extended significant discounts on all equipment and/or software applications needed to process a transaction. Midwest Transaction Group will even help the membership comply with the new PCI security standards and meet the related filing requirements, at no cost. Better yet, when you process a credit or debit card transaction through Midwest Transaction Group, a small amount of the fees go back to help support the MFA. It's no wonder that the floral community continues to make Midwest Transaction Group their processing choice.

## Benefits of Hold Plus Systems



BOB HADDAD  
PREMIER COMPANIES  
P.O. Box 559, Dimondale, MI 48821  
(877) 944-8343  
[www.florist.holdplus.com](http://www.florist.holdplus.com)  
[bob@mrholdplus.com](mailto:bob@mrholdplus.com)

*Who are we?* – Premier Companies was founded in Lansing in 1984. We provide message on-hold marketing (HOLD PLUS) to clients from coast to coast. I've personally handled the floral industry for the past nine years and bring more than 25 years experience in the card, gift and home décor industry with me. In fact I used HOLD PLUS in my retail stores for 14 years before I became part of the company.

*What do we do?* – HOLD PLUS put those valuable 30–45 seconds of caller on-hold time that exist in every business to work for MFA members. HOLD PLUS educates and entertains callers, while reminding them of upcoming events and holidays, promotes your Web site, your monthly specials and enhances your professional image.

*What's the cost?* – Believe it or not, our prices are the same



today as they were nine years ago. The annual service rate is just \$449 with a three-year Service Agreement and annual pre-payment. A one-time set-up fee of \$269 continues to be required.

What makes your company a benefit to Michigan Floral Association members? – Ease of use, broadcast quality productions, exceptional script writing, the ability to change their messages in just 60 seconds, more than 140 unique messages written specifically for the retail florists, all designed to do one thing, positively impact their bottom line. In today's world, the local florist needs to capitalize on every opportunity, playing HOLD PLUS message to their on-hold caller's works, that's why we have more than a 95 percent renewal rate year after year.

## Benefits of Office Depot Discounts

Membership in the MFA provides these discounts:

- More than 100 items on your 'best buy' list, including paper and an extensive toner list
- An additional 5 percent off the lowest price listed on the retail Web site on standard office supplies
- Free next-day delivery of in-stock items for orders of \$50 or more
- In-store discounts with registered cards
- Office supplies, furniture, business machines, copy, print and promotional items
- Access to a private Web site for order placement
- No contract and no sign-on fees \*



**MichiganFloral**  
ASSOCIATION

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

on any of MFA's member benefits,  
please contact MFA Executive Vice President  
Rod Crittenden at [rod@michiganfloral.org](mailto:rod@michiganfloral.org)  
or call (517) 575-0110.

### 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

### 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 ..... \$150

All Student members ..... \$50

\* 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: \_\_\_\_\_



## AIFDEVENTS

# Nature's Creative Edge 2009

### Floral Art – Museum Inspirations

BY ALICE WATEROUS, AIFD, MCF, MFA PRESIDENT



**O**riginating as master design classes organized and hosted by Bob Friese, AIFD, with Hitomi Gilliam, AIFD, as the guest instructor, Nature's Creative Edge has evolved into a popular West Michigan event. For the past several years, some of the country's top designers gather the third week of September at the Friese homestead to create an amazing

floral display in the woods. With a different theme each year, this year the designers interpreted the work of famous artists.

As an AIFD North Central public awareness event, the public is invited to view the completed exhibit, which also serves as a fundraiser. Beneficiaries from ticket sales have been the West Shore Symphony, Muskegon High School and AIFD Scholarship Funds.

The exhibit opens in the late afternoon and becomes illuminated at night with thousands of candles and strategically placed spotlights. A family-friendly event, this year's exhibit attracted more than 1,000 visitors of all ages, who had an opportunity to view floral design like they have never seen before. ✿

## Take a Walk through the Woods...



*Martin Van Til, AIFD, MCF, created a sculpture of leaves and vine representing the work of Michaelangelo.*



*Not really a hat – Deborah Dawson, AIFD, created a Tiffany-like lampshade of floral materials and glass accents.*

*Salvador Dalis' melting clocks painstakingly created by Rae Roberts-Griffith, AIFD.*



## AIFDEVENTS



A vision of an Alexander Calder outdoor sculpture/mobile created by NCE host, Robert Friese, AIFD.



Laura Parker, AIFD, MCF, represents Picasso with a burst of color and texture at the base of abstract figures she carved herself.

# A Floral Gallery



Christo Javocheff, performance artist, is interpreted by Jodi Duncan, AIFD, PFCI, with yards and yards of fabric as the "canvas."



A tower of salvaged granite pieces composes a tower of light. James Lutke doing James Lutke the artist.



Ivone da Silva, AIFD, puts the last touches on her version of "View of Toledo" by El Greco. El Greco worked mostly in Spain but was a native of Crete (Greece), therefore the name "the Greek," or El Greco.

# A Floral Gallery *continued*



Inspired by contemporary artist Chris Weed, Rick Orr, AIFD, put together a delicious display.



Depicting his Tahitian period, Alice Waterous, AIFD, MCF, represented the work of Paul Gaugin, fellow Dutchman and friend of Van Gogh.



Jim Rauch, AIFD, built this multi-dimensional homage to the artist Ford Smith. Beautiful in daylight, breathtaking at night.



Circles Within a Circle by Wassily Kandinsky inspired Carolyn Clark Kurek, AIFD, to create this striking display.



Susan Bain, AIFD, from Florida and Margaret Rosemeyer, AIFD, of IL, collaborated to honor the work of Judy Pfaff.

Loann Burke, AIFD, PFCI, puts the final touches to her version of Edgar Degas' famous ballet paintings. All the little girls loved this one.





James Lutke emulates the style of Jackson Pollack.



Eldon Haabs' Paul Cezanne-inspired still life design. Prevented from attending because of his mother's death, friends Judi Borah, AIFD, and Rhonda Hess, AIFD, installed his exhibit.



Natalie Carmolli formed Birch Bark into a Georgia O'Keeffe style Calla Lily. Paintings created for the exhibit, echo the theme.



A "Seussical" whimsy installed by Robert Friese, AIFD, and James Lutke.



Mary Linda Horn, AIFD, PFCI, utilized the creek to install her version of the work of Andy Goldsworthy. Beautiful both during the day and illuminated at night.



Sue Bal, AIFD, and daughter Stacy, CFD, constructed an interpretation of Leonardo da Vinci's flying machine. Up, up and away!



In remembrance of AIFD members who have passed and are missed.

## WEBSAVVY

# Six Questions to Jump-Start Your Web Site

BY WILL CARLSON



**W**hen you work with brides who know they need flowers (but have no clue what you can do for them) you ask some basic questions – date/time/place/how many people/color/theme – before you meet and give a quote or proposal. It's the same when we talk to people for the first time about creating their Web site. We need some information in order to help people through their process. These are the six most frequently asked questions we ask when clients approach us for a Web site quote or proposal:

## 1. How do you want your Web site to work for you?

A site can represent your company when you are not available; gather names, e-mail addresses and other contact info from viewers; sell products; generate new business and reinforce relationships with existing clients. The answers to these question guide us in recommending: what kind of site you need (billboard, e-commerce, portal) and what projects beyond site construction (opt-in reward products, galleries, newsletter templates, SEO campaigns, etc.) need to be created or provided with the Web site.

## 2. How much time do you want to personally invest in the maintenance of your Web site and electronic communication?

Are you interested in a daily or weekly blog? Sending monthly e-mails to customers? Swapping seasonal images out on your site? The answers to these questions tell us whether we have to create content for you, whether you need an editable site, and whether we will have to tie in social networking entities like a blog, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, or if we might have to create an online newsletter or magazine for your site.

## 3. What products, services, type of customer, and/or activities do you specialize in?

The answer to this question lets us know how to organize your Web site into categories, how many pages you'll possibly need, and helps us optimize search engine page rankings during site construction. It's also important to list

where you deliver so you can help the search engines match your products with your customers.

## 4. Are there features from your current site or other people's sites that you would like to model in your new site?

Looking over these sites gives us an idea of who you are and what you expect so we can create a signature site that represents you and your work (it's like "interpretive design" for the Web world).

## 5. Do you have pre-existing: logo, colors, font, catch phrases, signature products or services that we need to align with?

It's really important that we extend your image to the Web. We like to see pictures of your storefront and showroom so we can make your Web site truly reflect your business. It's vital to branding that your message and look is consistent in all forms of communication to the public.

## 6. What is the current budget for your new Web site?

Do you need to stay under \$10,000, \$5,000, \$1,000? Knowing your budget forces both client and Web designer to get practical, sometimes developing the site in stages so it can be easily added to and evolve over time to be the entity you envision. Consider these six questions and feel free to touch base with us for a consultation, quote, or proposal when you are ready to jump start your new Web site. It'll go a long way in helping us craft a site you need. ✿

*Will Carlson is the owner of WebZone Marketing, based in Ovid, MI. Its floral program, FlowerPR, develops solutions for the floral industry to thrive on the Internet. Visit [www.webzonemarketing.com](http://www.webzonemarketing.com) for more information.*

*Don't miss Will at the Great Lakes Floral Expo! His business sessions,*

*"From Traditional to Progressive – A Journey Worth Taking" and "Web sites that Work FOR Florists!,"*

*offer invaluable information that today's flower shops can't survive without. See pages 17 & 19 for detailed information.*



# 2010 Great Lakes Floral Expo

March 5-7, 2010

Arrangement designed by Florigene Flowers, [www.florigene.com](http://www.florigene.com)

## Bus Trips to the 2010 Great Lakes Floral Expo

*Navigate to the largest gathering of floral professionals in the Midwest and leave the driving and expense to us!*

### Bus 1: Chicago Land Express

Leaves from FTD Headquarters, 3113 Woodcreek Dr., Downers Grove, IL 60515

#### Travel Schedule:

- Friday** 3/5/2010 – Depart FTD 1:00 p.m. CST.  
3/5/2010 – Arrive Amway Grand Plaza Hotel approx. 5:00 p.m. EST.
- Sunday** 3/7/2010 – Depart Amway Grand Plaza Hotel 4:00 p.m. EST.  
3/7/2010 – Arrive at FTD Headquarters approx. 6:00 p.m. CST.

Sponsored by



### Bus 2: The Detroider

Leaves from Nordlie Inc (W), 25300 Guenther Road, Warren, MI 48091  
Then makes a stop in Flint. Nordlie Inc (F), 3440 N Torrey Road., Flint, MI 48507

#### Travel Schedule:

- Friday** 3/5/2010 – Depart Nordlie (W) 1:30 p.m. EST.  
3/5/2010 – Arrive Nordlie (F) 2:15 p.m. EST.  
3/5/2010 – Depart Nordlie (F) 2:30 p.m. EST.  
3/5/2010 – Arrive Amway Grand Plaza Hotel approx. 4:30 p.m. EST.
- Sunday** 3/7/2010 – Depart Amway Grand Plaza Hotel 4:00 p.m. EST.  
3/7/2010 – Arrive Nordlie (F) 6:00 p.m. EST.  
3/7/2010 – Depart Nordlie (F) 6:15 p.m. EST.  
3/7/2010 – Arrive at Nordlie (W) approx. 7:00 p.m. EST.

Sponsored by



***\$2.50 ticket price includes: Round trip transportation from designated city/location.***



## Don't Miss This Amazing Opportunity!

### **BUSINESS SESSION – Working Smarter...**

#### **A Full Day's Journey Will Help You Map Success in 2010!**

**Friday, March 5, 2010 • Time: 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Presented by: Derrick Meyer, CPA, CFP**

**Sponsored by: Crockett, Myers & Associates**

**Location: River Overlook AB**

*Additional fees apply*

This all-day business session will help you navigate through the rough economic seas that we've endured over the past year and set you on a course for profitability for the rest of 2010 and beyond.



*The day begins by exploring the topic of:*

#### **TURNING FLOWERS INTO DOLLARS**

Delve into the 'dark side' of the floral business... the numbers! We'll start by examining financial statements, their structure, and how they should be setup to provide the reader with the most information. Then learn how to analyze your shop to determine what areas of your business need improvement. We'll look at sales, costs of goods sold, payroll, marketing, wire business, delivery costs, etc. You will learn proven strategies to increase your profits. Derrick will lead you on your journey on "Turning Flowers into Dollars."

*Next you will venture into:*

#### **THE DREAM FLORIST**

Every florist dreams of the perfect flower shop; during this portion of your day you will learn management techniques that can get you and your employees all working towards the same vision. Learn to set goals for yourself and your staff that can make your dreams a reality. We go through an interactive journey and define the 'perfect flower shop' for each attendee. Through visualization (nothing hokey) we walk through the front door of our Dream Shop and create it as we continue, in our minds eye, from the front door through the showroom, design room, offices, and out the back through the delivery area. Each participant will then have a clear direction of where they wish to go with their flower shop (multi-store, event only, etc.) and the results of this clarity are nothing short of amazing.

*Your adventure will end with solid lessons focusing on:*

#### **PRICING FOR PROFITS**

Controlling cost of goods sold is one of the most difficult jobs of the florist. Florists that purchase their flowers properly, don't allow their designers to over-stuff, and properly price their arrangements usually hit their target cost of goods sold percentage. We will look at some of the most common pricing strategies and analyze their effectiveness.

As you can see, this day will be an amazing journey that you and your key staff members will not want to miss out on. Plan now to spend the day with Derrick. You won't be sorry; you'll leave invigorated and ready to navigate your way to higher profits and happier days.

### **HANDS-ON SESSION – Architectural Armatures for Design**

## A Can't-Miss Special All-Day Workshop!

**Friday, March 5, 2010 • Time: 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Presented by: James Lutke**

**Sponsored by: Michigan Floral Foundation**

**Location: River Overlook EF**

*Additional fees apply*



This all-day session consists of constructing armatures to assist in the support of floral arranging. Sticks, stems and wires are our building blocks. Architectural principles of support and design are our tools. The resulting projects will compliment floral design and stylistically please the eye. By attending this class your designs will stay one step ahead of the rest. Leave your competition behind. They'll be asking how did you do that, and wishing they had navigated to the 2010 Great Lakes Floral Expo!  
**BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**

### **HANDS-ON SESSION – FFA Student Certification Prep Class Create Your Own Destiny**

**Friday, March 5, 2010 • Time: 7:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

**Presented by: Kim Herbers**

**Sponsored by: Michigan Floral Foundation**

**Location: River Overlook EF**

*Additional fees apply*



Create your own destiny! Bring your imagination, your tools, and learn how to create a signature design that will add value without adding excessive labor or material costs. This work-shop will allow you to let your creative juices flow as you design and share. Kim will show you tips and tricks on how to set yourself apart from the everyday designer and make your work shine like the up and coming star that you are. **BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**

### **HANDS-ON SESSION – The Smart Designer**

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Presented by: Ann Jordan, AAF, AIFD, MMFD**

**Sponsored by: FTD**

**Location: River Overlook D**

*Additional fees apply*



Our industry is changing, and with that come the challenges in the design room. Today's flower shops need high performance people who work passionately, quickly and with profit in mind. In this workshop, Ann will show you how to create designs that are trendy and innovative while streamlining productivity. Don't miss this chance to study with one of the industries most sought after designers. **BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**



# GLFE Retail Shop Dinner Tour

## A night of good friends, good food and great flower shops!

**Friday, March 5, 2010**

**Time: 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.**

*Additional fees apply*

The always-popular Retail Shop Dinner Tour remains a highlight of the Great Lakes Floral Expo. The tour sells out early, so sign up today to be 'wined-and-dined' as you explore four fantastic flower shops in the Muskegon, MI area. Kathy Petz, AAF, MCF, PFCI, and her vice chair, Christa Kirchner, MCF, will be your co-hostesses on the bus. You'll ride a deluxe motor coach with floral friends as you navigate your way to the Lake Michigan coastline on a night to remember! This is one journey you won't want to miss. Make your reservations today!

**6:00 p.m.: Bus departs promptly from**

**the Welsh Lobby at DeVos Place**

**First Stop: FLOWERS BY RAY AND SHARON  
Horsd'oeuvres & Beverages**

**Second Stop: WASSERMAN'S FLOWER SHOP  
Salad**

**Third Stop: CHALET FLORAL  
Main Course Dinner**

**Fourth Stop: EASTERN FLORAL & GIFTS  
Dessert**



## GLFE Shows – Saturday, March 6, 2010

### HANDS-ON SESSION – Today's Wedding Journey

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.**

**Presented by: Kevin Ylvisaker, AIFD, PFCI**

**Sponsored by: Teleflora**

**Location: River Overlook E**

*Additional fees apply*

Learn how to design today's trendiest wedding bouquets and floral jewelry in this fast-paced, hands-on class. You will use the most innovative products on the market to create your works of bridal art. This is what today's brides are asking for, come to this workshop and learn how to walk the walk and talk the talk – don't be left out. Work one-on-one with Kevin in this workshop and learn the secrets of the pros. **BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**

### HANDS-ON SESSION – Prom for Profits

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Presented by: Cory Brown, AIFD**

**Sponsored by: Fitz Design**

**Location: River Overlook F**

*Additional fees apply*

Our hands-on session will be a more detailed look at what it takes to have a successful and profit-making prom season. Make beautiful designs, pushing and stretching your design skills, while learning new business skills in an educational and entertaining environment. We'll start with a basic, but we'll finish with designs that will be unique to all skill levels. The class will include both design and marketing, showing and sharing unique techniques in both. Don't be scared – I'll help you all along the way. **BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**

### BUSINESS SESSION – From the Phone to the Bottom Line

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.**

**Presented by: Derrick Meyer, CPA, CFP**

**Sponsored by: Crockett, Myers & Associates**

**Location: River Overlook AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



Your sales people are quite often the first impression of your business. In this session you will learn how to make sure your people make the right one. Learn how to avoid limiting phrases such as "how much do you want to spend" and replace it with questions that can increase your sales and ultimately your bottom line.

### BUSINESS SESSION – From Traditional to Progressive – A Journey Worth Taking

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 noon**

**Presented by: Will Carlson**

**Sponsored by: WebZone**

**Location: River Overlook AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



It's time you navigate away from traditional marketing practices and chart a more progressive course for your business success. This multi-media presentation offers you safe and comfortable strategies for profiting from: LESS discounted orders and MORE direct-to-your-business sales!

### MAIN STAGE SHOW – The Budget Conscious Bride

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 noon**

**Presented by: Jackie Lacey, AIFD**

**Sponsored by: BloomNet**

**Location: Stage Ballroom AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



With today's brides and hosts looking for a way to have the wedding or event of their dreams and stick to a budget, every designer is challenged to provide more for less. We will set up the stage as a wedding ceremony and reposition everything on stage to show how all the products from the ceremony can be used the second time around for the reception décor. Revisit some of the tried-and-true design techniques and learn some of the new ideas being used to add value to your design services.

## MAIN STAGE SHOW – Designer of the Year Run Off

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.**

**The IRON CHEF of Floral Competitions!**

**Sponsored by: Teleflora and MFA**

**Location: Stage Ballroom AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



You'll want to set your sails straight to this intense, exciting, awe-inspiring design event! The top five floral designers from the Design Contest go head-to-head, flower-to-flower on the Main Stage, working at identical stations with identical materials. All eyes on them, they must design, under pressure, in front of a pumped-up crowd of their fellow florists, friends and family! This is IRON CHEF: FLORAL STYLE! This fun event will be emceed by the ever-entertaining Robbin Yelverton, AIFD, MCF, PFCI, co-owner of Blumz... By JRDesings in Detroit and Ferndale, MI. When the designing has commenced, judging will begin and one lucky designer will be declared the 2010 MFA Designer of the Year. His or her designs will be featured in six issues of "The Professional Florist."

## BUSINESS SESSION – Asset Management/Protection

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Presented by: G. Kent Mangelson, CFP**

**Sponsored by: The American Society for Asset Protection**

**Location: River Overlook AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



G. Kent Mangelson, CFP, will teach you how to protect 100 percent of your professional and personal assets from lawsuits. He will teach you how you should structure your business: C-Corporations, S-Corporations, LLCs, Limited Partnerships, etc. You will learn how to protect your business, property, and personal assets in the event of a judgment in excess of liability insurance or an exclusion in a policy. You will learn how to minimize taxes. Normally, a session like this would cost thousands; at the Expo you will learn from one of the nation's top speakers for free! How can you beat that in today's economy? You are guaranteed to benefit greatly from the ideas presented to you in this session.

## MAIN STAGE SHOW – Sympathy: Celebrating Lives!

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 3:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.**

**Presented by: Corey Lonsert, AIFD**

**Sponsored by: Smithers-Oasis**

**Location: Stage Ballroom AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



Continue to blossom and grow your sympathy business with AIFD designer Cory Lonsert, who will showcase new and exciting sympathy designs and illustrate tips and techniques to make and keep your designs profitable. Join Cory as he takes you through key points to keep your shop on top of this ever-important portion of our industry. Remember that many people in your community will see every sympathy piece you send out. Navigate your way to this show and take back new quality ideas to your shop.

## BUSINESS SESSION – Proms for Profit

**Saturday, March 6, 2010 • Time: 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**Presented by: Dan Fisher**

**Sponsored by: Fitz Design**

**Location: River Overlook AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



This workshop will be an in-depth discussion and presentation of the highly successful marketing strategies for your prom and special event seasons. Fellow florists nationwide have used these strategies with dynamic success. We will go into the details of creating marketing plans and campaigns that fit your shop and your community. Come learn how to personalize these concepts for your shop, your schools and your city. This is a very interactive action seminar that will unlock a number of secrets we have discovered working with florists like you; but don't worry – we'll have a lot of fun too!

## GLFE Shows – Sunday, March 7, 2010

### MAIN STAGE SHOW – Don't Get Caught with your Plants Down!

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 8:45 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.**

**Presented by: Jim Schmidt and Kim Herbers**

**Sponsored by: Hyacinth House**

**Location: Stage Ballroom AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



Come and review the tried-and-true methods on selling plants. In the green and blooming plant business for 35 years, Hyacinth House has stood the test of time. From everyday to extravagant sales, learn how to make more money. Let's talk plants! Let's talk green! Let's talk money! Let today's trend of 'Going Green' work for your bank account. You'll learn while having fun with Jim and Kim! Jim will present some of the best ideas from successful and innovate florists from Michigan – the top plant ideas and fresh ideas from his top customers. Come see what your fellow florists are successfully doing with green and blooming plants and learn how to implement these ideas in your shop!

### HANDS-ON SESSION – Modern Bouquets: A Trendy Approach

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Presented by: Howard Silver, AIFD**

**Sponsored by: Michigan Floral Foundation**

**Location: River Overlook D**

*Additional fees apply*



Hip, chic, classic, elegant, trendy, extravagant, romantic, modern, futuristic, exotic. We will define the style of that special bouquet you will create. Anyone can cluster roses together and tie on a pretty ribbon... well, almost anyone! In this session, attendees will learn practical technical skills to create modern interpretive bouquets. Contemporary, composite and cascade will be the focus during this bridal bouquet workshop. **BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**

## HANDS-ON SESSION – Sympathy: Celebrating Lives!

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Presented by: Cory Lonsert, AIFD**

**Sponsored by: Smithers-Oasis**

**Location: River Overlook E**

*Additional fees apply*



Students will have the opportunity to construct innovative and unique sympathy pieces using new and current OASIS® Floral Products. Each participant is encouraged to bring in one 'personalization' item to be incorporated into their floral design projects, such as a photo, golf clubs, garden tool, etc. Fine-tune one of the most profitable portions of our business – sympathy design! Remember that sympathy work done well can be one of your best forms of advertising, and if it's not done well one of your worst! **BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**

## HANDS-ON SESSION – High Impact Style on a Low Impact Budget

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Presented by: Jackie Lacey, AIFD**

**Sponsored by: BloomNet**

**Location: River Overlook F**

*Additional fees apply*



With today's demanding economy, the need to stretch every budget is bigger than ever. As designers, we are asked more than ever to provide a high-impact look, the WOW factor for memorable table designs and room décor. What do you do when customers say, "The budget is lower than we first talked about." Let's take some old tricks and add some new twists on stretching the budget while providing a new and updated look for tablescape. This hands-on session will focus on today's design style of more look for the money and bringing the cost-conscious event planner and bride back to the local flower shop, instead of heading to the do-it-yourself aisle. **BRING YOUR OWN FLORAL TOOLS!**

## MAIN STAGE SHOW – The Route to 2010 Wedding Designs

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon**

**Presented by: Kevin Ylvisaker, AIFD, PFCI**

**Sponsored by: Teleflora**

**Location: Stage Ballroom AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



Kevin Ylvisaker, AIFD, PFCI will guide you down the path to today's wedding trends. You will be treated to the industries current color themes using the most current and up-to-date products the industry offers. This show will inspire everyone from beginner to seasoned professional. Turn the page on the past and explore new paths of creativity in bridal design with Kevin as your navigational guide and companion.

## BUSINESS SESSION – Exit Strategies and Succession Planning

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

**Presented by: Derrick Meyer, CPA, CFP**

**Sponsored by: Crockett, Myers & Associates**

**Location: River Overlook AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



When we talk about succession planning, most people immediately think of retiring to a beach somewhere. Although this can be the result, accomplished through an outright sale, a buy-sell agreement, an ESOP, etc., succession planning also refers to transfer of the business in the event of disability or death. Properly planning for all of these events can save thousands of dollars in income, transfer and estate taxes. Together we will look at ways to plan for your future and the future of your business.

## MAIN STAGE SHOW – Prom for Profits

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 12:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.**

**Presented by: Cory Brown, AIFD**

**Sponsored by: Fitz Design**

**Location: Steelcase Ballroom AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



This Prom for Profits stage presentation will include design, fun, and an overview of the highly successful marketing strategies from all our market research. We will share, in an entertaining and informative way, everything from fashion and floral trends, to the true value of your business to a high school girl. Come learn the newest styles, techniques and designs. These are not your mother's designs and ideas! Cory Brown, AIFD, is Mr. Prom!

## BUSINESS SESSION – Web Sites That Work FOR Florists!

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**Presented by: Will Carlson**

**Sponsored by: WebZone**

**Location: River Overlook AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



Knowing where you are and where you want to go is the first step of any journey. Take this Hands-on Web site Planning Workshop and enjoy smooth sailing with an itinerary for success that will get you to your chosen business destination profitably.

## MAIN STAGE SHOW – The Impact of Perception

**Sunday, March 7, 2010 • Time: 2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Presented by: Ann Jordan, AAF, AIFD, MMFD**

**Sponsored by: FTD**

**Location: Steelcase Ballroom AB**

*Comes with day or weekend pass*



Profitable companies believe image is their No. 1 asset. Floral product is everywhere, from street corners to the Internet. We have one thing that will always be our own, and that is our image. This intangible personality is our fingerprint; it is our reputation. Why is it so important? Self-branding creates customer loyalty. If the mystic of image is missing from your company, how much time and money are you willing to put into creating one? In this program, Ann will show you how to create designs that reflect your own brand.

# BOOKS, BIDS, SHOWCASE, BANQUET

## MFA Book Fair

**Saturday, March 6, and Sunday, March 7, 2010**

**Time: Tradeshow Hours • Location: Steelcase Ballroom AB**

An educational, informative and inexpensive way to spruce up your floral knowledge is through books. The books from the MFA Book Fair at DeVos Place in Grand Rapids are a part of the Great Lakes Floral Expo that you can take back to your shop and utilize with all staff members. A mix of books offer something for everyone and cover topics such as today's latest design styles and helpful how-to techniques. Plus, these great prices are hard to beat.

## Bid at the MFA/MCF Silent Auction

**Saturday, March 6, and Sunday, March 7, 2010**

**Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. • Location: Steelcase Ballroom AB**

At the MFA Silent Auction, you will find floral supplies, floral products, unusual and unique gifts, gift certificates and much more. One hundred percent of the proceeds from the auction go to the MFA Scholarship Fund. The fund was established to enable those who would like to participate in MFA-sponsored education programs, including the Great Lakes Floral Expo and related expenses, and MCF testing and certification. In 2009, eight scholarships were given to deserving florists to further their education. Donations also are welcome and appreciated. If you have a product or service you would like to donate, please call Silent Auction Chairman Jim Schmidt at (800) 777-9945, or the MFA office at (517) 575-0110.

## AIFD/MCF Designer Showcase

Simply stroll through the Grand Foyer at the Amway and be blown away by exquisite floral designs created by North Central AIFD members and Michigan Certified Florists. Each designer has created a floral feast for the eyes that will be on display the entire EXPO weekend. This is a favorite event for both florists and the flower-loving public, so take some time to stop and smell the delicious design!

## Grand Rapids Nightlife

After the Recognition Banquet, hit the hot spots in downtown Grand Rapids for a night of fun! Endless venues offer something for everyone to enjoy. Visit [www.gmnow.com](http://www.gmnow.com) to learn more about nightlife and entertainment in the area and make plans for fun with your floral friends!

### Set Your Sails to the Italian Riviera! President's Recognition Banquet

**Travel to Italy on Saturday, March 6, 2010**

**In the beautiful Pantlind Ballroom at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel**

*Additional fees apply*

#### President's Reception

**Time: 6:00 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.**

#### Recognition Banquet and Awards Ceremony

**Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

This is the night all of your floral friends dress up in their finest attire, mingle in a breathtakingly beautiful ballroom, enjoy delicious food and drinks, and honor MFA's finest with the 2010 Industry Awards. It's a night you don't want to miss!

Robbin Yelverton, AIFD, MCF, PFCI, co-owner of Blumz... By JRDesigns in Detroit and Ferndale, MI, will emcee the evening, and Gary Wells, AIFD, along with a team of designers and students from Technical Schools from around Michigan will transform the Pantlind Ballroom into the Italian Riviera with fabulous flowers for an unforgettable event.

An array of Industry Awards will be bestowed by the MFA. New inductees into the prestigious Certified Florist program also will be recognized. This night only comes once a year, so book your ticket now and plan to spend the evening with us as we travel to the Italian Riviera.

## GLFE Tradeshow Marketplace

### Tradeshow Marketplace

Top floral companies are setting their sails to the 2010 Great Lakes Floral Expo for your profit, education and success! It's the perfect place to meet vendors face-to-face and see products in person. Vendors will display their latest and greatest products for florists. You'll want to allot ample time to shop for new or favorite items from a top-notch group of companies. Everything from cut flowers, green and blooming plants, decorative items, floral hardgoods and service providers will be on hand for your convenience. Remember, it's important to support these vendors – they make the Great Lakes Floral Expo possible!

### Product Reviews

MFA has brought back the ever-popular Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, AAF, AIFD, from The Flora Pros in Chicago. Bobbi will be traveling the tradeshow floor going from booth to booth presenting brand-new items and clever, unique and sellable ways to use the exhibitors merchandise.

### Coffee Café

Stop by, rest your feet, chat with floral friends and enjoy a hot cup of coffee. **Sponsored by: The Michigan Horticultural Industries Self-Insured Workers Compensation Fund.**

### MFA Annual Meeting

**Sunday, March 7, 2010**

**Time: 8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. • Location: Steelcase Ballroom AB**

**Sponsored by: The Michigan Horticultural Industries Self-Insured Workers Compensation Fund**

This is the time to see and hear what your Association has been up to over the past year and find out where we plan to chart our course in the coming year. Meet MFA President Alice Waterous, AIFD, MCF, and other association leaders. A free continental breakfast is served to all attendees.

## 2010 MFA Design Contest

**Friday, March 5, 2010**

**Time: Tradeshow Hours**

**Sponsored by Teleflora and the Michigan Floral Association**

The Michigan Floral Association's Design Contest is one of the most prestigious contests in the nation. Enter and rate your talents with your peers! Winners will receive certificates, cash awards and recognition in *The Professional Florist* magazine. In addition, the individual named "MFA Designer of the Year" will be the featured "Designer Spotlight" designer in six issues of the *The Professional Florist*. The contest serves as

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an exceptional opportunity for designers to learn and exchange new ideas while competing, receive professional recognition for their work, and is an excellent opportunity to gain publicity for you and your shop. Let 2010 be the year you navigate to the prestigious MFA Design Contest!

**Call Design Contest Chairwoman Tonja Vander Veen, AIFD, MCF, at (616) 262-4351, with questions on the Design Contest.**

**Call the MFA Office at (517) 575-0110, or visit [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org) to get a Design Contest packet.**

**YOU MUST REGISTER BY FEBRUARY 26, 2010! Don't let this incredible opportunity sail away: register now!**



# GLFE Schedule At A Glance

**COLOR KEY:**  
 Green: Main Stage Shows  
 Red: Hands-On Sessions  
 Orange: Business Sessions  
 Blue: Retail Shop Dinner Tour  
 Purple: MFA President's Banquet and Awards Ceremony  
 \*Not included with weekend pass.

## 2010 MFA Great Lakes Floral Expo March 5, 6, 7, 2010

### Friday, March 5, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Open	Secchia Foyer
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	*Business Session: Derrick Meyer – Working Smarter: A Full Days Journey	River Overlook AB
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	*Hands-On Session: James Lutke – Architectural Armatures for Design	River Overlook EF
12:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Retail Cart (Store) Open Hours	Grand Gallery
4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Design Contest Registration	Welsh Lobby
6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.	*Progressive Retail Shop Dinner Tour	Welsh Lobby
7:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	*Hands-On Session: FFA Student Certification Test Preparation Create Your Own Destiny: Kim Herbers	River Overlook EF

### Saturday, March 6, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Open	Secchia Foyer
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Tradeshow Open	Steelcase Ballroom AB
9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.	Tradeshow Shopping Time	Steelcase Ballroom AB
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Hands-On Sessions (Choose One) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *The Smart Designer: Ann Jordan</li> <li>• *Today's Wedding Journey: Kevin Ylvisaker</li> <li>• *Prom for Profits: Cory Brown</li> </ul>	River Overlook D River Overlook E River Overlook F
9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Business Session: Derrick Myer – From the Phone to the Bottom Line	River Overlook AB
10:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Retail Cart (Store) Open Hours	Grand Gallery
10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Jackie Lacey – The Budget Conscious Bride	Stage Ballroom AB
10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Business Session: Will Carlson – From Traditional to Progressive – A Journey Worth Taking	River Overlook AB
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	*Lunch Buffet	Steelcase Ballroom AB
12:30 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Designer of the Year Run Off – Emcee Robbin Yelverton	Stage Ballroom AB
1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Product Review: Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford	Steelcase Ballroom AB
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Business Session: G. Kent Mangelson – Asset Management/Protection	River Overlook AB
1:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.	*CF Written Test	Registration Desk
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Student Design Contest Showcase	Welsh Lobby
3:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Corey Lonsert – Sympathy: Celebrating Lives!	Stage Ballroom AB
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Business Session: Dan Fisher – Proms for Profit	River Overlook AB
6:00 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	*President's Reception	Pantlind Ballroom
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	*Recognition Banquet and Awards Ceremony – Emcee Robbin Yelverton	Pantlind Ballroom
9:00 p.m. +	*Grand Rapids Nightlife (On Own)	Downtown GR

### Sunday March 7, 2010

7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Open	Secchia Foyer
8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Tradeshow Open	Steelcase Ballroom AB
8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.	Annual Meeting MFA and continental breakfast	Stage Ballroom AB
8:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	New MFA Members/First Timer Introduction	Stage Ballroom AB
8:45 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Jim Schmidt & Kim Herbers – Don't Get Caught With Your Plants Down!	Stage Ballroom AB
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Hands-On Sessions (Choose One) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Modern Bouquets: A Trendy Approach: Howard Silver</li> <li>• *Sympathy: Celebrating Lives!: Corey Lonsert</li> <li>• *High Impact Style on a Low Impact Budget: Jackie Lacey</li> </ul>	River Overlook D River Overlook E River Overlook F
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Kevin Ylvisaker – The Route to 2010 Wedding Designs	Stage Ballroom AB
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Business Session: Derrick Meyer – Exit Strategies and Succession Planning	River Overlook AB
11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Retail Cart (Store) Open Hours	Grand Gallery
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	*Lunch Buffet	Steelcase Ballroom AB
12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Cory Brown – Proms for Profits	Steelcase Ballroom AB
1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Business Session: Will Carlson – Web sites that Work FOR Florists	River Overlook AB
2:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show Ann Jordan – The Impact of Perception	Steelcase Ballroom AB
3:30 p.m.	Silent Auction Bids Closed	Steelcase Ballroom AB
3:30 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.	Exhibitor Move Out	Steelcase Ballroom AB



# Tropical Paradise

BY TONJA VANDER VEEN, AIFD, MCF

**I**t's now the middle of winter; snow is falling, cold winds are blowing and we are all getting a little stir crazy. Why not bring some of the warm tropics to your designs? Birds of Paradise and the Protea are a great reminder of someplace nice and warm. The bright yellow Gerber daisies bring the sunshine back inside. Adding bamboo to the arrangement will give it a larger feeling, or as we call it, 'selling space,' and can add to the cost of the arrangement. Make use of all the stems of the Birds of Paradise, binding them together and adding them back into the arrangement instead of on the floor of your design area. Your customers will love to see that winter does not have to be all grey and colorless. ✿

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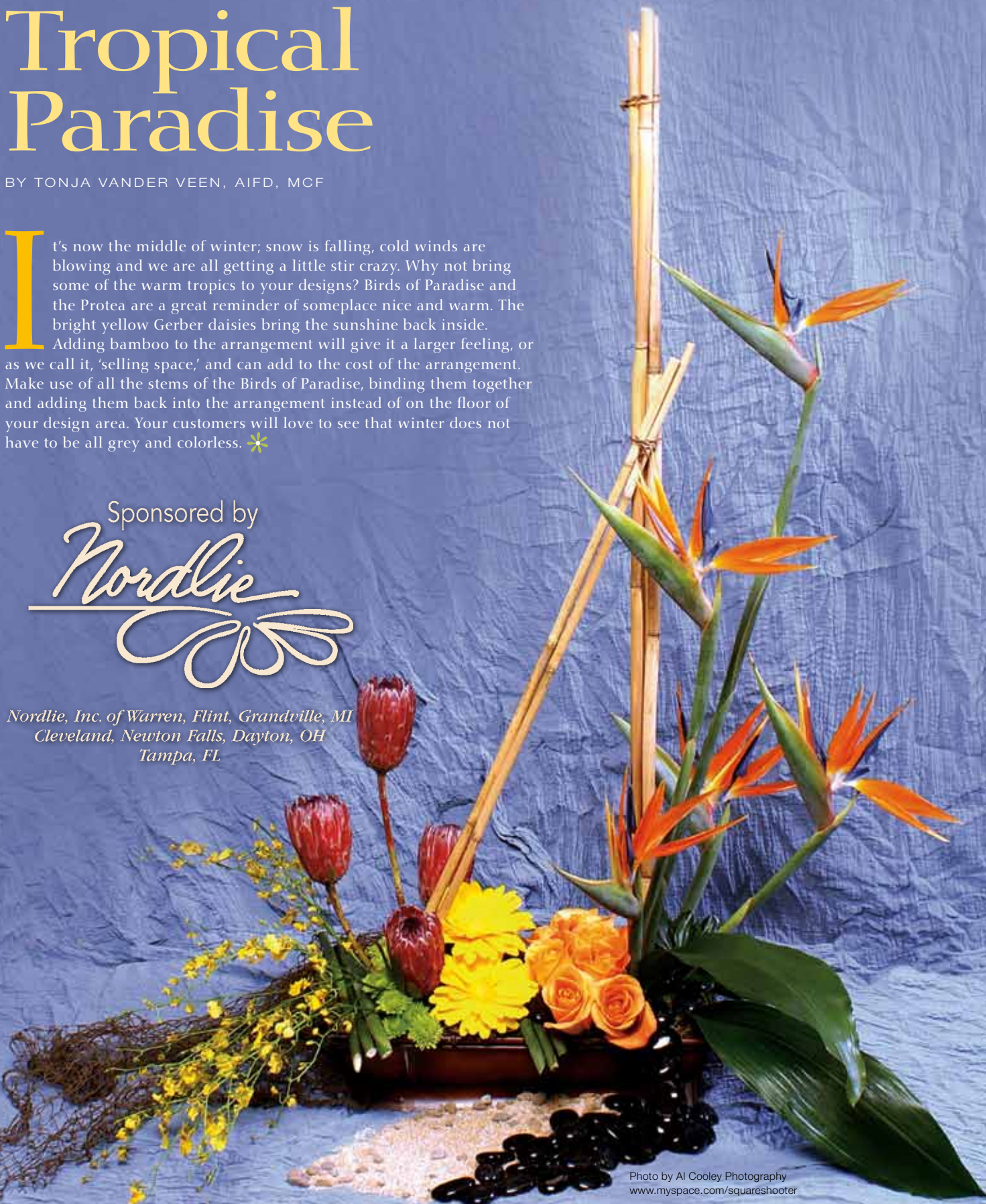


Photo by Al Cooley Photography  
[www.myspace.com/squaresooter](http://www.myspace.com/squaresooter)

## WEBNETWORKING

# Getting In The Loop with



BY KIM RANGEL

Ever talk to a know-it-all and wonder how they are familiar with all of the latest tricks and who is using them? Chances are, the answer is in some form of Social Media. From Facebook to Twitter to YouTube, information is easier to get and conveniently available at any time of day. It's quite the concept – the opportunity to share your progress, announcements, and even frustrations and gain instant feedback

Let's say you are struggling to find a certain vase. Post: "Looking for a red vase with a wide base and narrow top. Any ideas?" on the MFA Facebook page (or your profile page) and see who responds. You may get responses from colleagues with

ideas or a vendor that has exactly what you are looking for, saving you hours of research time! You can also contribute your ideas to other posted questions and create your own network of experts. Don't be afraid to request someone as a "Friend" if you are responding to each others posts. Florist Janet Martineau of Floral Verde ([Janet@floralverde.com](mailto:Janet@floralverde.com)) finds Facebook friends in a different way, "If I like someone's Blog, I friend them on Facebook to get to know them on a more personal level."

When you register for the Great Lakes Floral Expo, be sure to announce that you have signed up! See who is attending and start making plans. This is a great way to connect with vendors that might have a

### Remember the three P's of Facebook:

- POST** your thoughts,
- PARTICIPATE** in discussion, and
- PROPOSE** new friendships to expand your network.

special product, get the latest event plans, or meet new people. Tracy Park of Park Place Design ([greatflowerlady@gmail.com](mailto:greatflowerlady@gmail.com)) uses Facebook to expand her network, "I have met a lot of people in the industry through Social Networking. When there are conventions or classes, we agree to meet there." She also notes the impact that Facebook has had on her business, "Social Networking has exposed me to so much more. I am from a small town and [Social Networking] has brought my business to a different level."

Consider Facebook your opportunity to have an open discussion about the Expo and learn about the opportunities that are available. Wall postings with event plans, special deals in the city, and ideas for the expo all help you design your conference experience to meet your interests. This may be your best bet for learning more about speakers and decide which topics you can't miss.

The trick to Facebook is making it work for you. Remember the three P's of Facebook: Post your thoughts, Participate in discussion, and Propose new friendships to expand your network. With participation that can be as periodic as you choose, this low-commitment option creates a high return on time investment! ✿

Kim Rangel is project manager for convention services at Grand Rapids/Kent County Convention & Visitors Bureau. [KRangel@Meetgrandrapids.com](mailto:KRangel@Meetgrandrapids.com).

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## WHOLESALE CONNECTION

# Florists Own the Wedding Flower Business ...and it is Big Business!

BY JIM WANKO

**R**etail florists own the wedding flower business – a big business that is going to grow. The retail value of wedding flowers in the U.S. in 2009 is \$2.8 billion, according to *The Wedding Report*. Eighty percent of brides say they buy flowers from a local florist. That means that brides spend \$1.8 billion a year with local retail florists for their wedding flowers. In the next three years the value of wedding flowers is expected to grow 12 percent and by nearly 18 percent in five years.

The good news is that you, as a retail florist, own the wedding flower business. You have a service niche.

### Strengths as a Florist When It Comes to Weddings

- Familiar with local styles and customs
- Full service
- Local
- Have vast resources
- And above all, you're reliable

### Four Characteristics That Bride's Value

- Genuine tender loving care (TLC)
- Provide answers to problems
- Spontaneous and flexible people who can take care of micro-problems as they appear
- Heroic recoveries – when a problem arises take ownership and say, "Here is how I will solve this now!"

To accomplish all that you need to do for a wedding, you need a reliable source for your fresh flowers, decorative greens and floral supplies. Your best resource is your local wholesaler. In a nationwide survey conducted in 2008, retail florists rated wholesale florists significantly higher in overall satisfaction over farm direct, importers, and wire-service cut flower sources across all florist sales groups and regions of

the U.S. Internet sources show a decline in sales to retail florists since 2006. Primary wholesale florists received the highest net intentions (54 percent) by florists to increase buying of cut flowers.

Your wholesaler can source the products you need so that you can concentrate on scheduling and planning how you are going to get the work done. You need to work closely with your local wholesaler.

### Tips on Ordering Wedding Flowers and Greens That Will Make Your Life Easier

- The No. 1 issue in ordering is lead-time. Give your wholesaler enough lead-time to properly source and properly ship the wedding flowers. Rule of Thumb: At a minimum, order two to three weeks before delivery date for best availability and pricing.
- Be sure you know what is expected: Never order a special flower just for the day of the event. If you are not familiar with a certain variety or type of flower, order some ahead of time so that you can make adjustments before the event date.
- Keep in mind that the same variety of flower grown in different regions and different farms may look different. Your wholesale partner can help guide you.
- Allow enough time to process the flower to the correct bloom-stage. Again, know how a flower performs. How many days ahead of the function do you need to allow for the flower to open? Ask your wholesale partner what their experience is in regards to the length of time needed to achieve the openness of the blooms.
- Always add one day in case the cut stage is tighter than normal.
- When selling to a bride, try to sell color schemes/themes and general shapes of flowers, not the latest variety talked about by a celebrity or in a magazine.

*Your wholesalers provide priceless products and information that keep your shop successful.*

*Don't miss a unique opportunity to meet face-to-face with your wholesalers at the Great Lakes Floral Expo (see page 15).*

*The latest and greatest products, plus a chance to ask questions and learn are awaiting you on the tradeshow floor!*

## WHOLESALE CONNECTION

### When Ordering Supplies From Your Wholesaler, Keep These Points in Mind

Try to establish a relationship with one salesperson. This helps in communication. As you develop a rapport over time, the salesperson will come to learn your preferences.

- Book your supplies well ahead of time – three weeks if possible – two weeks if not. This will allow the wholesaler to react if the order involves something that is out of stock or requires a special order.
- Ribbon and silk flowers can pose a challenge when ordering over the phone. If possible, try to work with swatches so the wholesaler can get the best match. Saying you need a No. 9 wine ribbon is asking for trouble!
- As with fresh flowers, unpack and go through your hard goods as soon as they arrive. There could be concealed damage that you'll want to know about.
- Make sure your policy with brides regarding final counts syncs with your suppliers. If your supplier requires two or three weeks to special order a certain product, but you allow the bride to change her count up to a week before, you may run into problems.

The Internet is becoming your competition for the wedding

flower business. It is easy to see what is being offered on the Internet and at what pricing. Simply Google “wedding flowers” and you will see more than 27 million results. If you don't have an Internet presence you need to get one. If you have an Internet presence but you are not showing your wedding work on the Internet, you need to start. More than half of newly married people are 27 years old or younger, so they are the most wired generation. According to survey data, 81 percent of couples use the Internet to plan their wedding. They are going to the Internet for wedding tips and ideas and they want to see pictures. As a florist, you can stand out against your local competition by having a wedding section on your Web site that shows photographs of the weddings you have done. Weddings are a showcase to your immediate community of the quality of the products and services you provide. Weddings are important business that you should covet. ✻

---

*Jim Wanko is the executive vice president of the Wholesale Florist & Florist Supplier Association (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. WF&FSA, 147 Old Solomons Island Rd., Suite 302, Annapolis, MD. 21401, Phone: (888) 289-3372, Fax: (410) 573-5001, jwanko@wffsa.org, www.wffsa.org.*

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## REGIONALREPORTS

# Florists Give Thanks by Giving to Others

**S**tudents and alumni of the Dick Gleason, MCF, Floral Design Program, offered through the Continuing Education Department at Macomb Community College in Warren, MI, helped make Thanksgiving a special occasion for about 200 homeless, mentally ill and domestic violence victims. The class created 20 centerpieces, with much of the materials provided by Nordlie, for a Thanksgiving meal served at Cass Methodist Church in Detroit by Cass Community Services.

"I absolutely wanted to be a part of this," said one alumnus. "It's a wonderful way to do something for someone else." ✿



Festive fall colors warmed the table with lilies, mums and carnations.



Dick Gleason, MCF, and his floral students.



Two hundred people enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner and the floral centerpieces.

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# Chairwoman's Report: Exciting New Developments from the Certified Florist Committee!



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



**A**t the MFA Expo last March, we introduced a new Certification Manual, and the response has been excellent. Our program has been endorsed by the National Alliance of Floral Associations (NAFA). This means that florists who would like to become nationally certified can go on the NAFA Web site, examine several state certified programs and select one as their choice to study to earn certification.

While we feel we have a superior product, we had one missing link: online testing. This online objective seemed overwhelming to the CF Committee; but thanks to Macomb Community College in Warren, MI, and the extraordinary effort of committee person, Dick Gleason, MCF, we hope to introduce online testing at this year's Expo! Dick is an instructor at Macomb and through this

connection, the college has agreed to take our materials to design a testing program for us. We are thrilled with what they have agreed to do for us and especially with an important component of the program they are designing!

In order for a person to take the written portion of our test, applicants will need to register through MFA for a password and select a community college location. MFA will then interface with a proctor from that community college, and set a date for online testing. Several states have already adopted our program, and as others follow their lead, applicants will be able to test at community colleges nationwide. At this time, no other state is offering proctor testing. We feel this offers a dramatic difference and we are very proud of the credibility this adds to our program. Watch for updates! ✨

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

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## CFREPORT

# Why CF?

BY BARBARA ZULESKI, MCF, DESIGNS UNLIMITED, JACKSON, MI.



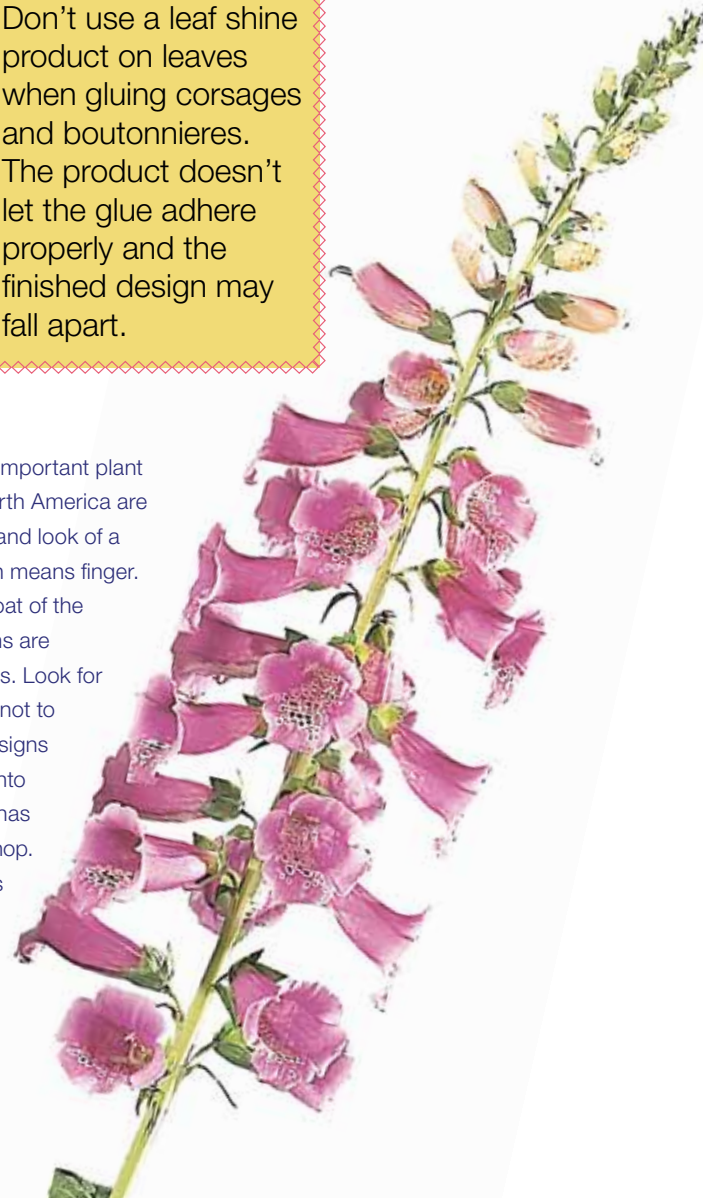
**A**cquiring the designation of Certified Florist is a significant step toward achieving your professional goals as a floral retailer, wholesaler or freelance floral designer. You also will be contributing to the advancement of the floral industry; customers will request doing business with florists who have earned these credentials. That is because the standards of excellence, upon which the CF program is built, reflect the expectations of discriminating consumers. Following the vision of "a customer expects that a professional florist will offer," the CF standard focused on five critical customer expectations. These include: superior customer service, long lasting fresh flowers and plants available in a wide assortment, designed in personally expressive floral arrangements, displayed within a visually pleasing shopping environment.

As W. Cleaver Harry said: "Experience is a good teacher; but experience alone, without a textbook, makes a slow tedious journey. After several years of store work, filled with glaring blunders and much hard labor, I began to realize that the

arranging of cut flowers and floral designs is an art; that the knowledge concerning it is based on method and principle; furthermore, that an understanding of these principles would enable a person to do better and quicker work, to overcome obstacles and direct the work of others: in a word, help oneself to become more valuable, an artist, a manager." ✿

### CF TIP of the Month

Don't use a leaf shine product on leaves when gluing corsages and boutonnieres. The product doesn't let the glue adhere properly and the finished design may fall apart.



## CF Flower of the Month

**Foxglove (Digitalis Purpurea)**, is one of the loveliest, most important plant species that has been introduced from Europe and now widely grown in North America are available January through August. The individual flowers are about the size and look of a thimble. The Latin name, digitalis, derives from the Latin word digitalis which means finger.

Colors range from lilac to pink to white with conspicuous spots at the throat of the tubular, bell-shaped two-inch flowers that grow on 12-inch spikes. The stems are 28-inches to 36-inches long. They last in arrangements for five to seven days. Look for stems with the lower half of buds open that have been packed lightly, so as not to have crushed the delicate bloom. These flowers are great for large-scale designs and make a pleasing linear element. Individual flowers also are fun to work into boutonnieres and corsages. Foxglove is ethylene sensitive, so check that it has been treated with STS (silver thiosulfate) solution, or treat them in your own shop.

Folklore tells of woodland elves giving the plant to foxes to wear as gloves during raids on chicken coops, thus leaving no clue to the identity of the perpetrators of the stolen poultry. Foxglove is not only a beautiful plant but also grown commercially to produce the heart drug, digitoxin. Foxglove is a fun, interesting and different flower to use in designs. It invokes a garden wildflower theme and can create a very upscale European look.

## PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

# MFA Hits the Road

## Design with Line and Form... Inspired by Nature

March 22 & 23, 2010

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day

Member: \$249

Non-Member: \$374

Lunches included in class fee

Instructors:

Bob Friese, AIFD  
& James Lutke



Fruitport, Michigan

Just North of Grand Haven  
and East of Muskegon



- How and when to harvest natural materials
- Making the most of what nature provides
- Methods that work

**S**tudents who return year after year for this springtime class always take home new techniques, skills and great projects. Enjoy the woodland setting at the home/studio of Bob Friese, AIFD, and be inspired by the vast array of materials gleaned from the local area, along with the creative genius of James and Bob, who will guide you in how to make nature work for you.

Bob and James have developed new projects that will challenge and delight you. Your materials will include native mosses, lichens, branches, vines and fresh flowers. Practice your willow weaving skills as well and learn how to incorporate nature's bounty into everyday and special event floral design.

This class is appropriate for designers of every skill level.

All materials included in class fee. **Please remember to bring your own tools.** ✿

### 2010 Class Registration Form

Visit [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org)  
for a complete 2010 class schedule.

**March 22 & 23, 2010**

**Design with Line and Form...  
Inspired by Nature**

**(Member \$249 / Non-Member \$374)**

Lunch Included

**Please fill out one form per person.**

**Class enrollment limited to 12.**

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

**REGISTRATION FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE!**

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Signature of Authorizing Representative \_\_\_\_\_

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## INMEMORIAM

# John Gerych, Sr.

**J**on Gerych remembers his father, John Gerych Sr., as a man who loved gardening, flowers and his community. The longtime Fenton business owner and community member died Nov. 17, 2009 at his home in Grand Rapids. He was 90. Gerych, who called Fenton his home for more 50 years, served in World War II before opening Gerych's Flowers & Gifts on Silver Lake Road in 1966. The business has since expanded to a Birmingham location.



"He was a great guy – flowers and plants and living types things were his passion," said his son, Jon Gerych. "Since I was like three years old, we would dig perennials and plant perennials. He was always creating, always growing something, always something new."

Gerych was recognized for his veteran status and positive impact on the community in 2005 when he was named the grand marshal of the 15th Fenton Freedom Festival.

"He was very honored by that," said Jon Gerych, the current CEO of the Gerych business.

John Gerych was born in Detroit in 1919 and moved to Fenton in 1945. He opened Gerych's Greenhouse in 1967, which transitioned into a flower and gift shop in the 80s.

"I kind of always looked at him as one of the pioneers of the Fenton area," said Genesee County Commissioner Patricia Lockwood, a former Fenton mayor. "He always remembered every non-profit group and every group that needed help. He was always there with donations and flower arrangements and anything anybody needed for the community. He did so much of that."

Known in the community as "Big John" or "Grandpa," John Gerych retired from his business in 2006 and spent his remaining years living in Grand Rapids. Gerych was loved by the community. He had a gregarious personality. He was a

storyteller. He was known by all and generous to all.

Surviving are his daughter, Chris, and husband Don Venema of Grand Rapids; son, Jon, and his wife Jo-Ann Gerych of Fenton; 14 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife Marjorie; daughter, Pam Pierce; granddaughter Kim Venema; sisters, Mary and Kathryn; and brother Pete.

Tributes and condolences may be shared at the obituaries page at [www.sharpfuneralhomes.com](http://www.sharpfuneralhomes.com). ✨

# Eric J. Benjamin

**E**ric J. Benjamin, 51, died after a brief illness Jan. 2, 2010. He is survived by his wife of eight years, Ann; father Kenneth Benjamin; brothers, Peter Benjamin and Thomas Benjamin; nieces, Ana and Callie; nephews, Kurtis, Kenneth and William and many other family and family friends. He was preceded in death by his mother Patricia in 2001. Eric, a native of Chicago, joined Cenflo Inc, publishers of trade journals in the floral and nursery industries, 30 years ago, following graduation from the University of New Mexico where he was a member of Sigma Chi Fraternity. He was currently in charge of Cenflo operations as Vice President and Group Publisher. He was responsible for a large share of the Companies photography in its award winning *Flora Magazine*. Eric was an accomplished musician as a Bass Guitarist. A Memorial Service was held Tuesday January 5, 2009 at French Funeral Home in Albuquerque, NM. Those wishing to send cards can mail them to the main office: Cenflo, Inc. Publishing,\* P.O.Box 44040, Rio Rancho, NM 87141-4040. ✨



*\*If your card is intended for a specific individual (ie. Ken, Tom, Ann, etc) please make the card attention to that person so it can be properly directed.*

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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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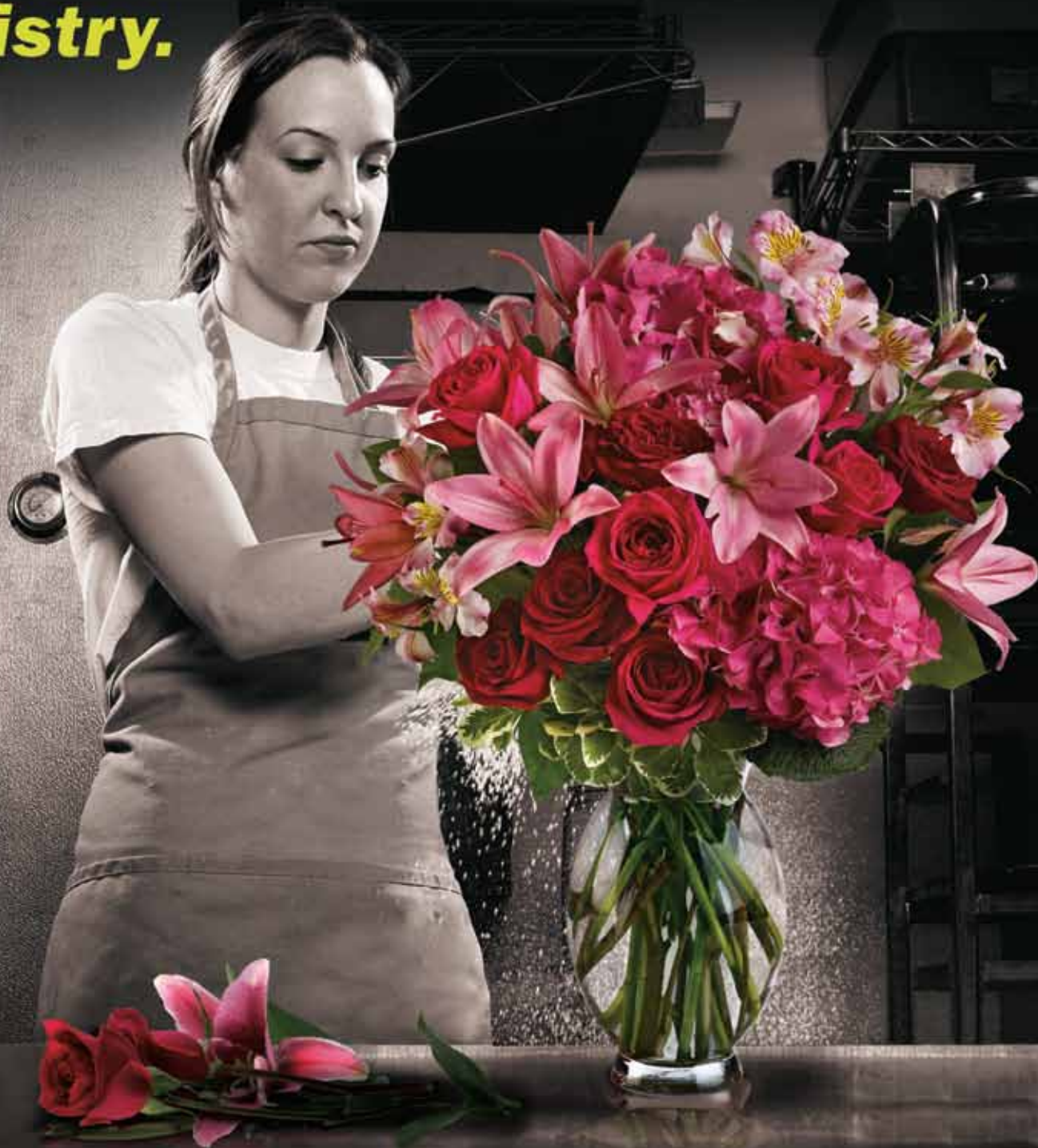


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