



Volume III 2012

the professional florist

The Show Behind The Show

My Expo Experience

That's A Wrap!

Going Local

Floral Imports Update



2012 Expo Recap

DIAMOND AWARD WINNING PUBLICATION



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Volume II 2012 Corrections: 1. Region 5 Director Teresa Cytlak is the owner of Ridgeway Floral in Three Rivers, MI. 2. Roses from Alexandra Farms are available at DWF-Flint.

Thank You to our Floral Photographers!

MFA would like to thank photographer Al Cooley (left) for capturing the classes, contests and excitement of the Expo all weekend! Al owns Squareshooter Photography in Allendale, MI. And thank you to Randy Wegner (right) for photographing the Expo's Retail Shop Dinner Tour! If you would like to purchase a keepsake disc with all the Expo photos, please contact the MFA office at (517) 575-0110, or e-mail cindy@michiganfloral.org.



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Thank you to the Expo Volunteers!

The MFA would like to extend a very special 'thank you' to the many wonderful volunteers who worked around the clock all weekend to make the Expo a great success. We couldn't do it without you and we are grateful for your hard work and dedication to the floral industry.

Thank you to the Expo Corporate Sponsors!



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2012GLFEREVIEW

That's A Wrap!

BY BOBBI ECKER-BLATCHFORD,
AAF, AIFD, PFCI,
EXPO 2012 CHAIRWOMAN

There's nothing quite like seeing stars, and the stars were sparkling brightly during the Sell-O-Bration weekend, March 2-4 at the Great Lakes Floral Expo in Grand Rapids, MI. The Amway Grand Plaza Hotel/DeVos Place was the perfect venue for the stellar show. MFA Executive Vice President Rod Crittenden announced that attendance was at an all-time high, with more than 500 florists, students, vendors and designers celebrating their profession with a flower-and-people-power-packed conference. Dick Gleason, CF, conference vice-chairman contributed mightily, while Teresa Cytlak did a standout job as conference program chairwoman.

Friday night's Retail Shop Dinner Tour launched the weekend activities, with the delightful Kathy Petz, AAF, CF, PFCI, of Teleflora in a starring role as hostess. As usual, Kathy and the retail shops hosting the event received rave reviews for fun, food and hospitality. Thank you to Grand Haven Garden House, Picket Fence Floral & Design, Eastern Floral & Gift and Don's Flowers & Gifts for opening their shops to the tour! Although Kathy is retiring from commandeering this event, she pledges to be a continuing MFA supporter.

Design Competitions orchestrated by Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, CF, PFCI, shone the spotlight on the talents of participants including the Student, Professional and Academy Divisions. Robbin Yelverton, AAF, AIFD, CF, PFCI, co-owner with Raska of BLUMZ by JRDesigns in Detroit and Ferndale, MI, won the "Hats Off To Bobbi" Academy Design Contest and will represent MFA in the Sylvia Cup design competition at Society of American Florists fall convention. An impressive display of design entries and tablescapes provided a showcase for both GLFE attendees as well as consumers passing through to the Grand Rapids Home Show.

Alice Waterous, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI, MFA president, and Jim Schmidt, MFA treasurer and co-owner of Hyacinth House in Lansing, MI, were the perfect commentators for The Great Celebra-



tion Banquet and Awards Ceremony. See page 12 to read more on the 2012 Award recipients. Colleen Carr, AIFD, CF, and her wonderful student helpers transformed the ballroom into something truly special for all attendees to admire and enjoy.

The Main Stage Design shows opened with the Friday night theatrical performance, "Move, Shake, Drop: The Kinetic Show!" by Derek Woodruff AIFD, CF, owner of The Floral Underground in Traverse City, MI. DWF Flint and the Michigan Floral Foundation sponsored Derek's show. The ever-popular Jerome Raska emceed the "Designer of The Year" Run Off on Saturday, sponsored by Teleflora and Smithers-Oasis. Winner of the competition was Doug Bates, CF, from Designs by Vogt's in Sturgis, MI. Doug will represent Michigan with a trip to NAFA's National Designer of the Year competition, and will be rewarded with an automatic entry into the Academy Division. Also on Saturday, Mario Fernandez, owner of Belle Fleur in Coral Gables, FL, starred in "Keep Your Shop Buzzing All Year Long," sponsored by Smithers-Oasis. Sunday morning the Main Stage Design Show, sponsored



7. Alex Jackson, AIFD, PFCI, sponsored by Teleflora.
 2. Brad Youngstrom, CF, teaching students how to make a bow at the Friday evening Hands-On Session. The MFA would like to thank Mr. Youngstrom for donating his time and talent to help educate the students at the 2012 GLFE.
 3. Derek Woodruff, AIFD, CF, from the Floral Underground in Traverse City, MI, along with his troop of performing artists entertained while

educating the attendees at the Friday night opening Main Stage show. DWF-Flint and the Michigan Floral Foundation sponsored Derek's show.
 4. "Photography for the Web, sponsored by Flower Shop Network, was a big hit.
 5. One of the beautiful headpieces made in Carolyn Clark-Kurek, AIFD's "Fascinators" Hands-On Workshop.
 6. Jackie Lacey, AIFD, PFCI, sponsored by Bloomnet

7. Jeff Corbin, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, sponsored by FTD.
 8. Mario Fernandez, sponsored by Smithers-Oasis.
 9. Left to right: Nancy Butts, Burgett Floral, Grand Rapids, MI; Tim Galea, Norton's Flowers, Ypsilanti, MI; Courtney Hill, Vans Floral Products, Grand Rapids, MI; Stan Pohmer, Pohmer Consulting Group, Minnetonka, MN, and Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, The Flora Pros, Chicago.

by Teleflora, showcased the fabulous Alex Jackson, AIFD, PFCI, of Phoenix Flower Shops in Scottsdale, AZ, with "Party Like A Rock Star." A performance by Jeff Corbin, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, from Radford, VA, sponsored by FTD, brought an amazing and economical approach to "Doing the Daily Grind – Another Day, Another Dollar." As always, Jackie Lacey, AIFD, PFCI, of Bluffton, SC, mesmerized the audience and closed the Main Stage shows with the dramatic finale "Let's Get This Wedding Party Started Right!" sponsored by BloomNet.

Friday's Business Session offered Ryan Freeman of Strider, Inc., presenting the all-day "Internet Marketing: Spring Training." Ryan presented the session again Saturday and Sunday. Stan Pohmer, of Pohmer Consulting, hit the nail on the head in a Saturday session with the generational marketing view "Connecting With Your Customers." Dan McManus presented "It's Only Money, Capture what you Deserve" on Saturday and "Marketing That Works" on Sunday, sponsored by Teleflora and Team Floral. Sunday morning's "Idea Swap Breakfast" featured a panel discussion with speakers Nancy Butts of Burgett Floral, Tim Galea of Norton's Flowers & Gifts, Courtney Hill of Van's Floral Products, and Stan Pohmer of Pohmer Consulting. I had the pleasure of participating, along with the dynamic Norma Chapman of DNC Associates in Huntley, IL. Also on Sunday, Jo Buttram, AAF, AMF, PCF, was the enthusiastic, entertaining go-to-gal presenting "Here Comes The Bride, Do Not Miss Her!" sponsored by BloomNet.

Hands-On-Sessions offered outstanding opportunities for attendees. In addition to those presented by the four Main Stage designers, Robbin Yelverton and Lorraine Atwill presented "Picture Perfect Sympathy Designs," sponsored by Flower Shop Network. "Flirting With Fascinators" featured Carolyn Clark Kurek of C2 Floral Design School in Franklin, IN, sponsored by the Michigan Floral Foundation. Carolyn had the entire Expo buzzing as participants in this session modeled their fascinating fascinators throughout the convention floor.

Also creating buzz were the CF and AIFD Showcases, featuring creative and awe-inspiring designs. Thanks to Kim VanTilburg, CF, and Amy Clark, CF, of Flowers from Sky's the Limit in Petoskey, MI, Barbara Zuleski, CF, Corg Inc. in Jackson, MI, and Victor West, CF, Vanessa's Flowers in Livonia, MI, for the CF displays, and thanks to Debbie Royal, AIFD, CF, Royal Expressions in Blissfield, MI, Bob Friese, AIFD, Natures Creative Edge in Fruitport, MI, and Laura Parker, AIFD, CF, freelance designer, Holly, MI, for the AIFD

displays! There are so many wonderful people responsible for the success of the Expo. I apologize for not including everyone involved – you know who you are and what you did and that is why GLFE works. The show has numerous benefits, including spectacular exhibitor booths. GLFE is the best venue and best value of any trade show in the nation. That's a wrap – congratulations, you did it again!

The GLFE will return to Grand Rapids March 1-3, 2013. SAVE THE DATE! ✨



The 2013 Floral Olympics

Floral aficionados, save the date! Mark your calendar now for the **2013 Great Lakes Floral Expo, March 1-3, 2013.**

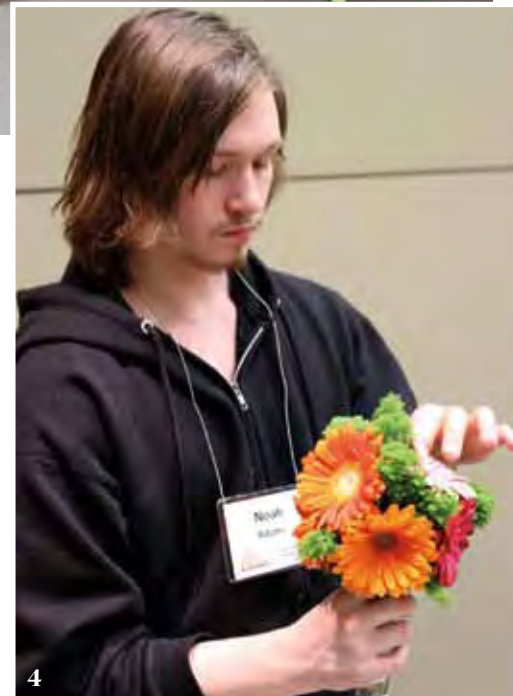
The conference, "Reaching for Excellence, Aiming Higher, Achieving More, The Floral Olympics," promises to be a fun-filled weekend full of inspiring and empowering learning opportunities. The conference will be held at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel/DeVos Place in Grand Rapids, MI. For more information on attending or exhibiting, please visit www.michiganfloral.org

or call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110.

— Dick Gleason, CF, 2013 Expo Chairman

2012GLFEREVIEW

2012 Great Lakes Floral Expo



1. Debbie Royal, AIFD, CF, brushes up on her sympathy work and learned all about taking photos for the Web in this Hands-On Workshop, sponsored by Flower Shop Network.

2. Attendees explore the Flower Shop Network booth on the trade show floor.

3. Marisa Rakowski, CF, and her volunteer crew created beautiful Expo displays. They used floral arrangements in combination with springtime patio furniture provided by Fruit Basket Flowerland for this fun look.

4. Noah Adams of Barlow Flowers in Hastings, MI, working on his bridal bouquet design skills in Alex Jackson's Hands-On Workshop, sponsored by Teleflora.

5. George Wilson shares a smile and welcomes attendees with fellow Bloomnet Market Area Consultant Jayla Love.

6. Gary Wall and Jacque Sir Louis of Smithers-Oasis show Victor West of Vanessa's Flowers in Plymouth, MI, tools and wiring products available this year.

7. Lea Kuklinski, CF's, beautiful entrance to the retail store.

8. Hannah Crittenden, MEA volunteer, and Lea Kuklinski, CF, of Fruit Basket Flowerland, worked the entire weekend selling flowers to the public at the retail store in the Grand Gallery. This was part of the West Michigan Home & Garden show. These two ladies and their volunteers raised more than \$2,500 for the MFA scholarship fund!

2012GLFEREVIEW



5



6



8



7

Expo 2012 Photos for Sale!

Great Pictures- Great Memories!

GLFE Photographer Al Cooley captured every second of Expo weekend, and all the shots can be yours on a special CD for just \$24.95 (includes S/H).

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2012GLFEREVIEW

2012 MFA Design Contest Winners

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MichiganFloral
ASSOCIATION

The Michigan Floral Association's Design Contest is one of the most prestigious contests in the nation. Winners 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 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.

MFA Designer of the Year

Doug Bates, CF
Designs by Vogt's
Sturgis, MI



Teleflora Chairman Tom Butler, AAF, PFCI, presents Doug Bates, CF, as the 2012 MFA Designer of the Year. Doug Bates' winning design.



Academy Winner

Robbin Yelverton, AAF, AIFD, CF, PFCI
Blumz... by JR Designs
Detroit and Ferndale, MI



Left to right: Jerome Kaska, AAF, AIFD, CF, PFCI, 2012 Design Contest Chair; Gary Wells, AIFD, MFA Academy Contestant; Laura Parker, AIFD, CF, MFA Academy Contestant; Robbin Yelverton, AAF, AIFD, CF, PFCI, the 2012 Academy Design Contest Winner; Libbie Deering, MFA Academy Contestant; Bob Williams, AAF, PFCI, VP Smithers-Oasis; and 2012 GLFE Chairwoman Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, proudly wearing the winning hat Robbin created in her honor.

Chuck Bannow Award

Leanna Gearhart-Theye, CF
Eastern Floral & Gifts
Grand Rapids, MI



Student Division: Theme – Happy Birthday to You!

- 1st Place
Jeanette Kuchler
Naperville
Central High School, IL
- 2nd Place
Olivia Lin
Naperville
Central High School, IL
- 3rd Place
Dan Stagg
Wexford-
Missaukee ISD, MI





**College/Novice Division:
Theme – In Loving Memory**

- 1st Place
Danielle Naumann, Oakland Schools, MI
- 2nd Place
Denise Pascarella, Joliet Junior College, IL
- 3rd Place
Gabriela Ortega, Joliet Junior College, IL



**Professional Division:
Theme – I Remember You**

- 1st Place
Doug Bates, CF
Designs by Vogt's, Sturgis, MI
- 2nd Place
Mical (Mickey) Dunlop, CF
Dunlop's Art of Flowers, Wolverine, MI
- 3rd Place
Rebecca Geary; McNamara Flowers
LaOtto, IN



**Professional Division:
Theme – Down the Aisle**

- 1st Place
Doug Bates, CF
Designs by Vogt's, Sturgis, MI
- 2nd Place
Loma Fowler, CF
Crystal Springs Flowers, Benton Harbor, MI
- 3rd Place
Debbie Royal, AIFD, CF
Royal Expressions, Blissfield, MI



**Professional Division:
Theme – Surprise...
Surprise**

- 1st Place
Leanna Gearhart-Theye, CF
Eastern Floral, Grand Rapids, MI
- 2nd Place
Loma Fowler, CF
Crystal Springs Flowers, Benton Harbor, MI
- 3rd Place
Debbie Royal, AIFD, CF
Royal Expressions, Blissfield, MI

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2012GLFEREVIEW

2012 MFA Industry Award Winners

MFA Past President's Floriology Institute Scholarship Winner

Cindy VanDeraa
Ridgeway Floral
Three Rivers, MI



Left to right: BloomNet President Mark Nance, winner Cindy VanDeraa, and Nicole Gandini from the BloomNet Floriology Institute.

2012 Lifetime Achievement Award

Stan Pohmer
Pohmer Consulting Group
Minnetonka, MN



National Service Award

Marie Ackerman AIFD, PFCI
Teleflora
Oklahoma City, OK



Retail Employee of the Year

Libbie Deering
Country Lane Flowers
Howell, MI



Retailer of the Year

Don's Flowers & Gifts
Zeeland, MI



Left to right: Douglas Vos, Ginny Vos, Katherine Vos, Katie Vos, Michael Vos and Sarah Vos.

Wholesale Employee of the Year

Brenda Kaye Counts
DWF - Flint
Flint, MI



Wholesaler of the Year

Tom Swientek
Lion/Offray Ribbon
Okemos, MI



Young Person of the Year

Garrett Fairbanks, CF
Bakman Floral Design
South Lyon, MI





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7.5" GARDEN VASE
PLAIN
Opening: 4.25"
12/Case



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PLAIN
Opening: 3.375"
12/Case



3950AST
Van's #292298
7.28" PETITE VASE TRIO
PLAIN
Opening: 3.75", 2.375", 2.5"
12/Case



3907CLR
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



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



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



3003SCLR
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



3929SCLR
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
Van's #292089
14" GRECIAN URN
PLAIN
Opening: 6.5"
6/Case



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3914CLR
Van's #295760
5" BUBBLE BOWL
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



2012GLFEREVIEW

The Show Behind

The secrets to success at the Expo

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

The biggest production of MFA's Great Lakes Floral Expo is one most people don't even see. In the 'back room,' which houses all of the event's fresh flowers and greens, hardgoods, supplies and so much more, volunteers work around the clock on every Expo detail. Planning starts months before, when MFA Executive Assistant Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF, organizes requisition lists from everyone who needs any type of product for the Expo, for the shows to the corsage bar and anything in between. To prepare for Expo 2012, Flower Room Coordinator Jackie Burrell, AIFD, CF, owner of Flowers from Sky's the Limit in Petoskey, MI, who has run the back room for years, spent a few days in early January working with Cindy.

"We double check all the lists to make sure nothing was missed and to make sure that everyone has requested all the supplies they need for their program or class," Burrell said.

"Sometimes we even call people to make sure we really did read their requisition correct."

Together they make a master list of everything that is needed, broken down into categories: fresh product, greens, hard goods, Oasis products, etc., coding items with correct product numbers where needed. The master list is broken down and sent to the appropriate vendors.

"Trust me, I get a crash course in Excel spread sheets every January," Burrell said. "But come Expo time, they make our life so much easier."

It's Showtime!

On March 1, Jackie and her team met in the back room at 8:00 a.m. to get started.

Vans Floral Products from Grand Rapids received and delivered the products requested from the procurement list, and items such as buckets that had been stored for MFA by Eastern Floral since last year's Expo. (See a list of product donors on page 5.) Volunteers then break into groups to process the flowers and unpack and divide the hard goods, then pull product for the different events going on.

"We have a set order in which product is pulled: Main Stage, Hands-On, Design Contest, and then everything else based on who was there helping with processing," Burrell said. "The workroom is divided into set work areas or holding areas for different things happening throughout the weekend. We continually check over the list, pull substitutions, make notes of missing things, and try to find all things that are needed."

Burrell keeps general hardgoods on-hand in case anything is



1

3

2

the Show



1. Angela Dunstan of Nature's Garden in Petoskey helps keep everything organized.
2. The GLFE workroom is actually the Recital Hall for DeVos Performance Hall. GLFE guest designers always say, "not only is our workroom well organized and spacious, but it also has the best acoustics!"
3. Beautiful product is held in buckets of water for the Hands-On workshops. Thank you to all who donated! (see page 5 for donors)
4. Jackie Lacey, AIFD, PFCI gives a big thumbs-up to the MFA workroom and the GLFE!
5. Derek Woodruff, AIFD, CF, CFD, of Floral Underground in Traverse City, works with his volunteer crew to create designs for his Friday night Main Stage Design Show.
6. Bob Friese of Natures Creative Edge in Fruitport helps shuttle product from the processing area on the loading dock to the third floor Hands-On classrooms, which overlook the Grand River.

forgotten – floral adhesive, bind wire, glue pans and guns, wire, corsage tape.

"Having worked with Cindy in compiling the requisitions, I have the advantage of knowing what everyone's wants are and can give them a heads up if there might be a problem. It's very interesting how from year-to-year there will be a few items that everyone asks for. This year it was white hydrangea, white dendrobium orchids, and white roses."

The back room has a motto: Never let them see you sweat.

"As long as the attendees don't know there were any problems, we did good," Burrell said. "What happens in the back room stays in the back room!"

The Power of People

March 2 and 3, Jackie and the volunteers were preparing for the Main Stage Shows, dividing product for and setting up the Hands-On Sessions, making appreciation bouquets, setting up and maintaining the convention décor, setting up the AIFD and CF public displays, working on the President's Reception and Banquet, preparing flowers for the corsage bar, making the vendor treat bags, making arrangements for the vendor's booths, preparing for the Designer of the Year run off, taking care of excess flowers from Hands-On Sessions, making sure there are

flowers and designers for the MFA Retail Store located in the West Michigan Home and Garden Show, and getting items to the Silent Auction in the right place. Jackie says "The Expo would not happen without our volunteers," and it's easy to see why!

First-time volunteer Angela Dunstan, designer at Flowers from Nature's Garden in Petoskey, MI, worked with Main Stage Show presenter Derek Woodruff, AIFD, CD, CFD, on March 1 and 2. Dunstan had been inspired by a show Woodruff, a fellow young designer, gave at DWF a few years previous, which spurred her to get more involved in the floral industry. With Burrell's encouragement, Dunstan signed up to volunteer.

"I really wanted to go to the Expo and be a part of something bigger than I'm used to," Dunstan said. "I liked being out of my element and working with mediums I had never worked with before. I do a lot of high-end elegant weddings and Derek's designs are funky and cool. He's such a free spirited designer and let me be creative. I'm really glad that I got to work with him; he really taught me a lot."

Dave Pinchock, who does store operations and design at Vogt's in Flint, MI, said volunteering kept him committed to attending the Expo.

"I started doing design work about three years ago, and this helped me get out there and learn new things," Pinchock said.

★ Important Reminder ★ MFA Scholarship!

The deadline to apply for MFA's Scholarship Program is June 30!

Winners use the MFA Scholarship to attend the Great Lakes Floral Expo, for Professional Education Center classes and for the Certified Florist program.

Applicants must be employed and working in the floriculture industry or show proof of enrollment in a course of study directly related to the retail floriculture industry. Applicants must have clearly defined career goals, which relate to the industry's course of study.

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

Applications must be received by June 30.



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"I worked as a designer's assistant, unloading and sorting the flowers. I helped Colleen Carr and other people set up for the President's Banquet, and helped set up the Accent Décor booth."

Pinchock, who recently received an MFA Scholarship, is working toward his Certified Florist status, and says volunteering helped reaffirm his involvement in the industry.

First-time volunteer Chris McGahey, fresh cut manager at Nordlie-Flint, who also helped staff the Nordlie Inc. booth, enjoyed all the networking at the Expo.

"It's a matter of staying on top of what's new and exciting in the floral industry, checking out the trends, talking with my peers, especially locally in the Michigan group," McGahey said. "Things are changing continuously, and if you don't stay on top of it, learning and growing, you get left behind."

In the back room, McGahey was amazed watching the massive amounts of flowers arrive, get split up into different categories, divided by class and designer.

"It was very cool to see how it all works," he said. "It's a tremendous undertaking. Jackie, along with the volunteers, under the direction of Brian Bak and Colleen Siembor, did a great job. It was all so organized and hands-on. It was amazing to see everyone come together for one purpose."

The Clean Up

Sunday's main purpose: cleaning.

"Sunday is clean-up day, but we still make sure that the Main Stage Shows and Hands-On sessions are still happening as scheduled," Burrell said. "We need to make sure things are packed up for next year for storage and to be returned to the MFA office, miscellaneous hard goods and fresh products are divided up among Vo-Tech Schools that had student volunteers. All of the different areas where we had displays or something going on are cleaned up and we make lists of what was packed up... all while keeping the flower area clean."

McGahey said a large part of his volunteering was cleaning up, breaking down boxes and sweeping, which was no doubt appreciated.

"I look forward to getting more involved with the MFA as a whole and with the Expo," he said. "It will help me leaps and bounds in the future with learning and networking. Working on the phone a lot, it's nice to put a face on the name and get to talk on a personal level. I appreciate Nordlie sending me, and what I learn will come back to them."

Dunstan, who is working toward becoming a Certified Florist with the MFA Scholarship she recently received, wants to come back every year.

"Watching the Designer of the Year run-off, I thought: 'I would love to do that,'" she said. "And if I pass CF, I will get my pin at the Banquet and I will get to design for the CF table next year. It's very exciting. Jackie is a huge mentor to me. If it weren't for her positive persistence, I wouldn't have known about any of this. She was in charge of so much it was crazy, and I don't know how she kept it all straight, but she did. If you need anything, you can go to Jackie."

On Monday morning, when the back room is empty and the crowds have dispersed, Jackie remembers the volunteers who shared the work with her all weekend.

"The people I get to work with is what makes it fun and is the main reason I do it every year," she said. "They work so hard to make it a great show for all the attendees. They are the people who help me make sure that all the things listed above get done in a timely fashion." ✿

My Expo Experience

BY STAN POHMER



As one of the top five floral association conventions/trade events nationally, I'm always excited to make the trip to Michigan for MFA's Great Lakes Floral Expo. I make new acquaintances and renew old friendships and get exposed to the artistry that helps differentiate the retail florist in the highly competitive marketplace. I had high expectations for the 2012 Expo, and I wasn't disappointed!

The GLFE coordinators asked me to share some information and insights on the state of the retail florist channel, who our customer is/isn't, and the ways we need to tailor our messages and approaches to the different demographic segments. I presented and facilitated two Business Sessions; I say 'facilitated' because the discussions with the attendees were free ranging and active, with everyone adding their perspectives and suggestions on how to engage and re-engage old and new consumers as we continue to slowly recover from the economic downturn we've experienced over the past four years. It hasn't been easy for the retail florist during the recession, especially in Michigan and the surrounding areas with a heavy manufacturing economic base. We've seen florists (and their suppliers) close their doors, and those who worked so hard to survive faced sales and profit challenges. Small businesses of all types had difficulty getting working capital from their traditional lenders. To say that the past few years have been challenging is an understatement.

But we're an industry of optimists and survivors! The 400+ people who attended the GLFE found ways to meet their challenges head on (and I know some of the decisions you had to make weren't easy!) They are the survivors who are stronger than before and are positioned, ready and able to start capitalizing on what the future brings them. I think what impressed me the most about attending this event was the enthusiasm everyone had; people weren't looking backward, they were looking forward!

As I expected, the design shows were spectacular, and the flowers decorating the Recognition Banquet were outstanding! As a non-designer, I'm always blown away by the artistry of flowers, the presentation capabilities of the designs, and the willingness of the attendees to learn new tricks from the pros. Watching them work their magic on stage, creating amazing arrangements that communicate the emotions only flowers can convey, and demonstrating the power of flowers, is always inspiring. I challenge all of us to try to communicate these same emotions and flower power to customers every day!



Left to right: Mark Nance of Bloomnet, Nancy Butts, CF, and Carol Butts from Burgett Floral, and Jim Jordan of 4North Associates listen intently to Mr. Pohmer's presentation, "The Challenges of the Retail Florist."

Helen Miller, AIFD, CF, absorbing information provided in the top caliber business session.

It's always special to recognize the talent and achievements individuals have worked so hard to achieve, and the Recognition Banquet served as the platform to showcase these individuals. From winners of design competitions, to earning Certified Florist status, they all deserve their special recognition. And on a personal note, I was surprised, humbled, delighted, honored and appreciative of the Lifetime Achievement award that was bestowed on me at the Banquet; any recognition given to you by your peers is extra special.

The entire GLFE team once again upheld the great MFA tradition of hosting an outstanding Expo. My parting challenge to you is to keep the enthusiasm I saw at GLFE high, tempered by the continuously changing consumer and economic trends. Stay agile and reactive to the competition around you, keep your willingness to learn (in design and business), and embrace change. You're all survivors and there are good things ahead. ✿

Stan Pohmer is the founder and CEO of Pohmer Consulting Group, Minnetonka, MN, and winner of the MFA 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award. At Expo 2012, he presented two Business Sessions, "The Challenges of the Retail Florist" and "Connecting With Your Customers."

Save the Date for the 2012 Michigan Floral Foundation Hall of Fame Awards Dinner

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OWNER OF THE FLORA PROS IN CHICAGO

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2012

Be sure to save the date, 10-11-12, for an evening of fun and fellowship as the Michigan Floral Foundation (MFF) presents its Hall of Fame, to be held at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, 187 Monroe Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI, 49505. Tickets for the event are available by calling the MFA office at (517) 575-0110. For more information on the Hall of Fame, visit www.michiganfloral.org/mff.html. Don't miss this exciting event from your MFA!

About the Michigan Floral Foundation – Founded 2007

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

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

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



Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford,
AAF, AIFD, CFD, PFCI

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

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



MichiganFloral
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How can I support the Michigan Floral Foundation?

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

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

MEMBERPROFILE

A Floral Past, Present & Future

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

Brian Bak got his start in the floral industry 35 years ago, delivering flowers for a shop owned by some friends from high school. When some staff went on vacation, one of the designers asked Bak to help in the design room.

"I didn't know how," Bak said. "She said, 'Just do what I tell you to do.'" So we made arrangements and filled the cooler with all kinds of different things. Customers came in and chose my designs over hers, and she was a trained designer!"

He honed his skills at that shop for three years, working on his natural design talent and "learning the ropes" from his floral friends. When an opportunity arose to open his own shop in another location, he took it, and has run Bakman Floral Design in South Lyon, MI, for the past 32 years. The full-service shop offers fresh flowers, green and blooming plants, greeting cards and gift items, and is a member of Teleflora, FTD and BloomNet.

Bak has three full-time employees, Linda Olli, Stephanie Kurth, and Garrett Fairbanks, CF, who won MFA's "Young Person of the Year" award at the 2012 Great Lakes Floral Expo, and was also recognized at the President's Reception and Banquet for achieving his Certified Florist status. Bak, who is working toward his CF, gets extra holiday help from friends and former employees.

"As a business owner, I am blessed to have a very creative and innovative staff," he said. "They do awesome work. We do a lot of special events, weddings and funerals. We can all do everything; I wear a lot of hats."

Some of those hats include Bak's work as volunteer co-coordinator for the Expo, and Program Chair for Expo 2013. For two years

Design by Garrett Fairbanks, CF, for the Baisch Skinner Display at the ISFA Spring Conference.



Brian Bak designing for a Teleflora show. In-store green and blooming plant display.



he has been president of the Michigan unit of Teleflora. Bak was named 2011's "Outstanding Unit President" in his region, and the Michigan unit won the sole "National Achievement" award.

"Teleflora is very pro-education, and we do a lot of educational programs for peers through Teleflora all over Michigan at different wholesalers," Bak said. "They're very good to us with these units and give us money to work with."

Bak says he's always going to a seminar or class, and enjoys lots of great functions and workshops in Michigan, including Nature's Creative Edge, and encourages other florists to do the same.

"Garrett, as a young person, goes to the vocational schools and drums up support to keep the students interested," Bak said. "He is such a blessing – not that many young people are truly interested in the floral industry, and when you find one who is, you do what you can to keep them motivated."

Bak tries to keep the people in his town motivated by flowers too. "We want to be present and be a part of our town, so we do a lot of different events with personal contact," he said. "We also have a presence online. We get a lot of orders from our Web sites, and Stephanie and Garrett run our shop's Facebook page – that requires a lot of attention. It's all to be visible and be a part of things. We try to make our little area a much better place through flowers."

In the future, Bak hopes to sneak away from his 'little area' and travel. "I'll be in this industry forever," Bak said. "I don't know where the first 30 years went, but I'm going to do the second 30 a little differently! I've never traveled, and I would love to see the European flower markets. That would be amazing to experience firsthand."

Every so often, Bak gets back to his beginnings of floral delivery to experience firsthand the power of flowers.

"When I deliver to a senior retirement village, and I walk the arrangement up to the door, it's amazing how happy the flowers make them when they aren't expecting it," Bak said. "Bouquets bring a satisfaction to people. A simple flower brings tons of happiness." ✿



DOMESTIC UPDATE

Going Local

Is “The 50 Mile Bouquet” for you?

BY KASEY CRONQUIST

What if someone told you that you could only source your flowers from within 50 miles of your shop? Could you do it? What if it was 1,000 miles? What if it just had to be “locally grown?” Could you do it then? Recently featured in the New York Times, Debra Prinzing’s new book,

The 50 Mile Bouquet, has certainly gotten many of us in the floral industry talking and asking questions about what can be done to accommodate a growing number of consumers seeking, “seasonal, local and sustainable flowers.”



Debra Prinzing’s book, *The 50 Mile Bouquet*.

With imports making up 80 percent of flowers sold in the United States today, the opportunity to source from a local flower farmer is made more difficult. Add the issue of seasonality, and it can be next to impossible for a local florist to source local flowers from within a 50-mile radius. So, what is a local florist to do, when it comes to this idea of sourcing locally?

While Prinzing’s book offers a compelling message and is an inspiring source of ideas, florists may be left to feel that such a concept is impossible to achieve. However, if you were to look at the book less literally and more figuratively, it’s really making the point that where your flowers come from matters. Not only does sourcing “locally grown” flowers meet a growing expectation from consumers who are seeking more seasonally, locally and sustainably grown flowers from local florists, but it matters to the economy, it matters to the environment and it matters to the life of the family flower farms still growing in our country.

So, while “The 50 Mile Bouquet,” may not always be possible or practical for a local florist in the Midwest in the middle of winter, California’s flower farms stand ready as a year-round source of production that can meet this growing demand and interest in going “local.” By focusing domestically, consumer expectations for “local” are met by sourcing those flowers that keep local dollars in the U.S. economy, purchasing from farms that are meeting standards that set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture and by significantly reducing the transportation footprint that can be involved with shipping flowers.

So, what steps can you take today, to meet this growing demand for “seasonal, local and sustainably grown” flowers?



Flower farmers at the Rose Parade proudly display the CCFC logos to “Support America’s Flowers.”



1. Admit you have an opportunity

It may not be within 50 miles, but the first step is to identify that there is increasing opportunity in becoming known as a local florist selling locally grown flowers.

2. Get to know your flower farmers

Find out where your flowers are coming from and get to know what they are about. Technology today makes this a reality. Web sites, Facebook, Pinterest, YouTube, Google Maps. Knowing who your flower farmers are provides a relationship you can leverage.

3. Leverage available resources to feature your “locally grown” relationship with your flowers

Put a face on those flowers and make sure you feature this new relationship. Show your customers that you care by featuring your flower farmers. You could profile flower farmers on your Web site. You could Facebook about a fresh flower shipment coming to you from the farm. You could embed a video about the farm’s you source from on your Web site and Facebook page. You could feature a farmer or farmers in your advertisements or newsletters.

Over the past several years, the California Cut Flower Commission has been working hard to help retailers better connect with their local farmers. Last year we released our first “Farm Guide,” through *Florists’ Review*. Over the past two years we’ve worked with J. Schwanke, of uBloom.com, to release a video series called the “California Grown Experience,” which specifically features our flower farmers and their flowers in California. The release of Prinzing’s book is yet another example that there is a “locally grown” movement afoot when it comes to flowers and highlights that where your flowers come from does matter. As a former Chamber of Commerce executive, I know how much local florists depend on their local community to buy local. Local florists know first hand how the commitment to “buying local” makes a difference in their own business. While California may be further than 50 miles from your shop, California flower farms do supply approximately 80 percent of the flowers grown domestically. So when it comes to fulfilling your customer’s “buy local” expectations, just tell them: “California’s Flowers are America’s Flowers.” ✿

Kasey Cronquist is the CEO of the California Cut Flowers Commission (CCFC), www.cffc.org.

DESIGNERSPOTLIGHT

Head for the Tropics

BY DOUG BATES, CF
FROM DESIGN'S BY VOGT'S
STURGIS, MI
2012 MFA DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

Everyone wants a little sizzle, right? The problem is making it happen in a way that's easily accepted by our customers. And if your shop is in a rural area like mine, that can be challenging, but it's definitely possible! At our shop, we've found that by incorporating long-lasting tropicals into our everyday designs, we can wow our customers time and again!

"But Doug," you might say, "aren't tropicals expensive?" Not if you plan ahead. Get a specials sheet from your wholesaler and get to planning YOUR shop's specials based on what's already available to you. Your wholesaler's heavy on hydrangea? They've too many tulips? Scoop them up at a special price and pass that savings on to your customers!

Standing orders with your wholesalers are another great option. You get the convenience of knowing exactly what you've got coming in, and can plan both your basic inventory needs and weekly specials. Even if you sacrifice taking your full mark-up on certain standing order items, it's a great promotion to get customers in your door. The idea being, of course, that once they're in, they'll be so enamored by your creativity that they'll take a carload of product home! By planning ahead, you're saving money! Who doesn't want that?

But back to the tropicals... whether you're tucking a few protea into the focal, adding some line with light-as-a-feather oncidiums, or collaring with a Monstera that commands attention, you can be sure that your customers will notice! And you know they're going to notice when their arrangement lasts for weeks on end! Just another benefit of incorporating tropicals into your everyday designs. ✻



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IMPORTUPDATE

Floral Imports Update

BY CHRISTINE BOLDT

2012 started with a good momentum. The weather in South America cooperated with no severe cold spells and no floods, as there have been in the past few years! The Valentine's season yielded lots of good quality flowers! These flowers were sent through the chain and had good results with the customers. We are now preparing for the Mother's Day season and hope that the good weather continues to produce top quality flowers for all of the mothers throughout the US.

Miami continues to be the main hub of flowers into the US. 89.4 percent of all flowers that are imported come in through Miami International Airport – up from last year's percentage of 88.9. Miami not only leads in imports of flowers, but also in fruits

and vegetables and fish with an overall perishable percentage of 69.7 percent. Due to these large volumes of perishables, Miami is able to provide quicker service by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) than at other airports.

Colombia and Ecuador continue to be the main growing region for flowers that are imported into the US. About 90 percent of the imports come from the South American Countries. Colombia has about 6,500 hectares of growing region, while Ecuador has about 2,000 hectares. Even though these counties continue to supply the majority of the US flower imports, the world is getting smaller! There are more and more countries selling flowers to the US providing an even greater variety of flowers available to consumers. Who would have thought that flowers from South Africa, Ethiopia, Australia, New Zealand and India would be some of the



Rose bouquets samples for Mother's Day.

South American flower farm.



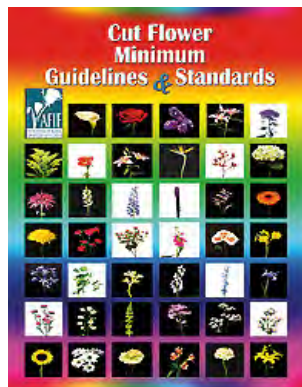
2011 Flower Imports

Roses	1.54 billion stems
Chrysanthemums & Pompons	454.5 million stems
Carnations	401.1 million stems
Alstroemeria	246.2 million stems
Mini Carnations	203.0 million stems
Mixed Bouquets	699.0 million stems
Rose Bouquets	335.3 million stems

INMEMORIAM

countries that provide flowers to the US? There are other countries that are “knocking on the door” such as Uganda, Sri Lanka, and some countries in Europe!

Invoices and paperwork listing flowers on flights is provided to the CBP, from which import statistics are kept by the USDA and the Department of Commerce on what has entered the US. From these statistics, we know flower import ranking for 2011 (see chart on page 22).



Quality products continue to be a main focus of the importers in Miami. A couple of years ago, the Association of Floral Importers of Florida (AFIF) published a Minimum Guidelines and Standards book to help the industry with what should be accepted by flower buyers. If adhered to by buyers

and sellers, then we can have a more level buying field, not just based on prices, but rather on standards that are above the minimums. If you don't have your copy of this book, contact AFIF (www.afifnet.org) for your free copy. ✿

Christine Boldt is the executive vice president of the Association of Floral Importers of Florida (AFIF).

Doris Silk

Silk's Flower Shop

Doris L. Silk, 87, passed away March 17, 2012, after a long and courageous battle with Parkinson's disease. Her husband, Howard, preceded her in death in 2010. Together in the early 1960's, Doris and Howard opened Silk's Flower Shop in St. Clair, MI, which they ran for 25 years. After retirement, Doris delighted in becoming a grandmother and enjoyed spending time with her family. Doris is survived by her children, Norman Silk of Detroit, Jan Silk of Port Huron, MI, and Kathy (Denny) Hillman of Port Huron, along with granddaughters Heather and Megan Hillman. ✿



Doris and Howard Silk

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COMPANYPROFILE

Get to Know FloristWare

A POS system designed for florists

BY HEIDI ANDERSON, EDITOR

After researching POS systems for his father's flower shops, Mark Anderson came up with the perfect solution: create his own! Anderson, who has a background in software development, had worked at both of his father's shops in Ontario, Canada; one did \$1.2 million in business every year, the other \$150,000.

"I watched how shops of both sizes worked," Anderson said. "I wanted to create a POS system with a different approach, something that would work for all shops, both big and small."

Over a period of three years, Anderson worked with 12 focus groups and met with florists to brainstorm ideas for the system.

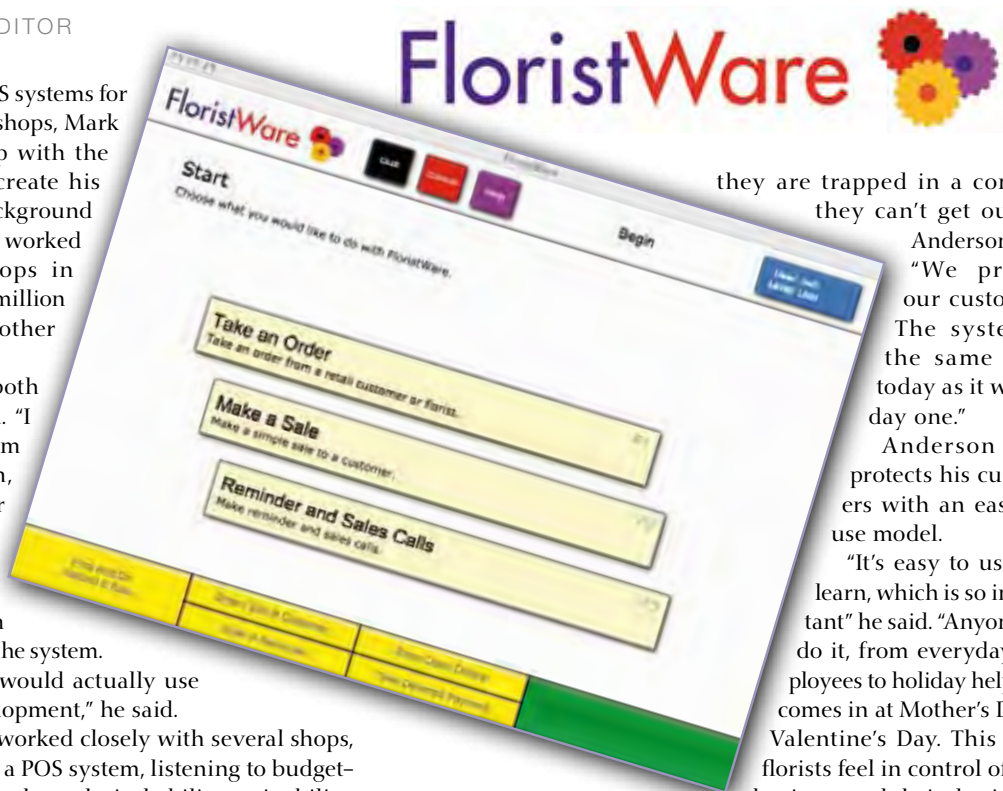
"I wanted the people who would actually use the product to guide its development," he said.

During the early stages he worked closely with several shops, learning what they needed in a POS system, listening to budgetary concerns, and discovering the technical ability, or inability, of employees. By 2005, hundreds of flower shops in North America were using Anderson's creation, FloristWare, to run their businesses everyday. The system offers tools for marketing, order taking, accounts receivable, reports and statistics and more.

"We only deal with florists, no other markets," Anderson said. "When you buy our system, you get the entire system – nothing is a la carte. We update pretty regularly, and there are never any upgrade fees."

Customers can download FloristWare for free and try it before they buy it, and even then it's a no contract, no commitment policy, with a month-to-month fee.

"We want people to use it because they love it, not because



they are trapped in a contract they can't get out of," Anderson said. "We protect our customers. The system is the same price today as it was on day one."

Anderson also protects his customers with an easy-to-use model.

"It's easy to use and learn, which is so important" he said. "Anyone can do it, from everyday employees to holiday help who comes in at Mother's Day or Valentine's Day. This helps florists feel in control of their business and their destiny. It's everything you want and expect from a POS system."

Susan Page, vice president of sales and service, worked for three different wire services before joining FloristWare.

"Susan loves to talk to florists and explain how the system works," Anderson said. "You never go in blind; you know what you're getting into. We love florists, we love helping them, we love seeing them do well and hearing they love the software. That's what we're 100 percent about."

For more information, visit www.floristware.com (where you can download a free 30-day trial) or call Susan at (888) 531-3012, extension 708. ✿

"We only deal with florists, no other markets," Anderson said.

"When you buy our system, you get the entire system – nothing is a la carte. We update pretty regularly, and there are never any upgrade fees."

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

Wednesday, August 8, 2012

We'll be playing at Eldorado Golf Course in Mason, MI. (www.eldorado27.com) The day will begin with check-in and range balls at 9:00 a.m. at the Club House, followed by a 10:00 a.m. shotgun start. Dinner and an awards ceremony will follow the round. Each 4-person team will play a scramble format. All players receive prizes, so don't worry about your score or skill level - this is a day of fun and networking!

COST: \$75 per golfer, \$250 per 4-person team; includes 18 holes of golf, cart, lunch, dinner, game holes & prizes

"Don't miss this day of fun, networking and golf with your fellow floral industry members. Hyacinth House is proud to once again be a sponsor of this event. I look forward to seeing you on the course!"

-Jim Schmidt, co-owner of Hyacinth House, 2012 MFA Golf Outing chairman



Birdie Sponsor - \$500, includes 2-tee sign @ \$100, golf for 2 @ \$150, \$150 donation, and designation as a sponsor in *The Professional Florist* magazine and on the MFA Web site

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

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

Tee Signs - \$100, includes company name and logo

Golf Outing Sponsorship Opportunities

Eagle Sponsor - \$1,000, includes 4-tee sign @ \$100, 1 4-team @ \$250, \$350 donation, and designation as Major Sponsor in *The Professional Florist* magazine and on the MFA Web site

"FORE" more information on playing and/or sponsoring, call Rod Crittenden at (517) 575-0110, or e-mail rod@michiganfloral.org

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CFREPORT

Chairman's Report CF Numbers Continue to Grow



BY TIM LATIMER, CF, CF CHAIRMAN



As of press time, we now have 158 Certified Florists. I am very excited that so many florists have taken that step forward. The next "Steps to Certification" workshop is Tuesday, June 5, at the MFA office in Haslett, and the next CF Testing is Sunday June 10 at Michigan State University in East Lansing. Visit www.michiganfloral.org to download the forms and sign up now!

Certification shows your commitment to excellence, to the industry and to your own professional development. Join me in welcoming the newest inductees into the ranks of Certified Florist – congratulations to you all! I would love to see your picture here in 2013! ✿

Tim Latimer, CF, teaches floral design at Michigan State University and has been on the CF committee since its inception. He was involved in developing the CF Manual and writing the written exam. Tim has been designing and teaching for 25 years.

CF FLOWER of the Month LISIANTHUS (*Eustoma grandiflorum*)

Lisianthus are available year-round, with the peak supply from June to August. The lavender, purple, white, pink and bi-colored flowers are excellent for use in mixed arrangements. This gorgeous flower, native to Mexico, has long held an important role in communicating a deep, heartfelt, romantic desire. Because of its long vase life, lisianthus is an ideal flower for corsages and bridal work.



From left to right: Gloria Durham, CF, Katherine Seeburger, CF, Rhonda Stibbe, CF, Garrett Fairbanks, CF, Doreen Thomas, CF, Becky Moore, CF, Geoffrey Rentovich, CF, Susan Kulka, CF, Janyce Fair, CF, Sherry Tennis, CF, Mical (Mickey) Dunlop, CF, Helen Miller, AIFD, CAFA, CF, Laura Boucher, CF, Miwa Kameyama, CF, Hiroe Peterson, CF.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2012 CERTIFIED FLORIST OF THE YEAR!

Jody Brown-Spivey, AIFD, CF –
Expressions Floral Design Studio, Gahanna, OH

CONGRATULATIONS NEW CERTIFIED FLORISTS!

- Theresa Andre, CF** – Amanda, OH
- Laura Boucher, CF** – Whimsy Design (Emerald City Designs), Ann Arbor, MI
- Mical (Mickey) Dunlop, CF** – Dunlop's the art of Flowers, Wolverine, MI
- Gloria Durham, CF** – Ypsilanti, MI
- Janyce Fair, CF** – Pattersons Flowers, Big Rapids, MI
- Garrett Fairbanks, CF** – Bakman Floral, South Lyons, MI
- Miwa Kameyama, CF** – Ann Arbor, MI
- Susan Kulka, CF** – Jackson, MI
- Gail Lockwood, CF** – Gregory, MI
- Helen Miller, AIFD, CAFA, CF** – Flowers & Such, Adrian, MI
- Becky Moore, CF** – Athens, MI
- Hiroe Peterson, CF** – Ann Arbor, MI
- Geoffrey Rentovich, CF** – Clinton Township, MI
- Katherine Seeburger, CF** – Ann Arbor, MI
- Rhonda Stibbe, CF** – Aurora, IL
- Sherry Tennis, CF** – Flowers & Such, Adrian, MI
- Doreen Thomas, CF** – Classic Designs, Lachine, MI
- Juan Tracy II, CF** – Flowers At The Falls, Idaho Falls, ID

FLORAL TIP: Welcome Customer Complaints! *From the CF manual, page 123*

Customer complaints point out areas that need improvement, give you a second chance to provide great customer service and give you an opportunity to increase customer loyalty. We all would like to be perfect, but sometimes we aren't. Your CF Manual will show you how to turn a negative into a positive and keep those valued customers coming back!



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Certified Florist Manual & Testing

Did you know? MFA's Certified Florist (CF) program is a comprehensive program that covers all aspects of professional floristry and is the most affordable program available to florists today. And the most convenient: you can self-study at your own pace with this great manual/reference resource. The Certified Florist accreditation is nationally recognized and an approved pathway to AIFD accreditation. MFA offers an optional, educational "Steps to Certification" class to help prepare for certification. Other Certification or Certified Floral Designer programs available today would cost you over \$1,000 and could take you years to accomplish! But not this program:

***Cost for manual and one round of CF testing is \$599.99 (includes tax & S/H)**

***Cost for manual only is \$399.99 (includes tax & S/H)**

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

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

The CF Manual consists of the following chapters and books:

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



**Visit www.michiganfloral.org
or call (517) 575-0110
and register today!**

Professional Education Center

Steps to Certification

Date: June 5, 2012, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: MFA Professional Education Center

Cost: Member/\$149 Non-Member/\$199

Lunch included

**Call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110
or visit www.michiganfloral.org to register!**

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

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.

Please bring your own tools!



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HELP WANTED: 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.

FOR SALE: Successful Business and Building. Owner Retiring after 35 Years. Northwest Wayne County Location. For more information, contact Robert Campbell at (248) 568-7830 Max Broock Realtors.

Seeking Donations: MFA Scholarship Committee seeks donations for the 2013 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 call the MFA office at (517) 575-0110 or go to www.michiganfloral.org/mfa_scholarship.html and download a Silent Auction donation form (PDF file).

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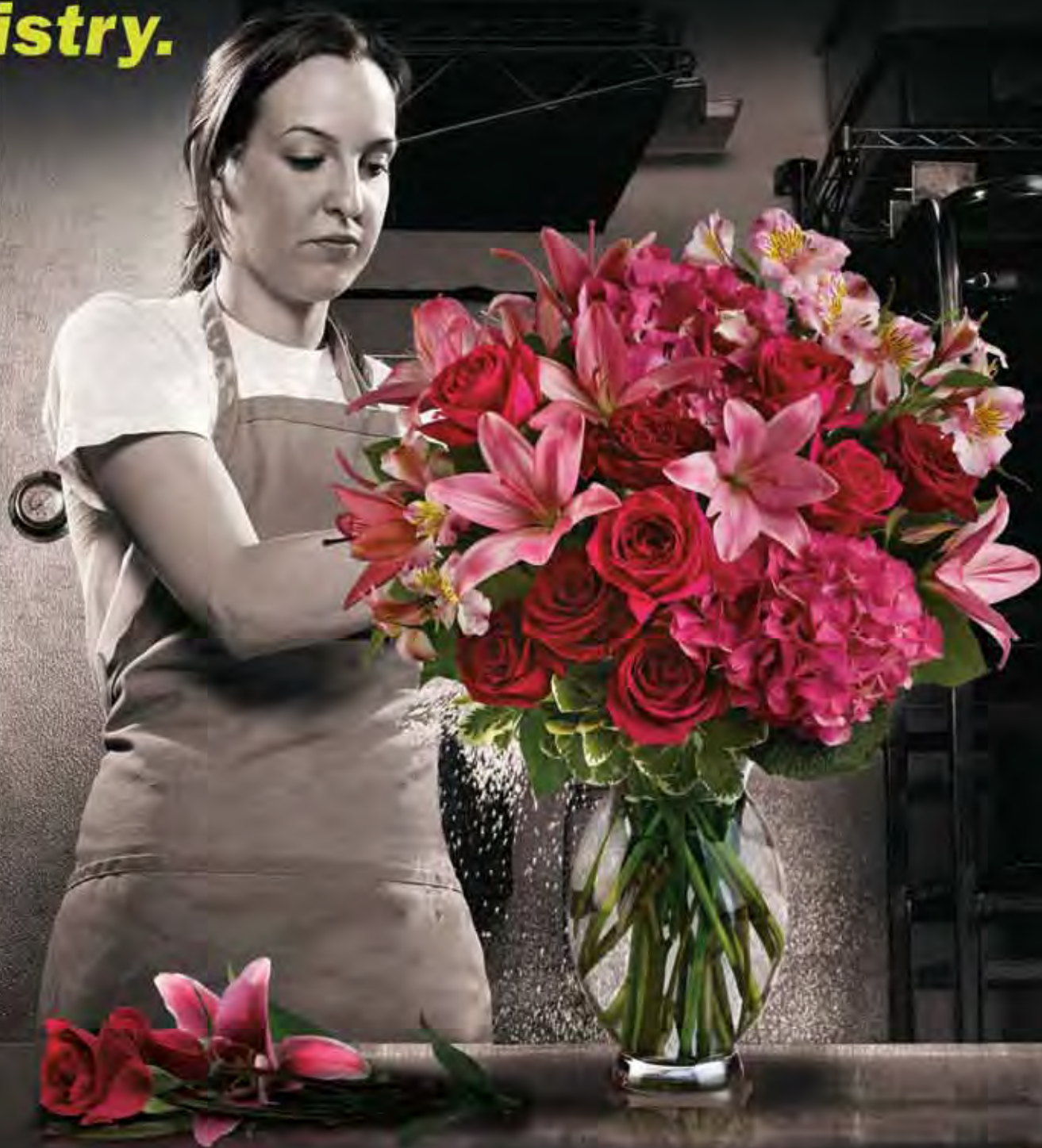
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