

The  
Professional

# Florist

Volume V 2018

**AIFD Members  
'Discover'  
Design Shows,  
Workshops, and  
Business Sessions**

**Making Prom  
Profitable**

**How to Hit  
Refresh for Spring**

**WUMFA Hosts  
First Annual  
Golf Outing**

**A Guide to Floral  
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The Professional

# Florist

Cover arrangement By Tonja VanderVeen, AIFD, CF, *Designing Dreams Floral and Tuxedos, Grand Rapids, MI, 2018 Academy Winner, Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo.*

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## LEADERSHIPREPORT

# School Days, School Days...

BY ROD CRITTENDEN, MFA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/CEO, WUMFA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Once again summer has come and gone and it's time to head back to school. I'm not just talking about the children but about all of us. I know you have heard this before but it is worth repeating, successful people never stop learning.

We are blessed not only to work in an industry we love, but also in an industry filled with many different educational opportunities to help us stay sharp. Following are some excellent ways to Head Back To School.

### MAGAZINES:

Right now you've got a great tool in your hands. Magazines provide an excellent platform for learning. Every thirty to sixty days you can pick up the latest issue of *Florists' Review*, *Floral Management*, *Floriology*, *Canadian Florist*, and/or *The Professional Florist*. Each issue offers a wide variety of content from business to design. These periodicals will stimulate your creativity and provide you with inspiration. The best part about a magazine is when you come back after being interrupted you can pick it up and immediately begin right where you left off. No logging back on and trying to find the link or website you were on.

### REGIONAL MEETINGS:

Watch for upcoming MFA regional meetings (See page 30). This fall we are partnering with Syndicate Sales to bring you the latest information on how to use and sell the new Holly Chapple cages. Each meeting will have an informative design session. Attendees will leave with sample materials for a design along with an information sheet.

Your local suppliers upcoming open houses also provide an opportunity to learn about new products and gather new ideas for the fall and winter holidays. Make sure to ask your suppliers for their open house dates and plan to attend as many as possible.

### MFA'S PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION CENTER:

For those who would like to learn the basics of floral design or hone their design skills with an intermediate design class the Education Center might be just what your looking for. MFA Director of Education Cindy Ching AIFD, CF, will be offering classes at both levels this fall. Classes are held at Association headquarters in Haslett, Michigan. You will make a number of designs in each class. All flowers and hard goods are provided.

### CERTIFIED FLORIST (CF) PROGRAM:

This comprehensive self-study program covers the basics of floristry. The manual comes with a study guide that will walk you through what you need to know in each chapter. You'll learn about care and handling of cut flowers and plants, product identification, customer relations/sales, delivery, marketing, accounting, gluing, lighting, and step-by-step floral design.

Not only will you learn these basic core subjects but also when you feel ready you can apply to take the written test and the five design hands-on test. If you pass both tests with a score of 80% or better you earn the right to brand yourself a Certified Florist (CF)!

### GREAT LAKES FLORAL & EVENT EXPO:

Your school year wraps up next spring with a trip to the Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo in Grand Rapids, March 1-3, 2019. This is your big field trip where you will have access to some of our industry's top educators. They will present main stage shows, hands-on classes, and business seminars. You'll also enjoy the trade show, design contest and networking with fellow industry peers.

As you can see we have many ways for you and your employees to head Back to School. Don't be afraid to dive in headfirst and start expanding your horizons today. ✿



## INMEMORIAM

**P**hillip Ching, 26, son of Michigan Floral Association executive assistant Cindy Ching AIFD, CF, and her husband Radford was killed in a plane crash, August 18, while

working as a crop duster. He loved flying and was a skilled pilot.

He is also survived by brothers Robert and David; fiancée, Mya Hall; grandparents Percy and Eleanor Ching; and many aunts and uncles.

Our condolences to Cindy, Radford, and the entire family.

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## CFREPORT



# Design Style

BY LAURA L. PARKER, AIFD, CF, MBA  
Fresh Start Floral Consulting LLC, Holly, Michigan

**S** style is a fundamental aspect of floral design. Interpretation of a particular style drives the choices a designer will make, like the placement of a line, the selection of colors, or the combination of textures. Style is defined as “the particular manner or technique” by which a designer creates a floral design. There are precise formal styles that are timeless: Hogarth curves, new convention, and abstract are a few interesting examples. Alternatively, there are styles more driven by theme or trends; boho, garden, and whimsical are all examples of less structured styles.

In this picture, the objective was to create a photo booth frame in a whimsical style. Whimsy is expressed in floral designs through playful lines, eccentric color harmonies, textures, and accents.

Along with traditional floral materials, small wooden craft trays and dyed wool roving have been included here. The wool roving was felted into playful butterfly-like and striped swooshes to add visual weight and interest. Small tapered wooden trays screwed directly to the frame provided additional design surface and added depth. The fluid lines, bright, complex color harmony, and fun accent characters work together to create a captivating little whimsical garden. ✿



Arrangement by Laura Parker, 2018 GLFEE

## Louisiana Florists Join CF program

**W**ith great pleasure and lots of excitement we welcome the Louisiana State Florists Association to the Certified Florist (CF) program. The national certification program through the National Alliance of Floral Associations (NAFA) is a pathway to AIFD. We commend Louisiana for this step to education and professionalism.

The four new Certified Florists are: Samantha Bates AIFD, CF, Especially For You Floral, Pontchatoula, Louisiana; Benette Thibodeaux CF, Lafayette, Louisiana; Bridget Joslin CF, CFD, Magnolia, Arkansas, and Annie Venable CF, Leona Sue's Florist, Scott, Louisiana. ✿

**Make this year  
the year you become a  
Certified Florist!**



CF Steps Class is Wednesday, **October 3, 2018**

Go to: [www.michiganfloral.org/education-center/](http://www.michiganfloral.org/education-center/)  
for complete information.

Next CF Testing is Sunday, **October 14, 2018**

WUMFA CF Testing is available at the Fall Workshops.

# MFA Golfers Go "Fore" Fun at the 2018 Golf Outing

The Michigan Floral Association held its annual golf outing, a day of fun and networking, last month at Eldorado Golf Course in Mason, Michigan. The day began with check-in and range balls with a 9:00 a.m. shotgun start. Everyone enjoyed hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and a cookie for lunch at the turn. The four person scramble format was played on two nine hole courses, the White and the Blue.

Golfers met in the clubhouse following the round for an awards ceremony where all players received prizes thanks to our generous sponsors.



Left to right: Kal Krueger (Vogt's Flowers), Janice Curran (Teleflora), Kyle Smith and Kreg Krueger (Vogt's Flowers).

- **Eagle Sponsor:** Hyacinth House
- **Birdie Sponsors:** Mayesh Wholesale, MHI Fund
- **Tee Sponsors:** DWF-Flint, FloraCraft, FloristWare and Teleflora.
- **Men's Winning Team:** Hyacinth House with a score of: -14 (57).
- **Mixed Winning Team:** Experience GR with a score of: -4 (67).
- **Game Hole winners:**
- **Longest Drive:** Men - Dave Warner (ArtCraft Display). Women - Jennifer Daly (ArtCraft Display).
- **Longest Putt:** #6White - Andie Newcomer (Experience GR), #1Blue - Andie Newcomer.
- **Closest to Pin:** #4White - Kreg Krueger (Vogt's Flowers), #8Blue - Terry Oswalt (Mayesh Wholesale) 🌸



Left to right: Alice Waterous AIFD, CF, PFCI (Alice's Christmas Elves), Molly Tlinski (FloraCraft), Anne Stol and Terry Oswalt (Mayesh Wholesale).



Left to right: Jason Mains, Tony Vear, Brent Mains, (Mains Importing), Kreg Krueger (Vogt's Flowers) showing team Mains what's for lunch, and team member Ryan Mains.



Left to right: Tim Galea (Norton's Flowers), Tom Figueroa AIFD, CF (Nordlie/Kennicott), Tim Timinski and Dave Weis (FloraCraft)

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Show me the money: Jerome Raska, MFA chairman, thanks all those who contributed at the 2018 Expo.



**T**he Michigan Floral Foundation would like to thank all those who donated monies at the 2018 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo Recognition Banquet. Together we raised a total of \$957 for education. Also a big thank you to this year's golfers who contributed a total of \$320 with the purchase of mulligans at the annual Michigan Floral Association golf outing.

The MFA also recognizes and thanks the following individuals whose year to date donations have raised \$500 for the MFF: Jackie Burrell AIFD, CF, Luurtsema Sales Inc., Garrett Skupinski CF, and Alice Waterous AIFD, CF, PFCI. Thank you to everyone who has made a donation to the MFF, you are all to be commended!

The Michigan Floral Foundation (MFF) 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.

It honors outstanding members of the floral industry who have mentored and inspired their fellow industry members in the Michigan Floral Foundation Hall of Fame and will also make available financial assistance to those seeking to become a Certified Florist.

Every contribution is tax deductible and is used within the State of Michigan to help Michigan florists. A contribution can be made in honor of

a person's birthday or anniversary or to honor a loved one at their passing. A donation can be given in honor of someone as a way of saying thank you or to make a professional gesture to let them know they are special.

If you would like to make a donation to the Michigan Floral Foundation simply contact us at (517) 575-0110 or go to [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org).

**INMEMORIAM**

**C**aroline Marie Gallagher, 84, of Macomb, Michigan has died.

In 1946 her husband Ed's parents established the North Gratiot Rose Gardens in Mt. Clemens. Ed and Caroline took over the business and with their children owned and operated it until 2007.

Her primary role at the business was as bookkeeper and office manager. North Gratiot Rose Gardens was the last commercial green house in Mount Clemens.

Surviving are her husband Edward, two sons, five grandchildren and three great grandchildren. She is also survived by her sister in law.

**J**ohn D. "Big Dave" Krueger, Vogt's Flowers and Gifts, Flint, MI, has died at the age of 84.

He bought Vogt's Flowers from founder Anton Vogt in the mid 1950s after working for him for several years. It is now being run by his son Kreg with help from grandson Kal.

He is survived by his daughters, Suzanne (Paul Janicki) and Kelly Krueger; son, Kreg (Cynthia) and grandchildren, Jarrett, Kal, Alyssa.

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The Make Someone Smile arrangement was filled with a variety of items including flowers, blooming plants, green plants and candy.



Melissa Maas CFD, Bank of Flowers, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, gets ready to put together "Smiles".



Renee Mousseau, den mother and troop leader for the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts that helped out during Make Someone Smile Week with Tech Sergeant Joe Glorso. They both have been distributing the mugs at the Aleda Lutz VA Hospital in Saginaw, Michigan, for many years.

# Make Someone Smile Week Delivers Over 30,000 Bouquets

Once again this year Michigan and Wisconsin Teleflorists joined in Make Someone Smile Week. Over 30,000 bouquets were delivered nationwide to hospitals, nursing homes, and veterans among others. Teleflora which has sponsored the program for 18 years donated the yellow smile mugs to florists who provided their time making the arrangements. Growers and wholesalers contributed the flowers. 🌸



Members of the Memorial Florist staff, Appleton, Wisconsin get ready to roll.



Ariel Ingram CF, June's Flowers, Mt Morris, Michigan, packs the delivery van. The Michigan unit did nearly 1,800 mugs.

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## AIFDSYMPOSIUM

# AIFD members ‘Discover’ Design Shows, Workshops and Business Sessions

BY PETE SAMEK, AIFD

Floral enthusiasts convened in our nation’s capital, Washington DC, for the annual American Institute of Floral Designers National Symposium. This year’s symposium was a multi-faceted experience offering educational information and design presentations on so many levels.

This was an event of many first time offerings and experiences with more breakout sessions than offered previously, involving not only floral design but informative business sessions as well to help us survive in today’s retail environment.

The symposium offered eight hands-on workshops from an A-list of creative designers, plus eight business sessions from some of the most successful people in the floral industry and finally, 10 “Inspire” sessions presented off the main stage where individuals could get up close and personal and learn from leaders in the industry. Additionally, the Partners Expo was filled with product demonstrations, dazzling displays and introduction of new products and services. I actually heard discussions from attendees about what to attend and how to fit it all in so as not to miss anything. It just makes you smile.

A very special event happened this year. The Future Farmers of America (FFA) was in attendance for the very first time. Five FFA chapters and their educators were awarded scholarships to attend symposium. They were able to experience hands-on classes especially designed for them, see the behind the scenes workrooms, attend main stage programs and the Inspiration Creative sessions.

You could see the amazement and disbelief in their faces while they absorbed unbelievable knowledge about flowers, floral artistry and the treasure trove of products we are accustomed to using on a daily basis. These students are a vital part of the future of floristry in every aspect from grower to supplier to retailer. In support of continuing education, the AIFD Foundation awarded several scholarships this year to young and up and coming horticulture students from across the nation. They also provided the opportunity to participate in the hands-on workshop given by international designer Alex Choi AIFD.

Thousands of dollars for FFA scholarships was raised at a special book sale. Claire Won Kang AIFD, donated several cases of her book: *Woness, The Art of Floral Collage*, a volume filled with gorgeous pictures of floral installations, collage and commentary on her floral interpretations. In exchange for a donation of \$150 or more to the FFA scholarship fund,



Alex Choi AIFD, current InterfloraWorld Champion, on the main stage.

each donor was given a copy of the book with Claire on hand to personally autograph each one.

Another first time was the America’s Cup competition to choose the floral artist representing the United States at the World Cup 2019. There were ten fantastic designers from all over the United States. The excitement and energy was incredible as they created their theme design plus two surprise package designs.

Happy to report that Michigan’s own Laura Daluga AIFD and Derek Woodruff AIFD, CF, PFCI made it to the final four. It was so exciting! Current reigning World Cup winner, Alex Choi from South Korea presented an inspirational program on the main stage and immediately following the stage was set for the America’s Cup runoff.

The crowd was engaged and cheered on the four competitors while commentators Ann Jordan AIFD and Ian Prosser AIFD hosted the event contributing information about each designer and the World Cup competition. When the scores were tallied and as emotions ran high, Katharina Stuart AIFD from Lee’s Florist and Nursery, Berkeley, California, was the winner. Congratulations go out to Katharina and best of luck at the World Cup. The room exploded with excitement and congratulations all around with American flags proudly



One of the bouquets presented by Holly Heider Chapple.

## AIFDSYMPOSIUM

A design by Agna Maesten, AIFD, EMC.



waved and displayed. All ten designers did an amazing job and should be very proud of their work.

Mark your calendars for the first week of March 2019 and the most spectacular artistic floral event ever, the FTD Interflora World Cup Competition. It will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society's (PHS) annual Philadelphia Flower Show. This competition has not been held in the United States for 33 years. If you are not aware it is the Olympics of floral artistry and design. We are expecting up to 30 countries to compete for the coveted cup so come out and cheer on the designers.

The next event was the incredible wedding program presented by Holly Heider Chapple. What an amazing runway program featuring a bridal bouquets retrospective of her career. Holly was able to contact her brides of years past and use them as models for the show. That was a huge feat in itself. Fabulous and a refreshing new/old look, organic garden style with a shot of texture and unique flower varieties to set today's wedding trends.

The farm to table movement is very obvious in her bouquets and she actually grows many of the flowers utilized in the wedding décor. Holly offers an amazing venue, an old rustic barn on her farm for events and classes, located in Virginia and not far from Washington DC.

The stage was set with a foliage wall topped with garden flowers in colors of pink, peach and cream. The runway featured a long lavish tablescape of floral accessories and fine line. The stage was accented by two spectacular floral trees created by Michigan floral artist James Lutke. Holly received a standing ovation and welcomed with open arms as an expert in the wedding industry.

The main stage showcased programs such as "Inspired to Succeed" by Hitomi Gilliam AIFD and Tomas de Bruyne with a collaboration of EMC designers; Vonda La Fever AIFD presenting "The Flower Shop of the Future"; an international presentation "Less is More" by Alex Choi. The knowledgeable and talented Talmage McLaurin AIFD created "Trend Archetypes, Unconscious Motivations". Taking the stage with the inspirational and lively program "Discovering the Art of Leadership" was Jodi McLeod AIFD and the finale program by Derrick Vasquez AIFD "A Passion for Parties" was over the top. It was impossible to not be inspired by these tremendous presentations.

Additional first time happenings included the first mother/daughter Fellows of AIFD. Susan Ayala AIFD, Riverside, California was recognized a Fellow of AIFD. She is the daughter



Vonda LaFever AIFD, PFCI, looked at the flower shop of the future.

of the influential industry icon Rocky Politz AIFD, who received her Fellow in 1993. The designation is given to long time dedicated members of AIFD who have given extraordinary service, upheld the goals of the institute and the activities of AIFD. Truly a memorable moment for all in the floral industry as these two individuals have touched so many.

The Special Recognition award honored *Flowers&* magazine which closed this year. A staple resource in the retail flower shop for many years, providing educational articles on every topic from everyday and holiday floral designs, wedding trends and bouquets to industry information and resources to profitable business practices, *Flowers&* will be greatly missed by many. Congratulations to Rocky Politz AIFD, Rich Salvaggio AIFD and the hard working editor/photographer Bruce Wright for an amazing job all these years.

A floral event this size and scale is a monumental task and it takes many to ensure a successful production. Congratulations goes out to Suzie Kostick AIFD, CF, and John Kittinger AIFD for taking the reins and guiding their committees and volunteers throughout the past two years of planning and organizing with the support of AIFD and the AIFD Foundation. And a special thank you to all the AIFD Partners who support such an amazing event each year.

As you read this article and have ever had the desire or goal to challenge yourself as a designer or you need a resource to get involved or network with individuals that talk the same talk as you or you are looking for new resources for flowers and supplies or you need a shot of creative inspiration, I recommend attending the AIFD symposium. You will meet and gain new friends and experience something like no other from talented individuals in the floral industry. Everything is there for the taking, absorb as much as you can, get involved, achieve your goals and be a First Timer that I can add to the list. ✿

# Michigan Floral Association... See what we can do for you!

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# How to Hit Refresh for Spring

BY HOLLY HAVEMAN, DESIGN MANAGER, KENNEDY'S FLOWERS AND GIFTS, GRAND RAPIDS, MI

**C**hange excites people, and there is nothing more exciting than switching over to the spring season. As soon as January hits, and the Christmas holidays are in the rearview mirror, it is time to bring out the color, add a splash of life, and of course, start to incorporate everyone's favorite spring flower: tulips.

In your store, embrace the spring holidays as a chance to add some pizzazz to the doldrums of winter, and think about how you can spice things up for your customers as well. From Valentine's to Mother's Day, there is a way to go beyond the norm, and intrigue your customers.

The first major holiday of the spring season is Valentine's Day, and boy what a biggie it is. We have learned that simple things like "skinnying down" our website, mass-producing in advance, and having a quality control station make this holiday go by with minimal gray hairs.

Do something unique to set your store apart by adding a "free arrangement" in March when purchasing a Valentine's Day arrangement of a certain value. At our store, we called this promotion "To the Moon and Back" and used it to encourage people to buy from us rather than competitors. We utilize inexpensive yet attractive flowers and containers as the free arrangement, so it doesn't break the bank. It was a wonderful way to invite customers back into our store during March, which can sometimes be a slower month.

However, March being slower may be a thing of the past with International Women's Day (March 8) coming on the scene. Take note that this holiday has huge potential in the floral market. In Eastern Europe it is bigger than Valentine's Day, with women receiving flowers from not only their partner, but also from friends, family, neighbors and more.

In our store, we have turned it into something really special, by creating \$10 arrangements and promoting them as a "gift that keeps on giving". Anyone who received one of the Women's Day vases was invited to come back into the store for free floral refills throughout the month of March. This creates a positive buzz amongst customers, and spreads the joyful power of flowers, all while keeping us top of mind.

After Women's Day, Easter arrives, and tulips and Easter lilies become your best friends. Ten dollar tulip bunches practically sell themselves, and is another way to get customers in the door, where they can see your spring merchandise displays.

Creating vibrant and playful vignettes of bunnies, ducks and pretty pastel color palette is soothing to the eye.

If you find yourself with extra Easter lilies at the end of the season, use them as cut flowers, and if you happen to have funeral work, encourage their inclusion in sympathy pieces. Share with the customer that they can plant the remainder of the plant in their gardens and enjoy their blooms again in the fall in remembrance of their dearly departed.

Finding unique ways to use up materials that haven't sold during a particular holiday allows your creativity and your business savvy sides to meet in the middle, and these are oftentimes the deals that customers will remember you for.

Another spring holiday that has huge potential is Administrative Professionals Day. Here, your creative marketing and salesmanship can really pay off. It is important to reach out to remind customers this day is coming up. Actually taking time to call companies you do business with, or reaching out and introducing your business to local companies, can be a more personal way to snag some floral or gift orders for the holiday.

Be prepared with several arrangements, plants, or gift items at a variety of price points, and, of course, have your cooler heavily stocked the day of and the day after for people who forgot to plan ahead and need to come in for a grab and go item.

Some fun gift ideas are multi-purpose items like arrangements in coffee mugs, or simple gerbera daisies in place of the straw in a thermal drinking cup. However, don't sell yourself short on this holiday. We have found that our average order was actually above the \$55 mark.

Now, the mother of all spring holidays is undoubtedly Mother's Day. This holiday might feel like a marathon week for florists, but again, working ahead is key to success. We follow a similar format to Valentine's Day in terms of skinnying the website and mass-producing ahead of time to be able to better fill the orders that roll on in.

It's always great to add a personal touch to your marketing approach, and sharing stories from mothers who work at your store can be a warm, fuzzy way to connect with potential customers on social media platforms.

Aside from these spring holidays, we have actually created a few holiday events of our own that fall in the spring season of each year. One event we celebrate is the anniversary

## SPRINGFEATURE



of our store, and another is the birthday of our owner. Both events are excellent opportunities to have a bit of a party atmosphere in the store, and to offer discounts and incentives to promote purchases.

When customers are having a good time, sales go up, so any excuse to celebrate is a good one. As with other holidays, we promote the events via email, social media and indoor/outdoor signage.

Checking inventory levels ahead of time, designating design spaces, hiring extra help, having a quality control station, creating recipe sheets, and reaching out to customers via email, reminder cards, phone calls, and social media posts are all great ways to let people know the fun offers you have going on in your store. The spring season is a time when things come back to life. Let your store be a source of fun, and delight your customers to encourage them to continually choose you in the future. ✿

## Five Tips for Successful Spring Holiday Sales

### 1 First things first, preparation is paramount to success.

Looking at historical orders helps plan for staffing and inventory requirements. Pre-selected designs and staff selling sheets allows to easily access floral recipes and pre-book some products.

Also, at the beginning of each school year, check in with local schools to get dates on dances. Oftentimes they fall right around major holidays like Valentine's or Mother's Day, and you need to plan accordingly by reserving free lance designers ahead of time to help out. Two weeks before major holidays, typically have "mass production" areas planned out; one week out from holidays start to stage vases and green, and then a few days before the holidays start to mass produce and store arrangements. The more you can do ahead of time, the easier life will be when the rush sets in. We have found that if we can always design at least two days ahead, we won't have to stay until the wee hours of the morning when the big days are upon us.

### 2 Less is often more

Before big holidays like Valentine's Day and Mother's Day, we often "skinny" down the arrangement options offered online. We pick a handful of favorite designs to represent the holiday, and then are able to "mass produce" them ahead of time so that we can grab them, freshen them, and send them out on delivery. When we are preparing in advance, we often separate and categorize orders by "Massing" or "Fussy" lists, and this allows the design manager to easily assign arrangements or pull from pre-made designs.

### 3 Quality Control prevents complaints down the line.

Before massive holidays like Valentine's Day and Mother's Day, and also in conjunction with school dances, set up a "checking station". When orders are filled, they are put on a table "to be checked" where a designated person, often the design manager, will read the order, look over the

arrangement, then give it the OK and move it to another table marked "checked". The delivery team then grabs arrangements from the "checked" table, and stages them in the delivery area. You can also do something similar with corsages and boutonnieres, lining up finished dance flowers on top of their order for a final quality check before the orders are boxed and stored. This system can be responsible for achieving minimal complaints after holidays have come and gone.

### 4 Holiday reminder cards and calls are appreciated by customers, and are an easy way to get repeat business.

If you aren't sending out reminder cards to customers who have ordered before, chances are you are missing out on a huge opportunity. Set up your computer system to flag birthday, anniversary, and holiday orders, then run a simple report, and target these customers for repeat business. You would not believe how often a phone conversation starts out with, "I just received this reminder postcard in the mail..." Sending out this reminder at the beginning of the month helps customers to place an order that they might not have remembered until it was too late. Also, placing personal calls to businesses around Administrative Professionals Day has proven to be quite popular. We usually assign one office sales member a list of 20+ businesses, and let them call and remind the office that holiday is coming up. Again, customers are grateful for the reminder, and we get dozens upon dozens of orders.

### 5 Create a "Bounce Back" product that encourages customers or recipients of flowers to come back and visit your shop.

The "bounce back" idea started as a way to give gifts that keep on giving. Oftentimes when we celebrate something in our store, customers who spend a certain amount may earn a gift certificate to come back at a later date and get a deal on a different arrangement, or perhaps even something for free.

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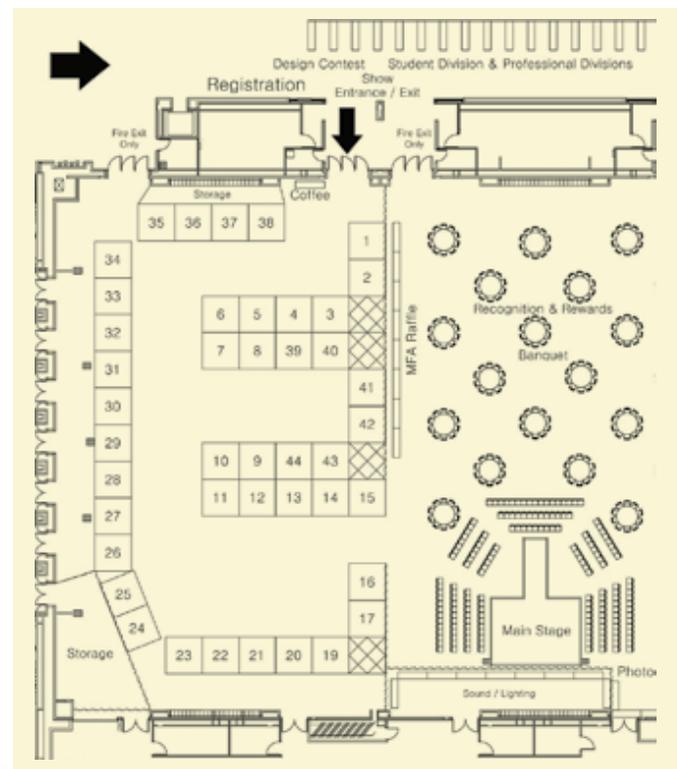
## 2018 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo Facts

- ✿ Total 2018 Registration: 420
- ✿ 298 buyers/designers/employees
- ✿ 90 representatives from 29 exhibiting companies
- ✿ 32 students from six different schools

**EXHIBITORS:** Reserve space now for the 2019 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo

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## NOTHING RHYMES WITH ORANGE

# A Guide to Floral Competitions

BY DEREK WOODRUFF AIFD, CF PFCI THE FLORAL UNDERGROUND, TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN



**A**s a student involved in the Michigan Floral Association, I competed in my first floral contest at the age of 16 at the MFA annual convention. I found the experience to be invigorating, exciting, and nerve-wracking all at the same time. I prepared my design at school and brought it to the competition per the instructions, made some final finishing touches and edits

on site, and left the room in time for judging to begin.

Later that evening, to my surprise, I walked back into the room to find a blue First Place ribbon next to my entry. I was overwhelmed with excitement and the addiction to competition began. Now, at 33 years old, I have competed in many, many competitions and am still at it. I have learned so much about the process of designing, judging, winning, and losing and I would like to share this information with you. Here is my comprehensive guide for preparing for floral design competitions.

### 1. KNOW THE RULES

In every competition, there is a specific set of rules and they definitely vary from one competition to the next. It is very important to pay close attention to each and every rule. If the rules state that you can only bring a few specific tools, do not bring your entire toolbox. If the rules state that your design can only be up to a certain size, be sure to stay within the boundaries. This all seems very obvious, but if you aren't paying close attention and you break even a seemingly small rule, it could mean serious point deductions or even disqualification.

### 2. P & E

The Principles and Elements of Floral Design usually make up most of the scoring criteria in competitions. It is important that you not only know them, but that you can execute each and every one of them within any competition piece, as each category is worth points. If you are lacking a strong line or a focal point for instance, you will score very little points in these specific categories, and that can affect your entire overall score. When your fellow competitors are of a high caliber, every point counts and point deduction is a fast way to lose your position on the leader board.

### 3. STUDY THE SCORE SHEET

Speaking of scoring, most competitions will have a sheet that the judges use to score the pieces. To do your best in a contest, you should know this score sheet like the back of your hand before competing. These guidelines will tell you just how important every category is and how many points it is worth. These scoring categories and their point values should be on your mind the duration of the competition.

### 4. LEARN ALL YOU CAN ABOUT THE JUDGES

Sure, judging is supposed to be unbiased, but every designer has his or her own opinion on what constitutes a strong line or dominant focal area. Some like the natural look of guard petals on roses, and others don't. Some love the use of color, and some

prefer things simple. These are all personal preferences that can influence judging based on the judge's background in scoring and in floral design. Befriend the judges on social media and stalk their photos. What is it that you see consistently on their pages? What particular things do they like? Store this information in the back of your mind and remember it when making choices in your competition pieces.

### 5. FOCUS ON WHAT NEEDS WORK

No one is perfect, or is ever done growing for that matter. I have my own challenges in floral design. For instance, there are techniques that I am really good at and others that I should work on more frequently. An individual is not going to win every competition, and you should take advantage of a losing situation. Look at your score sheets from previous competitions. What went wrong? Where were your scores the weakest? I learn more in a competition when I don't win than when I do. I always focus on what I need to work on so that when I step up to the plate again, I am in a better situation to win.

### 6. TIME MANAGEMENT

Every competition will have its own timeline. I have been in competitions with as little as three minutes of design time ('The Arrangement' Season 1, Episode 1, available on iTunes). I have also been in competitions with a time clock set to two hours. It is important to manage your time appropriately. If you have seemingly unlimited amounts of time, it means the judges will be looking for detail. They want to see how you spent that two hours, and what you did that was smart, inventive, and outside the box within that long stretch of design time. If you have very little time, perhaps 20 or 30 minutes, be careful about your choices. If you are rushing to cover floral foam in the last few minutes, your mechanics may appear messy. Be sure to know your limits and strengths based on how much time you have to complete the task.

### 7. EDITING

Speaking of time management, make sure that the choices you make leave time for editing. This is an important process in floral design competition as it allows you to take a moment to step back and put yourself in the judges' shoes. Look for neatness, principles and elements, and clean mechanics. These last few minutes of the competition could be the most important as you can take the time to make edits to your pieces that could bring your scoring from a three to a five. Every point counts!

### 8. RELAX, DO YOUR BEST, AND HAVE FUN.

Remember that competing is supposed to be about learning, growing, pushing yourself, and just having fun floral designing. Yes, it can be stressful, but it is no different than that time you forgot to make the extra bridesmaid's bouquet and had to make it work on site at the last minute. Life is a competition and we choose to design in it every day. Take a deep breath, focus on all of the above, and have a great time making something awesome! ✨

---

*Derek Woodruff is the owner of the Floral Underground in Traverse City, Michigan and is noted for his cutting edge floral designs.*

## PROMFEATURE

# Making Prom Profitable

BY DOUG BATES AIFD, CF, FLOWERS BY VOGT'S, STURGIS, MICHIGAN

**P**rom! We LOVE it at our store. It's probably my favorite non-traditional holiday because, with a little guidance, it's such an easy sell to a younger customer base.

One of the complaints I hear from other florists is that prom isn't profitable because it's so time consuming. I challenge that idea. Last year, we implemented a new sales technique that streamlined the order-taking process and it was a huge time-saver, but more on that later.

I believe prom is profitable when you plan correctly, work efficiently, and charge appropriately. Let me share how we promote, merchandise and sell.

First, we have to promote; we have to create buzz for our store. So social media - Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest - is a must. Start sharing and making posts just after Valentine's Day. Remember, effective posts offer information and value for our customers, such as popular dress colors, hot spots for dinner, who's hosting the after prom, links to other prom services like tuxedo or limo rental. You get the idea...at this point you're not trying to "sell" your product, you're positioning yourself as the expert in your area.

This is also the time to revisit hard goods - ribbons, cold glue, bracelets, decorative wire, rhinestones, chains, butterflies, and the like, and place orders for any supplies you're lacking. In our store, we separate ribbon by color into

clear plastic totes shoe box size or smaller. At prom time, we store these on an upright utility cart from U-line. It has storage cubbies on each shelf. Proper storage and labeling helps us know at-a-glance if we're low on necessary supplies.

When it comes to display, we want to wow our customers without overwhelming. Think elegant tables with luxe linens and reflective surfaces. Carve out an area in your store that you can devote to prom and make it easy to find. We make our area front and center, because we know that kids (some who have never placed a floral order before) will be stopping in. Signage is a must, as most prom goers are a little shy to ask questions at first. So we found that removing every barrier by placing helpful signage made it easy for them to understand how to order.

Now, about that order taking. We created a form that the kids fill out themselves. Our forms are color coded by school, and we have all of the pertinent information preprinted on them (school, date, prom theme, etc). The kiddos fill out their contact information, who they're going with, etc. They choose the bracelet they want (they're numbered and priced) and the #9 sheer that is closest to the dress color.

From there, the form instructs them to select two to four #3 ribbons to complement the dress color. We've also created numbered swatches of the available #3 ribbon, organized by color family. So, it's super easy to simply put the coordinating ribbon numbers on the form. We are available to offer



suggestions for color combinations, but we're mostly out of the mix. Talk about a time-saver!!

Once they've completed their form, they bring it to the counter and one of the staff reviews it to be sure all information has been filled in and we ring up the order. At the register, we have coded sheets detailing costs of bracelets, rhinestone picks, feather stems, etc., just in case there's any question. All necessary items are pulled at the time of the order and placed into a corsage box with the order form.

We've marked out templates for ribbon length, so even if a sales clerk isn't



## PROMFEATURE



comfortable making a bow on the spot, they can cut the necessary lengths and put them in the corsage box. Then, when designers have a few extra minutes, corsage bases can be assembled, all ahead of time. Boutonnieres are much the same.

Most of our customers are familiar with our unique work and simply ask us to make something creative that complements the corsage. The vast majority of our bouts are made on an aluminum wire base that can be preassembled, and fresh flowers glued

on later. Again, this is all pulled and placed into one corsage box. Boxes are then organized onto a shelf in the workroom by the date needed.

We've found that most prom kids have zero preference when it comes to the variety of flower used. They just want the colors to match. Of course, there is always an exception, and we certainly accommodate those, but if we've positioned ourselves as the expert and offer our professional suggestion, generally they agree with it.

We keep a master sheet of flowers needed for each weekend, and update it as orders come in. To show that flowers have been accounted for on each order, we will highlight the flower selection or place a small sticker in the corner of the order form. By planning ahead this way, everything is in place before it gets crazy the week of prom. We simply have to glue flowers into place.

Let's touch on pricing for just a minute. We've established a base price for corsages. I am not going to tell you what it is, but I can tell you how I came up with it. All of this prepping, planning, and preparing takes time. And time is money especially in a flower shop.

So I account for the time to take an order, prep an order, make an order and add to it the cost of a standard bracelet with standard flowers and standard bling. Anything on top of this is an up charge and must be added. Otherwise, we shortchange ourselves. Don't shortchange yourself, and don't apologize for charging appropriately. Just because we love what we do doesn't mean we should do it for free.

My hope in sharing all of this information is that you will treat prom as another floral holiday, which takes planning, preparation and working efficiently, but yields plenty of profit. 🌸



### The Michigan Floral Foundation will honor **Alice Waterous** AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI Wednesday, October 10, 2018

At the Hall of Fame Dinner • Goei Center, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Alice Waterous is a person of many talents: retail shop owner, event designer, floral wholesaler staff designer, freelance and program designer. As a member of AIFD and PFCI and a Certified Florist, she believes education is an ongoing process. During her 47 years in the industry, she has been a main stage presenter for AIFD National Symposium, president of North Central Regional Chapter of AIFD, on the AIFD membership committee and president of the Michigan Floral Association in addition to serving on several MFA committees. She is also on the Board of the Michigan Floral Foundation. Her specialty design and consultant company, Alice Waterous Floral Consultant LLC/Alice's Christmas Elves serves commercial, municipal and private clients. Her design work has appeared in *The Professional Florist*, *Flora*, *The Canadian Florist* and *Grand Rapids* magazine. Freelance work has taken her throughout the country to work on large events and to numerous wholesalers to teach and present open house design programs. Enthusiastic about the industry, she enjoys networking with fellow florists and is dedicated to encouraging the use of floral products as part of everyone's lifestyle.

The Michigan Floral Foundation supports the industry through various educational opportunities and community enrichment activities. It provides financial aid to those seeking to become a Certified Florist. Contributions are tax deductible. Donations can be made in honor of a birthday or anniversary or in memory of a loved one. To donate contact the MFA office (517) 575-0110 or visit [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org) and click on the MFF in the menu bar.

Tickets for this special evening are available for \$100 each. Please make check payable and mail to: Michigan Floral Foundation, PO Box 67, Haslett, MI 48840

Overnight rooms available at JW Marriott, 235 Louis St NW, Grand Rapids, MI, at the special rate of \$199 by calling (877) 901-6632. Reserve prior to 9/14/18 to ensure this rate.

Purchase tickets and/or reserve an overnight room online at: <http://www.michiganfloral.org/alice-waterous-aifd-cf-pfci-hall-of-fame-dinner>.



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# Floriculture Expo Features Education, Awards, Product

BY BARBARA GILBERT, EDITOR

Once again floriculture professionals flocked to Chicago for the International Floriculture Expo held at the McCormick Place exhibition center. The event featured educational sessions, product displays, and the opportunity to network with fellow industry members. The expo will move to Miami next year, June 18-20.

After the first day's education sessions guests gathered for the IFE toast to the industry, and the 9th annual flower naming ceremony which honored Bradley Gaines of United Supermarkets for his 20 plus years of service. "Bradley", a yellow flower with a golden center was bred and grown by Ball.

This year's merchandising award of excellence went to Cindy Fitzgerald and Michelle Beeson of Hy-Vee Store #2 in Omaha, Nebraska, for their display "Valentine's Day: Our Love is Written in the Stars". The event was hosted by *Super Floral* magazine and Syndicate Sales.

One of the highlights of the meeting is the Iron Designer Competition which pitted eight floral artists from across the world against each other in a 20 minute surprise package contest. This year's winner was Adam Havrilla of Artistic Blooms in Chicago who won for the second time, having taken the title in 2016. Jose Morales, designer at Continental

Flowers, received the crowd choice award.

The theme, "Discover more...outside the box" honored Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, who was famous for her flowered hats, by using a hat and hat box in the design

A flower field chat presented by J. Keith White AIFD, introduced the audience to the new American Floral Trends Forecast for 2018-2019 compiled by *Florists' Review's* panel of consultants. He showed how to use the trends in event and holiday work.

Among the education sessions was a presentation by Jackie Lacey AIFD, PFCI, who took his audience through the latest figures on consumer purchasing including demographic profiles, average purchase amounts, and preferred colors. The data was taken from the American Floral Endowment/SAF research study which was last compiled in 2005. The year-long study funded by the Floral Marketing Research Fund surveyed over 43,000 participants. ✿



Visiting with retiring Hiawatha Evergreens sales manager Mark Thompson (second from right) are Michigan Floral Association's Amy Potter Crittenden; Cindy Ching AIFD, CF, MFA executive assistant, and Rod Crittenden, MFA executive vice president.



From left, Bruce Wright, freelance journalist; Alexandra Farms' Joey Azout, and flower maven J Schwanke AIFD, PFCI, pose for the camera.



Design contest winner Adam Havrilla.

*Pictures courtesy of Bruce Wright, freelance journalist, www.bruce-writes.com.*



Floral product in all varieties and colors were on display at the expo.

DESIGN TIP

# When life gives you lemons...

BY TONJA VANDERVEEN, AIFD, CF, DESIGNING DREAMS FLORAL AND TUXEDOS, GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
2018 MFA ACADEMY WINNER



thinking of how I could make it darker and not take away the sparkle. Then it came to me. I flipped the ribbon over and there was navy color with a little sparkle. I made the bow from the raw side of the ribbon and it worked. The customer came in and was happy.

So out of desperation, I realized that a lot of the ribbons we work with are quite pretty on the raw side. Next time you need to figure something out look at the back or raw side and the color you need may be right there. Yes, making sure that you have enough supplies ordered is easier, However, we are all human and can miscalculate. Just make sure you never run out of chocolate... that makes all the difference! 🌸

**H**ave you ever found yourself in this situation? Prom time, 1:00 a.m., and you've run out of navy sparkle ribbon.

Obviously, all the wholesalers were closed, and I wanted to get everything done so I did not have to deal with it in

the morning. But, I definitely needed chocolate before I tried to make it work. Now onto the dilemma. I looked high and low for navy sparkle ribbon. What to do, what to do... I grabbed the sparkle royal blue ribbon, that I had used 100s of times before, holding it, staring at it,



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## CONGRATULATIONS

# Derek Woodruff Wins Bobbi Cup for the Third Time

BY ALICE WATEROUS AIFD, CF, PFCI, GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN

**D**erek Woodruff AIFD, CF, PFCI, Traverse City, Michigan, became a three time winner of the Bobbi Cup at this year's competition. He had previously won in 2012 and 2014. He received a decorator art glass vase and \$500 from the North Central AIFD chapter and a metal sign (etched with Bobbi's saying "Good things are happening") donated by Bobbi Ecker Blatchford's family.

First runner up was John Windisch AIFD, Hinckley, Illinois, who received a smaller "Good things are happening" sign. In addition Polly Klein AIFD, Libertyville, IL; Lisa Belisle AIFD, ICPF, Madison WI; Debbie Strand AIFD, Cary, IL, and Laura Daluga AIFD, Ann Arbor, MI, participated this year.

Other winners have been: Carolyn Minutillo AIFD, EMC, 2013, Sandy Schroeck AIFD, PFCI, 2015, Toni Piccolo CFD, 2016, and Stacy Carlton AIFD, 2017.

Debuting as the new AIFD North Central Regional Chapter president, Laurel Hollopeter AIFD, Victor, Iowa, spearheaded the seventh annual competition held at Kennicott Bros Wholesale, Chicago.



The competition began in 2012 as the brainchild of North Central chapter member Loann Burke AAF, AIFD, PFCI, to honor Bobbi Ecker Blatchford AAF, AIFD, PFCI the chapter's most esteemed member and a legend in the floral industry. Bobbi loved a good contest, and believed this activity would bring greater attention to floral artistry. Until this year, the event was incorporated as a feature at the springtime Chicago Flower & Garden Show at Navy Pier.

This year, leadership of the chapter chose to try something new by changing the venue and time of year. Kennicott Bros. graciously agreed to host and the contest date was changed to July. Kennicott helped make this competition possible supplying fresh and hard goods since its beginning in

2012. Smithers Oasis has also given generous product support each year.

Competitors were chosen via a drawing held at the North Central regional meeting at AIFD National Symposium. Chapter member designers who cared to compete put their names in the "hat" for an opportunity to participate.

Over 40 floral professionals gathered to witness and cheer on the competitors as they were given 30 minutes to complete a signature design. Given an identical assortment of fresh product and a selection of three containers to choose from the six competitors were off and designing.

But wait...an additional "surprise". A ceramic head shaped planter, and a coil of



Commentator Alice Waterous



gold wire was brought out 10 minutes into the contest. They were given an additional five minutes extending their total to 35 minutes to complete both design challenges.

As time expired, the competitors were shooed from the area and the evaluators who had been sequestered entered to select the winner. Shopping before and after the program was made available by Kennicott's, who also furnished a light meal for attendees.

Many in the audience stayed to take pictures and witness the evaluation process, others enjoyed the chance to finish some shopping and converse with colleagues.

Many thanks for the success of the event go to Amanda Strassburg AIFD, Brent Leech AIFD, Carolyn Minutillo, Janet Gallagher AIFD, and Joyce Grattoni AIFD. Thanks again to Kennicott Bros. and Smithers Oasis.

Looking to 2019, who will step up to the challenge? 

## INDUSTRY INFO

### USDA to Publish 2018 Floriculture Crops Report

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will produce the Floriculture Crops Report after a two year hiatus. SAF initiated a strategic advocacy campaign to resume the publication of the report.

The floriculture industry considers the Floriculture Crops Report to be the benchmark in identifying market trends and projecting sales opportunities. The report shows trends in domestic production and helps show year-to-year direction. In addition, the report is used in determining government agricultural policy as well as providing data for academic studies.

It is the only source of annual data on annual bedding and garden plants, potted herbaceous perennials, potted flowering plants for indoor and patio use, foliage plants for indoor or patio use, cut flowers, cut cultivated greens, and propagative floriculture materials.

### New Guide Available for Flower Marketing Series

The new #FlowerMarketingMonday video series encourages all members of the floral industry to use the short flower-promoting videos as personalized marketing materials to promote their businesses. A new video is shared on the American Floral Endowment social media pages each Monday.

To ensure that everyone uses the videos to their fullest potential, there is a new guide: "How to Make the Most of #FlowerMarketingMonday." It shows step-by-step how to access, download, personalize and use each video in the series. For a free copy of the guide go to [www.endowment.org](http://www.endowment.org).

### Ardith Beveridge Retires from Institute of Floristry

After 58 years of service in the floral industry, 28 of which have been spent at the Koehler & Dramm Institute of Floristry in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Ardith Beveridge AAF, AIFD, CAFA, PFCI, has announced her retirement.

She has spent over half of her career in the floral industry dedicated to educating the next generation of designers. Internationally, she has served as a floral designer, consultant, and commentator, as well as a judge at floral design competitions.

She has contributed to countless industry publications and appeared on several television programs including HGTV. She designed for the office of the Minnesota governor, the Tournament of Roses Parade, presidential inaugurations, and White House Easter egg rolls. She was inducted into the South Dakota State Florists' Hall of Fame in 2003, followed by her induction into the Minnesota State Hall of Fame in 2010. She was honored with SAF's Tommy Bright Award in 2012.

### Michigan, Wisconsin AIFD Inductees

One industry member from Michigan and one industry member from Wisconsin were recognized at the 2018 AIFD Symposium.

Youngmi Hong AIFD, CF, Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan, was inducted into AIFD this year while Melissa Maas CFD, Bank of Flowers, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, will be inducted in 2019.

### Prom Promotion Generates 2.4 Million Impressions

A new social media campaign conducted by the Society of American Florists scored big with prom-goers, garnering 2.4 million impressions. Targeted to girls ages 15 to 18, the campaign featured a short video posted on Instagram to promote customized prom flowers and entice teen girls to take a quiz to discover their prom flower personality. The campaign drew 571,394 video views and inspired 24,424 teens to take the quiz.

Drawing traffic through paid promotions, the 26-second video invites viewers to find out their true prom personality, along with their ideal prom flower, by taking the quiz at [aboutflowers.com/promquiz](http://aboutflowers.com/promquiz). By answering questions such as their ideal way to get to the prom, favorite after-school activities, or which celebrity they'd want in their prom group, participants learned their closest prom type and received photo suggestions for ideal corsage arrangements, along with a link to find the nearest SAF member florist.

### International Floriculture Forum Set For November

The 9th edition of the International Floriculture Forum will take place at Expo Haarlemmermeer in Vijfhuizen, the Netherlands, on Tuesday, November 6. The exhibition draws international flower growers and buyers from all over the world. Visitors from over 125 countries attend this annual event.

Keynote speakers will share their view on trade, logistics and product innovation and look toward the future of the international floriculture industry. For more information contact [info@hpp.nl](mailto:info@hpp.nl).

### Corpse Flower Comes Back to Life Again

Alice the *Amorphophallus titanum* or titan arum bloomed again at the Chicago Botanic Garden. The flower, which last bloomed in 2015, was then repollinated. In order to hopefully minimize the "rotting flesh" smell, the flower was placed outdoors.

Alice grew larger this time, reaching a height of approximately 70 inches. In 2015 it was only 55 inches. This was attributed to a larger bulb which was able to store more food. The botanic garden has several corpse plants in its collection.

### Garrett Skupinski Wins Mid-America Cup

Garrett Skupinski, CF, Floral Today, St. Louis, Missouri, has won the 2018 Mid-America Cup design competition. He represented the State of Missouri. The contest was held at the Arkansas Florists Association convention in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Since 2006, the competition has showcased designers talents from all across the United States with one person representing their state. In the past, states that have been represented included: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and the countries of Mexico and Colombia.

## WUMFA

# Education is the Key to Success

BY LISA BELISLE AIFD, ICPF, WUMFA PRESIDENT



Summer WUMFA classes have just finished at three locations throughout Wisconsin: Green Bay, Milwaukee, and Madison. Not only did we have great attendance in all locations, each group was full of talented presenters and participants.

A big thank you to Jane Edwards AIFD, for bringing so many eager minds to the Milwaukee location and a shout out to Heather Rupp and Mike Hollenbeck AIFD, for assisting in both Milwaukee and Madison. We could not have made it a success without you.

Education and continuous growth are imperative to being a successful designer. Over the years I have always been eager for new knowledge and being challenged in various situations. Listening to educators and designers speak about how they maneuvered out of stressful situations has always been an invaluable source of information.

I also love to experiment with products from Smithers Oasis, Accent Décor, or Syndicate Sales as they have new products available that most of us have not properly “played” with yet or used in retail situations. You will see their product in sculptural pieces at art events.

In the class “Out of the Box Everyday Designs,” I introduced new ways to use midollino sticks, flat cane, and wire mesh. Almost all of us have access to these, but most of us are unsure about how they can be used to make something unique that will sell in a retail situation. Usually these efforts turn into “playtime.” However, playtime can also mean profit if you practice and increase your speed. With dedication, you will be designing unique pieces with ease and grace.

Customers...Like...New. If we are not introducing new ideas, designs, or flowers, how are we to increase sales? Did you know that the average customer spends twenty percent more on an

online floral purchase versus an in store purchase? Why do you think this is? Most of us don’t ask for a larger sale because we don’t believe a customer would buy a \$125 arrangement or like something structural.

I think it is time to ask ourselves if this belief is actual truth. Something to consider is putting a few arrangements online that push the boundaries of your “normal” offerings. I cannot guarantee that they will sell immediately; however, you are subliminally telling your customers that you have a wider variety of options. Next time they are looking for the perfect unique gift they will know who to call.

Keep in mind that the fall and winter holidays are quickly approaching and that your website should reflect your offerings. New WUMFA classes will be starting October 16 and I urge you to register early and secure your spot for the opportunity to make your cooler and website sparkle with holiday designs. ✿

## WUMFA Hosts First Annual Golf Outing

The first annual WUMFA golf outing was held at Morningstar Golf Club in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Golfers had a great day of networking with WUMFA members and friends. Team Teleflora won with a score of one under par. Teams Rojahn & Malaney and Karthaus & Sons tied for second and third place with a score of one over par. Eagle sponsor was Rojahn & Malaney Co. and birdie sponsor was Karthaus & Sons. ✿



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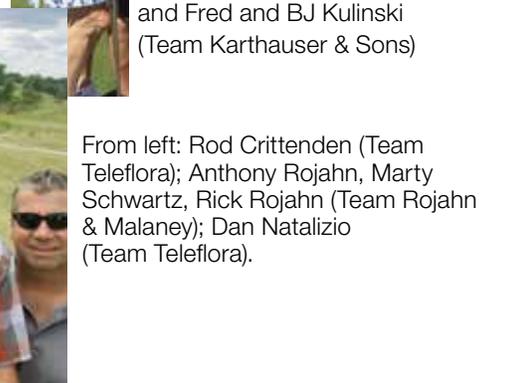
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From left: Susie and Gregg Wilke and Fred and BJ Kulinski (Team Karthaus & Sons)



From left: Rod Crittenden (Team Teleflora); Anthony Rojahn, Marty Schwartz, Rick Rojahn (Team Rojahn & Malaney); Dan Natalizio (Team Teleflora).

# Sustainable, What Does It Really Mean?

BY LISA BELISLE AIFD, ICPF,  
FLORA ELEMENTS, MADISON, WI

**S**ustainable. How many of you have heard this word over and over for the last few years? And what does it actually mean to florists?

Today we have so many hats to wear as business owners, so many rules to follow, and our cities are putting more restrictions upon business owners to ensure that we are being responsible.

When I asked Google about sustainable business practices, here is the response I received: The term “**sustainable** business practices” generally **means** giving consideration to the environmental, economic, and social impact of a company's business practices – both internally and externally – when making business decisions. Well, that is a lot of words that can be twisted, misrepresented, and tossed aside if you are in the wrong head space. It's time for us to really have conversations about being sustainable florists so we can understand the term with clarity.

We, as florists, are probably one of the biggest contributors to the rubbish pile so it is very important for us to understand sustainable business practices in a floral shop scenario. An industry that works with living and breathing material creates so much waste it's kind of ridiculous.

Can we find a way to reduce waste and make our industry more sustainable? Well, this is my mission. Over the course of the next year let's find ways to reuse, recycle or upcycle to love the environment and make some extra profit. I think we could all use some extra zeros attached to the bottom line.

Let's start with some of the more obvious items right off the bat. Boxes and paper galore. Whether you get deliveries or buy direct, boxes are always an issue. Did you know that most wholesalers will take their boxes back? Next time you receive a delivery, have previous boxes stacked and ready to go back with the driver.

If storage is an issue, look into the following options: a recycle only waste bin collection (now mandatory in some cities), or taking the waste to a collection site weekly or monthly to receive cash for your cardboard. I would highly recommend keeping all of the paper, foam, and plastic pillows that come with your boxes. Have a packing station near your wrapping area with a clean garbage can that your processors can keep stuffing wrap in. All of this can be used to pack boxes and keep items from shifting. This is especially useful for corporate events, work parties, and weddings.

Part of being a sustainable florist is being creative in the design department. For this round of design, take a box and trace a circle, about 12" in diameter, and then trace another circle in the middle, about 4" in diameter. Cut around the 12" diameter circle and then cut out the smaller circle inside it.

Once the circle is finished, adhere the silver tree fern using U-Glue dashes around the circumference. (Another idea is to use wool and just wrap it around the circle.) I then used banyan root and did a few wraps over the silver tree layer to

give the piece more texture. You may use three 18 gauge taped (to prevent sliding) wires. Pick three balanced insertion points (a triangle shape is a great idea). Afterwards put some Oasis® glue to ensure that the wire fits snug.

Fold the wires down to form a handle. After you have completed the handle, start using it as an armature and create a spiral hand-tie with flowers, colors, and textures to match. You will be surprised when the viewers of your work ask how you created something so beautiful out of a box you probably were going to throw into the recycle bin. ✿



**WUMFA EDUCATION**  
**Fall and Winter Holiday Themes!**

**Instructor: Lisa Belisle AIFD, ICPF**  
**Price: \$35.00 Member \$55.00 Non-Member**

Sometimes the Winter Holidays can get a little humdrum and you are grasping for ideas to make things new and interesting. Come for a night of stepping outside the box and let Lisa open your mind to a new world of creative ideas. Lisa has studied with floral artists from around the world and wants to share new concepts that you can have fun with. After you create an armature, you will have to decide how to adorn your hand-tie to follow through with color theory and truly emphasize the shape you chose. Let your imagination run wild. Bring a friend, some laughter, and we will provide the rest.

*Bring your own tools: knife, pruner, scissor, wire cutter, and needle nose or jewelry plier.*

**DATES AND LOCATIONS:**

**Wednesday, October 17:** Bill Doran Company  
1739 W. St. Paul Ave., Milwaukee, WI

**Thursday, October 18:** Bill Doran Company  
1255 Bellevue St., Green Bay, WI

**Tuesday, October 23:** Bill Doran Company  
4710 Pflaum Rd., Madison, WI

**Wednesday, October 24:** Chippewa Valley Technical College  
4000 Campus Rd., Eau Claire, WI

**Time : 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

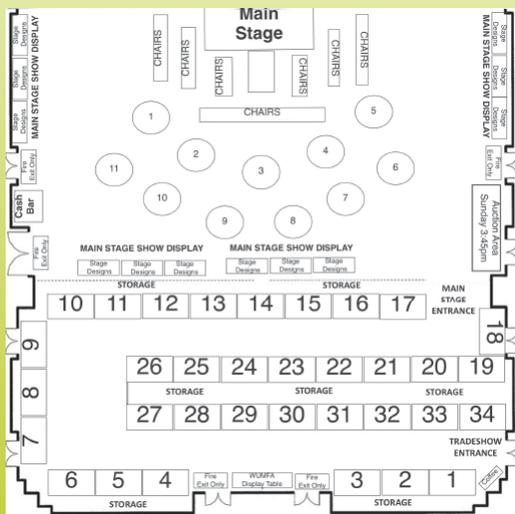
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**EXHIBITORS: Don't wait, sign up today!**

Support WUMFA's education efforts and reach potential customers at the Trade Show.  
For information contact Rod at (517) 253-7730 or email [rod@michiganfloral.org](mailto:rod@michiganfloral.org).

# WUMFA Participates at 2018 Wisconsin State Fair

Once again this year Wisconsin & Upper Michigan Florists Association members promoted flowers and plants at the annual Wisconsin State Fair.

A standing room only audience was on hand for the 2018 Grand Champion Floral Challenge won by Judith Moehr, Fox Brothers Piggly Wiggly, Hartland, Wisconsin. Jessica Hahn, Arbuckle Floral and Decorating, Plymouth, Wisconsin, was the first runner up with Diane Schulte CF, WMFM, Metcalfe's Floral Studio, Madison, Wisconsin, as second runner up.

Susan Wilke AAF, PFCI, and Leah Manthey, Parkway Floral, South Milwaukee, commented the program while Cary Johnson from Parkway acted as timekeeper and cheerleader.

Six WUMFA retail florists designed a booth at the fair. This year's participants were Parkway Floral, South Milwaukee; Snapdragon Floral, Elm Grove; Flowers By Jan, Milwaukee; Bank of Flowers, Menomonee Falls; Rose's Flower Shop, Wauwatosa and Fleurs, Cedarburg.

For more pictures and information visit the WUMFA group page on Facebook.



Adults and children made 750 Flowers on a Stick. Local wholesalers donated product and Smithers-Oasis donated the cold glue.



Floral challenge winner Judith Moehr.

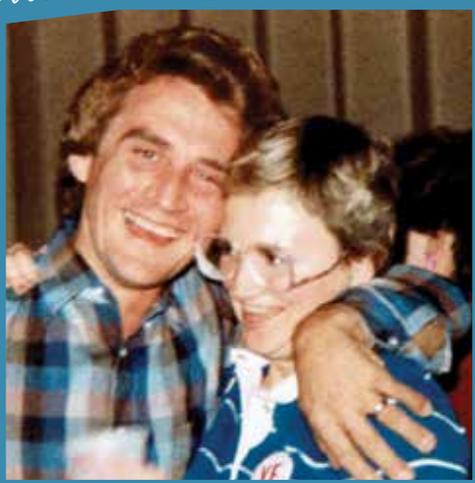


Karthausser and Sons, Germantown, Wisconsin, donated all the product for the stage as well as the WUMFA "Find A Florist" booth.



Flower cart at the state fair.

## Memories 1983



David Hein and Daria Skibba at the 1983 WUMFA Convention.

**Welcome New WUMFA Members**

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## INMEMORIAM

**Eunice Elizabeth Gehrke** of Mondovi, Wisconsin, has died at the age of 90. She graduated from American Floral Art School in Chicago and was a bridal designer at May's Floral in Eau Claire. For her involvement in the floral industry, she was inducted as an honorary member of Pi Alpha Xi, a horticultural honor society.

In 1962 she was employed at Robinson's Flowers in Mondovi, which the Gehrkes purchased in 1973. She owned Gehrke Floral and Greenhouses for 28 years until selling to her son, John. For 35 years she was well known as a registered fair judge for flowers and cultural arts at the county and state level.

She became the first woman president of the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Florists Association in 1991 and has been inducted into the WUMFA Hall of Fame.

She is survived by seven children, many grandchildren and great grandchildren, a sister and a brother.

## NEVILLE ON THE LEVEL

# HAPPY WHATEVER DAY, IT IS!

BY NEVILLE MACKAY, CAFA, PFCI, WFC, MY MOTHER'S BLOOMERS, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA



**T**here was a time, such a wonderful time really, when there were specific holidays: New Year, Easter, Mother's Day, etc., and the world was a much simpler place. Now, there's a bloody holiday for every day of the year and help us all if we don't know and recognize them when we're confronted by a customer.

I had a look at some of the "holidays" that are celebrated by one fool or another and they range from "Stuffed Mushroom Day" on February 4 (who wouldn't want to take a day off for that little gem?); "World Compliment Day" on March 1 (like that's gonna make me say something nice about my ex) or of course, an all time favorite on March 28 "Something on a Stick" day! I will say nothing about this day at all...you are welcome.

And aren't we all in a terrible rush now, too? I mean, we haven't even scraped the glitter off our arses and everyone's getting a heart on for Valentine's Day and then before the leftover chocolates get down our throats it's time to hop into Easter and dig out last year's plastic eggs.

And of course, in the middle of all this total chaos, we are tripping over brides and wannabe brides, setting up wedding shows and window displays, ordering flowers for Mother's Day (gotta get that 5% discount) and stocking up on bracelets and Tylenol in anticipation of the new crop of graduates.

Don't you just LOVE it when a couple comes in on Valentine's Day to discuss their wedding in two years? Hahaha! Look, my favorite was the couple who knocked on the door on Christmas Eve after we were closed. I doled out a drink for all, being the sap I am at times. I felt sorry for them, as I assumed they had been in a coma and hadn't gotten a present for the family, so I let them in.

Well, did they actually WANT something at the last minute? Noooooooo! They wanted to chitchat about flowers for Mother's Day because this is when they thought of it and we wouldn't be too busy to take the order. Needless to say, the lights did not go back on nor was an order taken.

We all have to do what we can to prepare for the pending Days of Doom, I mean holidays, and the more we can get done ahead of time, the easier things will be for all. At my store we try to get things together the first week of January (and I try to grow all my hair back too!) and that does make a bit of a difference.

Try this: Get your calendar and mark all the important dates coming up (my birthday is March 19) or better yet, get someone under the age of thirty to put it in their phone. You can, when it actually is a little calmer, get your ducks in a row and start being proactive for the new onslaught of holidays.

It's a great time to plan any advertising you may want to do, review last year's orders and plan on what you'll need this season. Think also of scheduling days off and vacations, as sometimes these can inadvertently conflict with a busy flower day.

Who hasn't run out of vases on Valentine's Day or flower food at Mother's Day or delivery boxes at Easter? Don't sit there all smug doing that "I'm so smart" wiggle with your shoulders at me. We've all missed something at one time or another. I have run out of all sorts of things during a holiday rush, includ-

ing patience, as well as all the things I listed before, and I am alive to tell you of it. Check your inventory and order the product you'll need to get, and even get someone to make a list of all the things needed, because you know there is always something we forgot! (like water tubes! Grrr!)

This is a great time to prepare window displays if you're so inclined. When we do windows, we try to make each so we can easily do a remake or tear down for the next occasion. Remember that if you are using a product in the window be sure to either have it for sale in the shop or be prepared to take it out of the window ten minutes after you spent three hours putting it in.

Well, good luck with the spring holidays, mark the special ones on the calendar (use the Firefighters calendar because you'll check it more often) and don't forget to be prepared...or well medicated." ✿

*On a side note, please send me your own favorite floral story for possible inclusion in my latest book venture.*

*Send it to:*

*info@mymothersbloomers.com.*



# Hearts and Flowers... the Perfect Combination

BY LISA VANDERMEER

LUDEMA'S FLORAL, GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
2018 MFA DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

**B**y the time my first Valentine's Day was done, I didn't want to see another red and pink rose vase ever again. That color combination was to be forever ruined, or so I thought. Over the years I've learned that the red and pink color combo doesn't need to be a reminder of a scary Valentine's Day past. With a few changes and specific design choices we can design an arrangement that evokes romance and sophistication. To create this lush and fragrant arrangement start with a gold heart mosaic vase. This container choice comes in several sizes allowing two different price points which will satisfy many budgets. Picking a variety of flowers with different textures adds visual interest. I love how the exotic protea looks next to ruffled red

Mikado spray roses and the deep Pink Floyd rose or how smooth variegated aspidistra looks next to small blossoms of pale pink hyacinth and delicate white ginestra. This is a look that will make anyone's special someone blush. ✿

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## 2018 Fall Regional Meeting Dates

Don't miss this chance to network and learn new ideas and techniques. Topics and presenters to be announced soon. Register online at [www.michiganfloral.org](http://www.michiganfloral.org) (Search date under Events Tab).

### Region 1 – Tuesday, September 25

**Location:** Nordlie Floral, A Kennicott Brothers Company, 25300 Guenther Road., Warren, MI 48091.  
 Cost: \$10 per person  
 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Registration  
 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Show/demonstration  
 8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Auction designs

### Region 2 – Thursday, September 27

**Location:** Arctic Blast, 501 Coliseum Dr., Chelsea, MI 48118.  
 Cost: \$10 per person  
 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Registration/Dinner on your own  
 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Show/demonstration  
 8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Auction designs

### Region 3 – Tuesday, October 23

**Location:** Rokay Floral, 1125 Hill Brady Road, Battle Creek, MI 49057.  
 Cost: \$10 per person  
 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Registration  
 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Show/demonstration  
 8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Auction designs

### Region 4 – Wednesday, October 3

**Location:** Ludema's Floral and Garden, 3408 Eastern SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508  
 Cost: \$10 per person.  
 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Registration  
 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Show/demonstration  
 8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Auction designs

### Region 5 – Wednesday, October 24

**Location:** DWF Flint, 5100 Exchange Dr., Flint MI 48507  
 Cost: \$25 per person  
 5:30 – 6:00 p.m. Registration  
 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. Dinner  
 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Show/demonstration  
 8:00 – 8:30 p.m. Auction designs

### Region 6 – Thursday, October 4

**Location:** BJ's Restaurant, 990 North Center Ave., Gaylord, MI 49734  
 Cost: \$10 per person  
 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Registration/Dinner on your own  
 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Show/demonstration  
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**MISSION STATEMENT**

*To provide education and professional partnerships to advance the industry and position our colleagues at the forefront of the floral industry.*

## CLASSIFIED ADS

### Floral Designer Wanted –

Experienced floral designer for established shop. Previous floral shop experience required. Able to manage customers, floral inventory, and POS computer systems (FTD Dove). Experience in all aspects of everyday and holiday floral design including wedding design. Motivated to learn, team player. Email resume and cover letter to [joe@thevg.com](mailto:joe@thevg.com).

### Experienced Floral Designer –

Well established flower shop in Mid Michigan area looking for creative, experienced and professional designer. Full time and part time openings available. Salary experience based with continued education benefits possible. Send resumes to: 586 Plantation Drive, Saginaw, Michigan 48638 or email: [jballien@gmail.com](mailto:jballien@gmail.com)

### Experienced Floral Designer –

PT/FT Floral Designer, Ferndale, MI. We are looking for an experienced floral designer that has a background in traditional, wedding, event, and modern floral design. This person must have a valid driver's license and reliable transportation to travel to off-site events when needed. This position does not offer health benefits but it may offer paid vacation, flex days and more! For more information please contact [Jerome@blumz.com](mailto:Jerome@blumz.com).

### For Sale –

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