

Volume V 2017

AIFD

**Symposium
Report**

**All Hands
on Deck for the
Spring Holidays**

**Profitable
Corsages**

**Tackling the
Spring Holidays
at a Small
Hometown
Florist**

**Simplifying
Your Social
Media**

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My Mother's Bloomers,
Halifax, Nova Scotia.

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LEADERSHIPREPORT

Certified Florist (CF)...Make 2018 The Year You Brand Yourself a Professional!

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



As consumers are offered more and more options for purchasing flowers, florists must differentiate themselves and brand themselves as a "Professional" in the floral industry.

Consumers want to spend their hard earned money as prudently as possible in today's economy. They do not want to buy inferior products and are therefore seeking the "best of the best" when it comes to making purchases. Consumers will be looking for your credentials or certification to help them justify spending money. Read on to learn more about the Certified Florist designation and how achieving it will benefit you and your business.

The Certified Florist Program (CF)

The Certified Florist (CF) program is the nationally endorsed certification by the National Alliance of Floral Associations. This program covers all aspects of professional floristry, much more than just design. Here is how it works and what is covered.

The program has been designed as an at-home or in-shop self-study program. "Steps to Certification" classes are offered if you need extra help preparing for the test but they are not required. Once your registration is processed you will receive the manual and study guide.

After you've read the manual, reviewed the study guide and feel you are ready to test, simply send in the exam registration

form with the appropriate examination date marked. A confirmation letter will be sent notifying that you have registered for the exam. The exam consists of two and a half 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. The design portion of the exam takes place at the MFA office in Haslett, Michigan. A two hour online exam consists of 30 product identifications and 100 multiple choice questions. When 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: Care and Handling, Product Identification, Customer Relations/Sales, Delivery, Marketing, Accounting, Gluing, Lighting, and Basic Floral Design. This last 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*. The study guide and evaluation forms also are included with the manual.

The cost for the CF manual and one round of testing is \$599.95 (including shipping and handling), a \$50 savings versus purchasing the manual and testing separately. The cost to purchase a CF manual only is \$399.95 (including shipping and handling).

I'm pleased to announce that at the summer WUMFA Board of Directors meeting it was decided to change Certified Florist (CF) programs and implement the Michigan self-study program that was founded 20 years ago in 1998. The cost for this program is approximately half the cost of the old program and will provide a more efficient way for florists in Wisconsin to become CF. Hands-on testing dates and locations in Wisconsin will be announced in the near future.

Call the association office today at (517) 575-0110 to start the process of becoming a Certified Florist! ✿



2017 Fall Regional Meeting Dates

Mark your calendars and plan to be with us at one or more of the fall MFA regional meetings.

Watch your email or check <http://www.michiganfloral.org/events-list/> for more information and details.

Region One

Tuesday, September 12, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Topic: Principles and Elements of Profitable Fall Designs

Location: Nordlie

25300 Guenther, Warren, MI

Shopping, food and refreshments 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

\$10 per person, call (517) 575-0110 to RSVP

Region Two

Thursday, September 28, 6:00 p.m.

Topic: Owner/Manager Business Discussions

Location: T.B.D.

Region Three

Wednesday, September 20, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Topic: Your Best 40 Bucks!

Hosted by: Teresa Cytlak

Location: Jac's Cekola's Pizza

7638 S. Westnedge, Portage MI

Food and drink on your own

Region Four

Monday, September 11, 6:00 p.m.

Topic: Design Tip Demos

Location: Nordlie, 4611 Ivanrest SW, Grandville, MI

Region Five

Wednesday, October 11, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Topic: Holiday Cash and Carry

Instructor: Kim Herbers

Location: The Cove in Uno's Pizzeria

Sheraton Four Points off of I 675

4960 Towne Centre Rd., Saginaw, MI

\$10 per person, food and drink on your own

Region Six

Wednesday, September 27, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Topic: Everyday Fall and Christmas

Instructor: Martin Van Til, AIFD

Location: BJ's Restaurant

990 North Center Avenue, Gaylord, MI

\$10 per person, food and drink on your own

Door prizes sponsored by FloraCraft




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Vintage 4-Color Assortment
5" Rosie Posie Vase
opening: 3 1/2" • case: 12

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AIFDSYMPOSIUM

X Marks the Spot: AIFD Symposium Report

BY ALICE WATEROUS, AIFD, CF, PFCI, FLORAL CONSULTANT, GRAND HAVEN, MI

Xtraordinary, Xciting and Xcellent describes AIFD “Symposium X”; now a beautiful memory for all who attended.

Xceptional designers from around the globe presented an Xquisite array of design programs and classes at the Washington State Convention Center in “The City of Flowers” Seattle. Seattle is truly a city of flowers, wonderful large hanging baskets throughout the downtown district and amazing flower vendors at Pike Place/ Farmers Market on the waterfront.

The availability of marvelous large, fresh bouquets at the market was stunning. Locally grown garden blooms ranging from amaranthus to cosmos, delphinium, sweet peas, lilies, sunflowers and more at unbelievably low prices. Ladies at these large booths work through the day putting together well-made bouquets. Must confess, I bought a large, vibrant bundle of sweet peas and ladies mantle for only \$5 to enjoy in our room during our stay.

Michigan Floral Association member Doug Bates, AIFD, CF, presented a hands-on workshop: “Xacting in Detail – Floral Jewelry from Decorative Wire”. His was one of four interactive sessions available under special registration. Each 90 minute session was



Xcel with Amatures – Ania Norwood, AIFD and Aniko Kovacs, AIFD

repeated three times over two days allowing attendees to take advantage of as many as possible.

Opening stage presentation was the team of Frank Blanchard and Erik Witcraft, both Washington State natives whose program was entitled: “Side X Side – The Northwest Experience”. Utilizing native materials embellished with flowers from around the globe, they shared the super green freshness of nature so prevalent in the Pacific Northwest. By the end of their program it felt as if we had taken a walk through a fabulous forest.

Ania Norwood, AIFD, and Aniko Kovacs AIFD, took the stage with: “Xcel With Armatures”. They took the audience on a journey inspired by nature with their Euro influenced creations. Their charming, fun style brought new ideas about structural techniques



Outside the Box, Artist in Residence – Arthur Williams, AIFD



AIFDSYMPOSIUM



Materialistic – Donald Yim, AIFD

that are functional and beautiful. Each of their designs whether large or not so large had real life practical applications.

“Are You Faux Real?” An ensemble of designers: Alex Torres, AIFD; Nicola Parker, AIFD, and Gail Terril, AIFD, Xplored the many advantages and design opportunities available through the use of permanent botanicals. Alex stressed the importance of solid, well weighted mechanics and physical balance, especially with large designs in commercial spaces. Whether a statement design, or a collection of smaller detailed designs, the many facets of appropriate selection and construction with today’s fabricated flower and plant materials was shown.

Arthur Williams, AIFD, known for his untraditional style and approach to floristry gave us: “Outside the Box – Artist in Residence”. As Creative in Residence at the Denver Art Museum, Arthur has gained a positive public reaction in regard to floral couture and interpretive/interactive design.

His clientele ranges from clients who seek out edgy and different to those who simply want well designed, pretty things. Hitomi Gilliam, AIFD, assisted Arthur with commentary as a parade of models strutted out in amazing floral costumes, hair adornments and makeup. They spoke of “how to” as Arthur actually disassembled one of the elaborate floral embellishments in one of the model’s hair. A program that made us think about how to employ some of Arthur’s design and marketing skills in our own regions.

Donald Yim, AIFD, gave us “Materialistic”, a collection of unique creations using common items in unusual ways. A precise, neat structure around the edge of a bowl was made of criss-crossed chopsticks, a collection of pottery vases supported another structure of branches, vines, midollino and fabricated yarn wrapped connectors that soared and seemed to float, carefully adorned with blossoms. A bright array of flowers seemed to spring from a slab of lumber with playful, swaying spikes of midollino creating motion.

This was a program that gave the audience many thoughts of what design ingredients they might be inspired to utilize when they got home. Donald also challenged those in attendance to “be a voice, not an echo”. Look for Donald’s many YouTube videos and visit the Smithers Oasis website for more inspiration and education from this bright young star.

Brooke Raulerson, AIFD, shared her Xpertise on wedding design with: “Xceptional Color and Texture Trends in Weddings”. Ranging from a petite “Pippa” style bouquet to the opposite end of the range with a huge bridal bouquet that trailed several feet behind the bride, Brooke’s program gave a complete picture of today’s trends.

In between the petite and huge was a bouquet with a wide cuff of appliquéd coffee beans, then a floral cuff designed on copper

flashing, on to embellished umbrellas and hats. She even covered the current popular trend so popular with brides, “Pink Blush” in loose form bouquets.

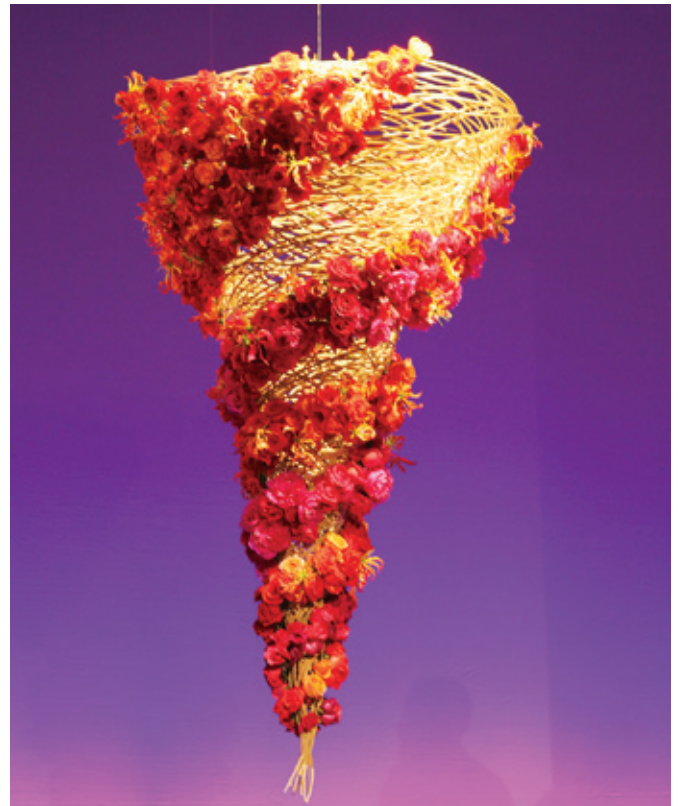
Brooke emphasized claiming value for the design work we do. She reiterated the importance of relationships with clients that allow creative expression and in the end a satisfied bridal customer and was quite frank in speaking of the need for a healthy bank account for the design professional. Bravo!

Former Michigander, current Washingtonian, Jon Robert Throne, AIFD, filled the main stage with lots of glitter and shine with his presentation “Merry Xmas”, from beautiful examples of today’s take on traditional rich deep red tones, to a funky horizontal tree for your really adventurous clients.

He moved on to the shine of mixed metals, then pearly tones Xpressed in both large and moderate sized designs suitable for a variety of spaces. His enormous focal point tree created with a tractor tire “stand” was affectionately referred to as “Ileen” thus named after some trials getting it to stand straight after moving to the stage. Jon kept the audience delighted with his witty repartee and thinking of how to use some of his ideas for their Yule season.

Yutaka Jimbo, AIFD, of Japan headlined a collective of designers from around the world who presented “X: The Meaning of Cultural Friendship Through AIFD”. Designers included: From Mexico, Mayra Agustina de la Garza Cueva, AIFD, and Juan Roberto Rivera Almaguer, AIFD. From South Korea, So Hyung Oh, AIFD. From Hong Kong, Solomon Leong, AIFD. From Kazakhstan, Ibragim Chupalaev. Interpreter: Chizuru Inoue, AIFD, of Japan.

Each made designs showcasing creative signatures representative of themselves and their cultures. The result was a program of



Xuberant! Minimalism – Natasha Lisitsa and Daniel Schultz



Xceptional Color and Texture Trends in Weddings – Brooke Raulerson, AIFD



Xuberant! Minimalism – Natasha Lisitsa and Daniel Schultz



Merry Xmas – Jon Robert Throne, AIFD

diversity, brilliant color, a bit of worldly Xperience and international humor. From all over the globe, the design team worked together in harmony and with respect. A wonderful example of how flowers bridge the gaps when language and geographical barriers might otherwise stand in the way.

"Xuberant Minimalism" – Natasha Lisitsa and Daniel Schultz, who are partners in life, collaborated to show the power of their combined skills. Natasha's Xpertise is color and texture with botanicals and Daniel's skill is architecture and mechanics.

First, they presented a tutorial on each of their large, architectural constructions and the story on how they have found a market for them. Focusing on large scale artwork, using a wide array of materials, they walked the audience through the process of design, construction, installation and the embellishment when fresh materials finish the designs. The textural and ethereal quality of their work often inspires viewers to touch, smell and walk around or through for a full Xperience.

Louisa Lam, AIFD, exemplified the floral artist as teacher/designer with her program: "Floral Art: Living With Flowers". Her philosophy towards flowers is centered on the fruitful influence they have on others and the relationships stimulated through the culture within the floral community.

One design was based on an interesting cast-off frame, which she designed in a suspended floral creation. In addition to her large, beautifully constructed designs, she featured several student helpers to whom she had given the assignment of making a design with a simple woven vessel. Each were given the same base to utilize in their design. Those students were then individually introduced carrying their interpretation on stage, placing them in a structure

for all to enjoy. Sharing the spotlight and making instruction a big part of her program, Louisa won huge appreciation from the audience.

The finale program was Phil Rulloda, AAF, AIFD, PFCI. Master of soulful Xpressions, Phil agreed to one last grand stage production on behalf of AIFD, its members and his huge fan base.

As always, he came with a message of how to harness your inner strength and artistic energy to create floral compositions with many layers of awareness. Stressing the need to always grow your skills, he reminded us to be cognizant of the materials and how they best form a harmonious design.

"When you work in the service of others, you will receive the ecstasy and exultation of the spirit, which is the ultimate goal of all goals." His words pretty much sum up this magical program that featured a giant botanically created "pod" out of which stepped his lovely daughter, Rosie.

Phil surrounded himself and gave credit to the many designers who created designs alongside him for this program, not the least being his wife, Kathy Hillen Rulloda, AAF, AIFD, PFCI and sister, Sharon Rulloda.



Floral Art: Living with Flowers – Louisa Lam, AIFD

AIFDSYMPOSIUM



Xpose the Xtraordinary Magic Within – Phil Rulloda, AAF, AIFD, PFCI

At the end of his program, with his team and family around him, Lynn Lary McLean, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, TMF, announced the creation of the AIFD Foundation Phil Rulloda Scholarship Fund, humbly received by Rulloda.

Others honored at symposium were Tim Farrell, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, who received the award of distinguished service to the floral industry. Farrell of Drexell, Pennsylvania, is well known, respected and loved for his design programs, skills as a businessman, devotion to his peers and as a positive spokesperson for the floral industry as a whole.

Merit of industry was awarded to United Floral Inc., Vancouver, Canada. General manager Tony Graff accepted the award while giving credit to all the employees of their company.

A beautiful video tribute to the late, beloved Bobbi Ecker Blatchford, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, was shown during the awards and induction ceremony. Lynn Lary McLean, awards committee CEO,

announced the funding goal had been achieved creating the Bobbi Ecker Blatchford fully endowed and named fund.

Class of 2018: Seventy-seven persons were inducted as accredited AIFD members. One hundred twelve took the hands-on testing, resulting in ninety three who will become fully accredited at the 2018 symposium in Washington, DC.

The student competition found City College of San Francisco garnering the most points overall. Overall individual winner of student competition was Dawn Mones of Cal Poly State University.

As Kim Oldis, AIFD, of La Conner, Washington, assumes the responsibilities as president of AIFD from outgoing president, Anthony Vigliotta, AIFD, the American Institute of Floral Designers looks forward to "Discover", Symposium 2018 to be held in Washington, DC.

Chairperson Suzanne Kostick, AIFD, CF, PFCI, and program chairperson John Kittinger, AIFD, PFCI, promise a plethora of new ideas and fresh approaches to floral design and the business of floristry. Tons of educational opportunities will feature business and design sessions in addition to the headliner stage shows. Suzie and John promise you will Discover a new take on Symposium.

Put June 30-July 4, 2018, on your calendars; invest in your professional skills, find inspiration and network with like-minded individuals.

The big news for 2018: FTD America's Cup competition to take place in conjunction with AIFD Symposium! ✿

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Attention! Potential Exhibitors

Reserve Prime Space Now for the 2018
Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo

2017 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo Facts

Total 2017 registration: 360
260 buyers/designers/employees
representing 122 businesses
70 representatives
from 23 exhibiting companies
30 students
from four different schools

2018

Floor Plan

- MFA raffle on show floor
- Designated Design Kiosk Stage on show floor

Saturday, March 3, 2018
Show Hours: 10:00 am - 6:45 pm
(3 hours of uninterrupted shopping time)

Banquet Cocktail Party on the Trade Show Floor 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Saturday

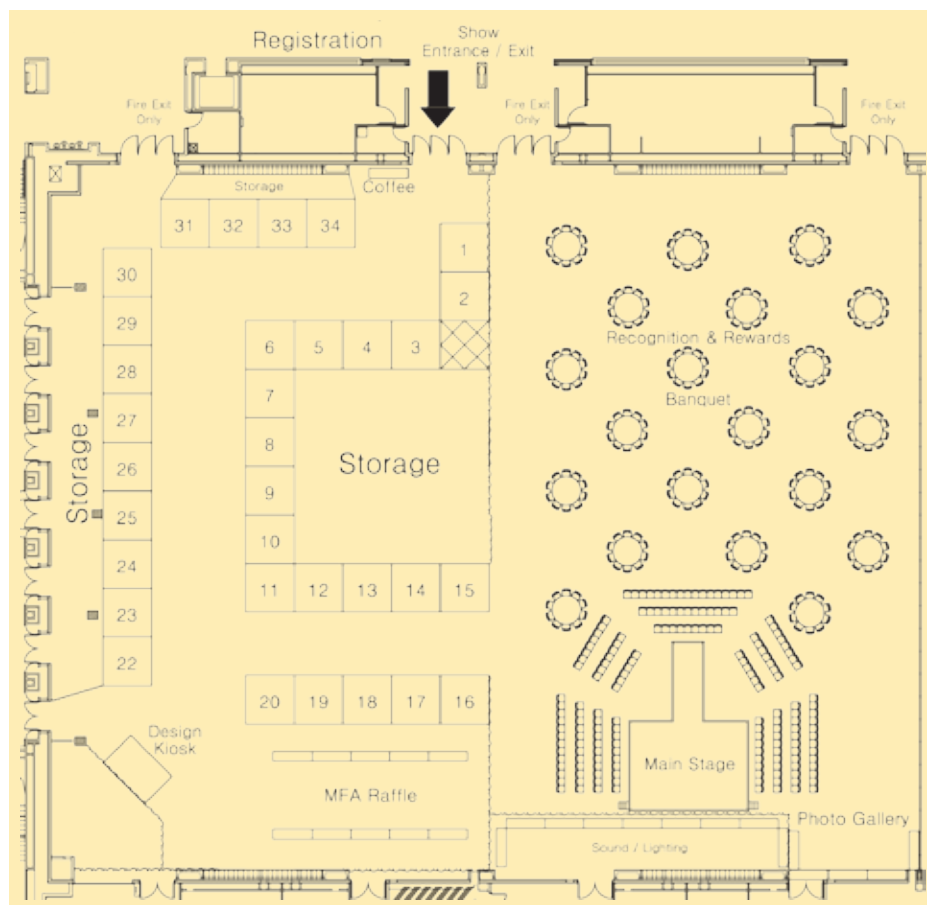
Sunday, March 4, 2018
Show Hours: 11:00 am - 2:30 pm
(1 hour of uninterrupted shopping time)

Product Reviews/ Design Demos on Designated Design Kiosk Stage During Show Hours



March 2-4, 2018

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel/Devos Place
Grand Rapids, MI



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to Reserve Your Exhibitor's Space Now!

"Probably the largest, most exciting and best-run regional show in the industry, the GLFE is also the best opportunity for vendors to engage with florists face-to-face. Michigan florists are especially interested in and loyal to vendors they actually meet, and no event is more committed to taking care of their exhibitors and providing them with a great sales opportunity."

—Mark Anderson of FloristWare, Exhibitor for the past thirteen years

"The MFA annual convention has worked for me for many years. It's great being where my customers are, and getting to know potential new ones. This past convention was well attended and planned out. I was able to see a nice increase in sales."

—Jim Wilson of Norman Smith Enterprises, Exhibitor for the past 30+ years

AIFDSYMPOSIUM

A First Time Xperience at AIFD Symposium

BY SAMANTHA BELONGA, ST. IGNACE IN BLOOM, ST. IGNACE, MI



As I prepared for my first-time experience at the AIFD National Symposium, I found myself very nervous about the whole thing. I knew that I would be overwhelmed by the amazing designs and presentations, and I was prepared to take lots of photos and notes in order to remember as much as possible.

The very first day I joined in on the Young Professionals group for a casual meeting at the Starbucks Reserve Roastery and Tasting Room. It was great to immediately connect with other designers my age, some were also first timers, just like me.

After our first timer orientation and tour we were able to go to the reception for all

the student designers who were competing. What an amazing thing to see so many brave (and young!) souls in the competition. I was very inspired by their creativity and impressed with their mechanics.

During the student reception I must have looked a little lost, because a very kind woman, who introduced herself as "Toni", came up to me and took me by the arm. She was so sweet and noticed that I didn't seem to know anyone so she took it upon herself to introduce me to groups of people around the room.

Toni was in charge of "Blooms Over Seattle", a program designed to re-purpose the flowers from all the shows and classes at AIFD into more manageable sizes to be distributed to non-profits and charities. She invited me to work on the project and I was able to design with other volunteer florists whenever I had a break in my schedule. It was wonderful to work next to designers from all over the world on such a great project.

Then there was "The Stage"...those shows were unbelievable. There is really no other word. All the designers had prepared so well and the pieces they introduced us to were very personal. Each showed a great deal about each designer. It was evident that there is a joy behind each work and it never ceases to amaze me how much talent God has given to floral designers.

One of my favorite elements of each stage presentation was the designers sharing with us the mechanics behind all their pieces. I love knowing the "how" when I see those amazing designs and it quickly took me from thinking "Wow, I could never do that!" to "Oh! I see how that works now...maybe I could try it."

The ever important educational element of the symposium was evident in all areas and I appreciate that so much. It has put a hunger in me to continue learning new techniques, new mechanics and new ways to look at everyday things. ✿



Sadie Quagliotto and Paul Sawyers, CF, from Blumz...by JR Designs, Detroit/Ferndale, Michigan, gather mugs that were delivered to the Michigan Humane Society and the Mariners Inn.

Teleflora's Make Someone Smile Week

Local florists and volunteers delivered more than 30,000 bouquets during Teleflora's Make Someone Smile Week. For the past 17 years Teleflora has donated the yellow smile mugs to florists nationwide. This charitable project involves florists who donate their time and growers and wholesalers who contribute flowers.

The bouquets were delivered to hospitals, nursing homes, foster care children, Meals on Wheels recipients, and veterans among others. ✿



The Teleflora smile mug filled with green plants.

SPRINGFEATURE

All Hands on Deck for the Spring Holidays

BY HEATHER VARGA, PICKET FENCE FLORAL & DESIGN, HOLLAND, MI



Picket Fence Floral & Design has been serving the Holland, Michigan area for over 15 years.

Owner Sarah Boetsma commenting on the upcoming spring holiday season noted "Springtime really kicks off our busy season not only for weddings but also the high-volume spring holidays. Valentine's Day and Mother's Day total 20 percent of our yearly sales in just two to three weeks.



"It's all hands on deck for these holidays. We bring in seasonal employees and do as much prep work as we can in the weeks leading up to the holidays. Organization is huge; we have a great system worked out that allows us to be ready for each day.

Sorting orders by date and type, all cards are prewritten and attached, as well as prerouted for our drivers. We have designers that only do assembly line type production for 10-20 of the same codified order while other designers work in our store front filling our coolers, keeping displays replenished and most importantly serving our walk-in customers."

The best plan of attack involves reviewing the prior year's sales and advertising, comparing them to previous years and seeing what works best. The shop starts heavily advertising about two weeks before the holidays (three weeks for Mother's Day). Great options for local advertisement include the reasonably priced Urban St. magazine, radio ads, local TV commercials, and donations to community events taking place in the same months.

"Donations offer us a great opportunity for prospective clients to see our work in person and make a connection with our brand. We can make a large visual impact on a big group for the cost of flowers and labor. Various charitable events for the West Coast Chamber of Commerce, the Holland Young Professionals, and Holland Hospital have given us a wonderful return while also benefiting our community", said Sarah.

The most popular holiday advertising is Facebook and radio giveaways. A "like and share" will enter the person into a drawing for a Valentine's or Mother's Day bouquet (a designer's choice value of \$50-\$75) or gift certificate (typically value of \$50-\$100). The local radio usually does a Valentine's and Mother's Day package with various local business each donating an item or service. These are a great little to no cost options that usually bring new customers for the first time, hopefully creating repeat clientele.

The marketing focus for Valentine's Day is men and when it comes to male customers they are notoriously last minute so a campaign is directed to these last minute shoppers, making sure there is a store front full of everything they can think of whether full bouquets, bud vases, single wrapped roses, teddy bears, balloons, jewelry, gifts or chocolates, anything that saves them a trip to two or three different stores.



The shop even teams up with a favorite local bakery to offer daily fresh boxed cupcakes, cookies and cake pops during these holidays. Not only does this offer customers a unique specialty item but helps out a fellow small business owner.

Sarah observed "We have a pretty good idea of what kind of traffic to expect by now but every year it never fails; you see a cooler full of hundreds of roses and you feel a slight panic. I think how will we sell all of these? But we always do!

"If we are left with an extra pack or two of flowers we make up 25-50 bud vases and bring them to one of our local nursing

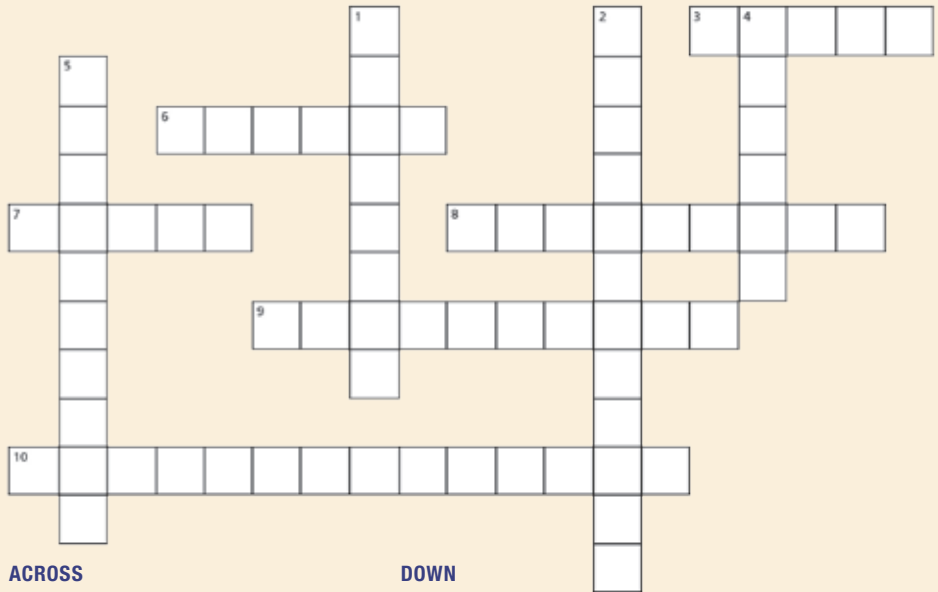
homes. It's a small gesture that I would encourage every florist to take the time to do once or twice a month with your extra flowers. I can't begin to explain what a huge difference this makes in their lives.

"We work hard to make every arrangement special, really listening to what our customer wants, putting a personal touch on every piece that goes out the door. Sometimes it's the little things that show people how much we care. It is really important to me that our customers know we want to exceed their expectations not only of our fresh beautiful floral but also with our customer service. You can't have a successful business unless you have both." ✨

Mother's Day is close to everyone's heart (You wouldn't be here without your mom!) but it hits especially close to home for Sarah. Sarah's mom Karen DeJonge passed away last year. She was Sarah's first business partner and was a co-owner of Picket Fence with her daughter. As a small business owner herself (West Michigan Canvas) she taught Sarah everything she knew about running a successful business.

Flower Power Crossword Puzzle

Answers on page 27



ACROSS

- 3 Poisoned flower in the Wizard of Oz
- 6 A source of saffron
- 7 State flower of Wisconsin
- 8 National flower of Egypt
- 9 Won't make you cry, used in place of onions
- 10 Related to the banana plant

DOWN

- 1 Used to make glue
- 2 State flower of Michigan
- 4 Pod provides vanilla flavoring
- 5 Number one source for US grown fresh flowers



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Profitable Corsages... Where the Economic Conditions Seem to Say 'Nope, Not on Your Life!'

BY LAWRENCE DERDERIAN, MY LADY'S FLORIST, WESTLAND, MI

Ah, Prom. The mind tingles with anticipation, romance, elegance, pomp (and its good friend circumstance) and INSANITY!

Maybe I've been doing this too long (30 plus years) and maybe my mind is beginning to fail me, but if memory serves me right (and, again, we will not count on that) prom

used to be a much more genteel affair...for both the attendees and their florists.

Now before you go and say, oh no, not another longing for the good old days diatribe, please believe me when I say I don't recall too many good old days except for maybe when I swiped that bowl of cherries off little Georgie Washington's desk at school.

Today, we have ever upward pressure by television, social media, glamour seeking

students, and star crossed moms and dads to see to it that this event is the event to end all events. Mom is spending thousands of dollars on a dress for Amanda. Dad is springing for a limo (or is a helicopter this year?) for Jake, and no expense is being saved except for maybe at the florist.

Having attended many a florist seminar, I am convinced that while we may have our premises right, we always leave a wee item



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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.)

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10. Study Guide & Evaluation Forms



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SPRINGFEATURE



out of the equation. Economics! So while I've enjoyed the seminar experiences, I've learned that in our auto worker/working class area the rules of engagement, where proms are concerned, don't always apply.

Yes, of course, in our area the moms, dads, and students all want the biggest show, the bling, the starlit night, and prom flowers to be envied, but they don't seem quite as committed to paying the price of both the investment of time and funds.

Oddly, though our clients freely state that this is the most important event of their lives, they are disinclined to order in advance, with roughly 60 percent of orders arriving the night before or the day of. Crazy right? Of course, crazy, but here's where the florist has to put on the hard hat, the steel toed boots, and go to work.

How do we do it? It's all hands on deck (full staff on prom day) Because of the numerous "Oh, were we suppose to order early?", the day has become something akin to Valentine's Day. Product is preordered based upon the previous year's purchases. However, we do keep an eye on trends (every year there is new funky color no doubt worn by the newest celebrity rising up the pop charts) and we add appropriate flowers, to our order, to accommodate that trend.

Here's where we earn our keep, apply basic Floral 101, and fly straight passed "You've got to be kidding" to connecting with all parties involved. I say connecting with all parties, because experience suggests that mom or dad will try to dictate the terms, but connecting with the actual prom attendee, though difficult, empowers the young adult and gets you to that prom floral happy place.

Just as an example...I had the occasion to have a father and son come in for prom flowers. Dad did all the talking, son just

continued to text on his phone. At one point I asked his father for his son's cell number and proceeded to send the son a text welcoming him to the florist.

Reading the client, finding that hot button, recognizing that most corsage seekers think in pictures, taking control of the momentum with a simple "may I recommend," and painting a verbal portrait of their soon to

be personally designed, truly original, elegant, and not to mention surprisingly affordable, prom night flowers, is the ultimate answer to the question, "Can I be profitable, where corsages are concerned, in a economically challenged area."

So I guess those floral seminars are helpful, if applied with a little regional common sense. ✿

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CFREPORT



BY CINDY CHING, AIFD, CF

Design Style

The Hogarth Curve

The Hogarth Curve is an “S” shaped line mass design created by William Hogarth in 1753. Hogarth theorized that the serpentine line was the “basis for all successful artistic design” and that all artistic beauty developed from this line. A two-dimensional form was called the “Line of Beauty” and the three-dimensional form the “Line of Grace”.

This can be done as a one-sided or all around design. In the Hogarth curve’s truest form, the tip of the ascending line is directly above the focal area, and the tip of the descending line is directly below the focal area. The test of a successful Hogarth Curve is when an imaginary line connecting the two tips is straight and passes directly through the center of the focal area. The ascending line can lean slightly backward, as long as the design stays balanced. Although classic Hogarth Curve designs may seem dated today, the graceful “S” curve is present in many contemporary designs.

This is my favorite design form and I love using Scotch broom with baby eucalyptus, mini carnations, carnations, spirea bush flowers and an Asiatic lily. ✿

CF Flower of the Month

Asiatic Lily *Lilium hybridum*

The many varieties include Sterling Star, Connecticut King, Enchantment and Montreux.

Colors: White, cream, yellows, reds, pinks, oranges and bicolor, many with characteristic markings.

Size: Cluster of five to eight flowers, each four to six inches across, on stems 24 to 36 inches long.



Tips and Tricks for Spring Holidays

- Make sure someone takes time to check all the shipments of flowers for accuracy (quantity and variety) and any type of damage.
- Make sure coolers are serviced and in good working order before a holiday.
- Make up recipe/price sheets for your designers and sales staff for wire orders, commonly requested designs and in-house specials.
- Prep all containers and have everything ready to save time during holiday week.
- If you have cooler space have some of the greening done ahead of time, watered and ready to go in the cooler.

CF NEWS

Accomplish your goal to become CF this year. We have CF manuals for purchase to help you become Certified Florists. There also are beginning classes and review classes available. CF steps to review is Wednesday, October 4, 2017, at the MFA office, Haslett, MI. CF testing dates are Sunday, October 15, 2017 and Sunday, January 14, 2018, at MSU.

DESIGNERSPOTLIGHT

Making Mother's Day Memories

BY DAVE PINCHOCK, CF, VOGT'S FLOWERS, FLINT, MICHIGAN, 2017 MFA DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

Designed in a blue swirl-patterned glass keepsake vase, this seashore inspired bouquet honors mom, reminding her of carefree, relaxed days at the beach. The combination of pastel tones creates a soft, cozy atmosphere with allium, delphinium, tulips, ranunculus, and chrysanthemums all complementing the container. Textural interest is added with hypericum, wax flower, baby eucalyptus, and trachelium. A woven willow orb adds an unexpected touch to the composition.

This style, designed in water, is popular with Mother's Day customers since it can be easily customized with some additional blooms such as a few of mom's favorite roses. Many appreciate the opportunity to give such a gift with the enhancement of a lovely upscale container.

Since presentation is important, display this design, as shown, accessorized with sea glass. Price accessories separately as an optional add on. ✿

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Plan Now to Honor **Dwight Larimer, AAF, PFCI**

At The Michigan Floral Foundation

Hall of Fame Awards Dinner

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

*University Club, Michigan State University,
East Lansing, Michigan*

Dwight Larimer, AAF, PFCI, has been a fixture in the floral industry for 40 years.

His record of service has made him an outstanding contributor to the success of not only his own company but also many floral industry organizations. In addition, he has been honored by his peers with several prestigious awards. His first award was in 1985 as the WF&FSA Young Executive of the Year. He also is the recipient of WF&FSA's highest honor the Leland T. Kinzele Award and a member of the Society of American Florists Hall of Fame. In addition he was recognized for his business acumen with the SAF Paul Ecke Jr. award and in 2016 the Michigan Floral Association presented him with its National Service Award. In the past he has served as president of WF&FSA, SAF treasurer, and as a member of the AIFD artist in residence committee.

Currently he is chairman of the American Floral Endowment board of trustees, and chairman elect of the Floral Marketing Research Fund. His career in the industry began at W.J. Cowee Inc., Berlin, NY and has culminated as president of Design Master color tool Inc., Boulder, Colorado. For 12 years he has made a commitment to fighting cancer and supporting AIDS research by participating in long distance bike rides.

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 and click on the MFF in the menu bar.

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Every Day is a Celebration!

BY NEVILLE MACKAY, CAFA, PFCI, WFC



Every day there is something we need to celebrate, from the obvious holidays like Mother's Day and Easter to the less conspicuous ones like "Friendship Day" and "National Pizza Day" (There is a National Pizza Day on February 9). Let me tell you, if you can think of a reason to pop the cork, there's a day for it.

Over the years, we, in the floral industry, have had our special big floral days watered down. What with the whole world getting in on selling flowers from gas stations to hardware stores, every charity using flowers for fundraisers and, of course, now the sheer number of floral "events" in a year; all this can cause folks to think of alternatives to flowers.

I remember all the lilies we got at Easter and poinsettias at Christmas...not so much anymore, sadly. So we have had to evolve and grow to meet the demands and challenges of today's fickle, I mean selective, clientele. That's ok, we are surviving for the most part and I think the industry has gotten stronger than ever, along with the quality of products and designs. There are things that we also must do now to assure our continued existence, I mean growth. (Darn auto-correct in my mind!)

Isn't social media a wonderful thing?! Well, it is if you use it to your advantage. Look, most all of us have smart phones, so be smart and use them. Take photos of your shop in action and post them on everything. We do videos showing this or that, post photos of lovely new fresh flowers and/or giftware, and put notices up for our upcoming events and promotions. We do a lot of our business on line, taking every opportunity to promote that, too.

Every holiday has its own possibilities for promotion. Valentine's Day is a time for lots of options, from photos of a little one handing a flower to his/her mum, a picture of someone leaving your shop with a lovely Valentine's bouquet, or a close-up of several design offerings. One year, I wrote a love letter to my David on a long piece of floral paper and hung it in the window like a scroll. That was a huge hit.

For Mother's Day we all got photos of our mothers and filled our window with them and flowers, and also posted a series of photos of our mums on line. You can also do a contest on line where you get folks to post photos of their mothers for a chance to get a bouquet for her. I also post pictures of and get my Mum to do little videos telling tales of what it was like years ago, stories of her holidays as a child, and things we kids got up to. These have an enormous following.

Have you used "Snapseed" yet? This is a great app that allows you to edit photos and add text to them, and once you've done that you can print, post or email them to your heart's content. This has been a glorious thing for me, and I have taken advantage of its simplicity often for promotions. Oh, and if you're too lazy,

I mean unable to do all this hard work, have a look at the many downloadable images offered from our friends at Smithers Oasis or some of the wire services.

Have you offered classes before? No? Why Not?! Look, this is a great way to not only sell some product, but teach those in the class how to work with and use the goodies we offer, making them even more apt to buy flowers from you. Look up



"list of commemorative days" ...you'll flip out! (National Purple Day is March 26, so imagine the possibilities) To be safer, maybe think about a Spring "Catch a Tulip!" class when tulips are in season and show folks how smart you are. We do several a year, offering a discount on everything in the store that night.

Everyone wants to do a cross-promotion, right? These can only work if the knife cuts both ways, so don't be too quick to offer something if it will serve to do more good to the offeree than you. I had someone who said it would be great for me and my business to come decorate their jewelry store for Easter with fresh flowers, and do a small demo for their guests. Yup. In return, she would have my business cards on the counter. What generosity! And the kicker was that this was only an hour's drive from my shop. I don't know what was wrong with me that I didn't jump on that one.

Anyway, I think next year I am going to celebrate National Day of Silence, April 15; Ice Cream Day on July 16, and my favorite, No Diet Day, April 24. You don't have to send a card, but have a scoop and quietly think of me.

Happy Holidays! ✿

Neville MacKay, CAFA, PFCI, WFC, lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. He is on the Smithers Oasis (North America) design and education team, speaks and designs internationally, appears regularly on TV and radio, and hosts tours to the UK. Neville has designed for many heads of state and celebrities. He opened his floral shop, My Mother's Bloomers, in 1992, info@mymothersbloomers.com.

WUMFA

Making a List, Checking It Twice

BY DENISE BARNETT, WUMFA PRESIDENT



Juggling. It's what we do in the florist industry.

Whether you're answering phones while trying to wrap that last minute

delivery as your driver is waiting, or finishing your Valentine's preorders while balancing your Christmas/New Year's inventory levels, juggling is just a fact of life.

So, how do you keep your energy level up, your team happy (and productive) and your clients begging for more? Take some tips from Susan Soczka from Charles the Florist in Appleton, Wisconsin, and simplify. Utilize non-peak times to streamline what you do and how you do it.

Getting refocused is a great first step. When are your peak sales weeks for spring? When do you level off? When are you (gasp!) slow?

Now, what does it take to shorten those slow periods and extend those peak times? Yep, "more customers" is a pretty common answer. So, let's go get more customers, right? You can do that with a well-organized marketing plan, a little hard work, some ingenuity and GUTS.

What do I mean?

Start with a list. More like multiple lists. Make sure they are big. And daring. Out-of-the-box crazy. Really! Now match those lists. Like this:

List one: Who are my potential customers? Where are they?

- Example: All residents in the greater _____ area
- Men, ages 20-50 who are married or in a relationship.
- Women or men, 60+ who are retired, etc. Be specific.
- All businesses within five miles doctors/dentist offices, hotels.
- You get the idea, and so on.

List two: How can I reach them?

- Example: Direct mail: postcard,

personal letter, brochure of services.

- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Groupon, Google Adwords, YouTube, etc.
- Free bouquet with drawing to win in lobby.
- Magazine/Newspaper expert articles.
- Print/Radio/TV ads.
- Radio/TV guest appearances.

List three: What do I want to tell them about?

- How to pick the perfect bouquet for the love of your life.
- Spring flowers when your garden is still covered in two feet of snow.
- The emotional impact of flowers.
- The health benefits of indoor plants.

List four: Match items from the first three lists:

- Example: doctors/dentist offices, free bouquet in lobby, emotional impact of flowers.
- Men, ages 20-50 married/relationship, radio appearance, picking the perfect bouquet.
- Women or men, 60+ who are retired, local morning TV show, spring flowers.

Keep going. As I said make these lists big. And daring. Out-of-the-box crazy. No, you are not going to do everything on these lists right away. Or maybe ever. But write it all down.

Now, circle three that you can do in the next seven days. These are the easy, low-hanging-fruit kind of things to get your momentum going. Track your results.

Next, pick three harder ones. Maybe these take a little more effort, cost a little money, and are outside your comfort zone. Figure out if there's someone on your team who would like to tackle the scary ones, or, even better, stretch yourself and take a risk. Again, track your results. Keep going. Work through that list. Add more as ideas come to you.

What makes me an expert? I'm not. But I've done everything listed above and here's what I've learned: Sometimes it works. Your Facebook post goes viral, your YouTube channel subscribers take off, or a producer emails to book you for a guest appearance on TV. Other times, you hear nothing. Just silence. That's okay...keep going.



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Measure the results of what you do and then do more of the good stuff. Drop the useless stuff. SIMPLIFY!

Feedback? Shoot me an email (denise@snapdragonneg.com) and tell me what you think, what you've tried and how it worked for you. We'd love to feature you in our next issue. ✿

Tackling the Spring Holidays at a Small Hometown Florist

BY SUSAN SOCZKA
CHARLES THE FLORIST, APPLETON, WI



On grade school calendars and retail displays, spring is advertised as being full of nature's bounty, with a rainbow of floral designs and prints in every shop window. But here at Charles the Florist in Appleton, Wisconsin, spring just means that the temperature is only marginally better than freezing and your shoes are filled with mud.

But while spring features two of the biggest floral gift-giving holidays, Mother Nature's moods can make it a challenging season. How do you advertise love in the February air when you and your customers are on edge from seeing nothing but gray skies for months? How do you drum up excitement over spring when your audience has grown used to expecting snow in May? And how do you manage to do any of that while you're cranking out high volumes of arrangements without overstretching yourself or your employees?

Charles the Florist is a small hometown business with only five year-round employees (only three of which are full-time), in an antique building with limited floor space and limited light, which has its own unique challenges. Like any other small business, we approach those challenges in our own way.

Tired of the staff feeling shell-shocked and frantic for weeks at a time, we switched up our approach to spring. After looking at the data from previous years, we decided to drop wire services and order gatherers. Relying on phone orders and our BloomNation website, we put ourselves more in control of our designs.

Not having to order containers and botanicals on the off-chance that we would need them for a wire order now allows us more control over our inventory, as well as giving us more freedom to change out our design catalog and respond to changing tastes among our clientele.

The first Valentine's Day without a wire service, our sales were basically what we would expect with a wire service, but our average sale was higher. We didn't have to decline orders due to lack of product, and our customers were more eager to leave positive reviews. As a result, we were able to be more creative, we had more time to handle organization and logistics, and even our delivery drivers were less stressed.

The time we would have spent cranking out arrangements that didn't reflect our design team's style and making multiple trips to the 13 ZIP codes in our delivery range is instead used on marketing and preparing for the next day in ways we simply couldn't before. Even with completing these projects, staff is still able to leave the shop earlier than previous years, lowering our cost of labor.

Being able to stay on top of marketing and other ongoing projects during Valentine's Day means that we have the time to plan out changes to store decor, plan our marketing for the season, and get a slight break between the industry's two busiest holidays.

Aside from designing outdoor planters for other local businesses and orders for the smaller holidays like Administrative Assistant's Day, we don't experience a particularly large spike in business for Memorial Day. As such, March and April are a fantastic opportunity for planning out Mother's Day.

We look at our best and worst selling arrangements from previous years and try out new arrangements to see which will sell best for the holiday. We also switch out our window display, which is about the only part of the store not dedicated to counter space, vase displays, and plants. We turn it from a Valentine's theme to a spring scene that can easily be used through Memorial Day, Easter, and Mother's Day by changing the color scheme.

This extra freedom during Valentine's and Mother's Day also allows for us to plan specific lines of spring arrangements using



WUMFA

similar flowers. By utilizing designs with similar recipes but different color schemes, containers, and shapes, we can streamline ordering from wholesalers and keep space in our cooler for more novelty botanicals to be featured for each holiday.

Throughout spring, for example, we can devote cooler space to the tulips that we run on special. Not only that, we can also switch out our design catalog whenever we want without having to worry as much about availability, or being held to another designer's aesthetic sense.

If certain arrangements sell like gangbusters but one at a similar price point has only been ordered once, we can adjust the design to better reflect the needs of our customers. Moreover, by featuring a designer's choice option on our website, our design team can be more creative and has more opportunity to utilize novelty varieties that customers may not be as familiar with.

By the time Mother's Day rolls around in May, the entire business is set up to smoothly navigate the holiday and all we really have to focus on are marketing



and logistics (and remembering to take the Easter eggs out of the window display). Having one employee on year-round as a shop coordinator, the logistics are down to a tried-and-true system of organization.

And, because we're a long-established business, we have great success keeping our marketing down to word of mouth, social media, and relatives of the families we've been doing weddings and funerals for since the 50s. So instead of finding ourselves in a frenzy as Mother's Day approaches, we have ample time to advertise by drumming up excitement about our seasonal outdoor products just in time for Wisconsinites to start spending more time outside.

By keeping our displays and inventory simple, we can focus on featuring specific, novelty seasonals. By keeping our advertising down to word of mouth and social media, we not only save on overhead cost, but also get the chance to develop a relationship with clients. And by putting ourselves in control of our design catalog and inventory, not only can we be more creative in our designs but we can also react better to the taste of the customer.

So while spring for the rest of the region just means melting snow and endless rain, spring at Charles the Florist means one thing: "Simplify, Simplify, Simplify". ✨



Susan Wilke, AAF, PFCI, shows off the flower and plant cart promoting buying from local professional florists. Plants were supplied by Karthauser & Sons, Germantown, Wisconsin. Hanging terrariums were donated by Rojahn & Malaney, Milwaukee. Over one million attended the fair and over 30,000 pass through the Grand Champion Hall.

WUMFA Promotes Flowers and Plants at 2018 State Fair

Once again this year the Wisconsin & Upper Michigan Florists Association participated in the annual Wisconsin State Fair.

Each year a group of selected retail florists are invited to pick out a handcrafted quilt and design a booth below it. Each shop that had a European flower cart picked out award-winning photographs for their booth. This year's participants were Parkway Floral, South Milwaukee; Snapdragon Floral, Elm Grove; Flowers By Jan, Milwaukee; Bank of Memories and Flowers, Menomonee Falls, Rose's Flower Shop, Wauwatosa and Fleurs, Cedarburg.

Highlight of the show is the Grand Champion Floral Challenge which was won this year by Doug Jaeger, CF, from Everlasting Flowers & Gifts, Wauwatosa. First runner up was Lon Cook, Alfa Flower Shop, Wauwatosa, with Michelle Hobbins, Malley's Blooms, Whitefish Bay, second runner up. The designers qualified for the contest by participating WUMFA design contests.



Grand Champion Floral Challenge winner Doug Jaeger, CF, Everlasting Flowers & Gifts, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

The designers each used a surprise package of flowers and supplies to carry out the theme of Cultivating Happiness and Joy. The winner receive a gift certificate from Chula Vista Resort and a cash prize from WUMFA.

Susan Wilke, AAF, PFCI along with Nancy Desonia from DWF Milwaukee commented the program, while Leah Manthey and Carly Johnson from Parkway Floral, South Milwaukee acted as time keeper and cheerleaders. A standing room only audience picked the winner. WUMFA member Christine Worgull of Karthauser also lent a helping hand.

Each year fairgoers participate in a hands-on project. This year they created 449 Fairtastic Flower Fans from flowers donated by Wisconsin wholesalers Bill Doran Co., DWF Wholesale Florists, Kennicott Bros., Krueger Wholesale and Rojahn & Malaney Co. They also embellished 250 state fair ribbon badges.

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

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**Chula Vista Resort
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**FINDING THE GREEN
WUMFA 2018**



First time golfer Alice Waterous, AIFD, CF, PFCI, part of the winning mixed team, listens to Tim Timinski describe his long drive on #7 Blue as the rest of the table looks on.

Fun in the Sun at the Annual MFA Golf Outing

Forty-four golfers took to the links at the annual Michigan Floral Association golf outing held last month at the Eldorado Golf Course in Mason, Michigan. The beautiful sunny day provided participants with the perfect backdrop for fun and networking.

- **Men's Winning Team:** Jim Schmidt, Bill Schmidt, Mike DeRose from Hyacinth House and Charlie Schwarz, Wexford Missaukee ISD, took first place with a score of 55.
- **Mixed Winning Team:** Janice Curran, Teleflora; Alice Waterous, Alice's Christmas Elves, and Terry Oswald and



From left: Kal Krueger, Greg Krueger, Dave Pinchock, and Kyle Smith, Vogt's Flowers, Flint.



Team FloraCraft, left to right: Tom Figueroa, Nordlie/Kennicott; Tim Galea, Norton's Flowers; Dave Wier and Tim Timinski, FloraCraft.

Anne Stol from Mayesh won first place in the mixed division with a score of 69.

- **Longest Drive:** Men: Mike DeRose, Hyacinth House; Women: Kayla Zane, DeVos Place
- **Longest Putt:** Mike DeRose, Hyacinth House
- **Closest to Pin:** Tony Vear, Mains Importing

Thank You

A big thank you to our sponsors for supporting the MFA and our annual golf outing. It is greatly appreciated.

- **Eagle Sponsor:** Hyacinth House
- **Birdie Sponsor:** MHI Fund, Mayesh
- **Tee Sponsors:** FloraCraft, FloristWare, FTD, DWF
- **Game Hole Prizes:** FloraCraft Corporation
- **Prize Sponsor:** York Risk Services Company

Congratulations to the winners and all the participants. We look forward to seeing you next year. ✨



Mains Importing was represented by, from left, Brent Mains, Ryan Mains (celebrating his birthday), Tony Vear, and Jason Mains.

INDUSTRY INFO

Talk on 'Plants and Beyond' Set for Teleflora Unit Meeting

Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, CF, PFCI, will be the featured speaker when Michigan Teleflorists meet on Tuesday, September 19. The meeting will take place at 6:00 p.m. at Hyacinth House Greenery in Lansing, Michigan.

Raska from Blumz...by JR Designs, Detroit/Ferndale, Michigan, will discuss cost effective ways to build green plant and succulent business. For cost and registration call Jeanette Ballien at (989) 799-2121.

Marvin Miller Named to USDA Committee

Dr. Marvin Miller, AAF, Ball Horticultural Company, West Chicago, Illinois, has been appointed to the National Agricultural Statistics Service advisory

committee on agricultural statistics. This committee conducts hundreds of surveys every year and prepares reports on production and supply issues, prices paid and received by farmers, farm labor and wages, farm finances, chemical use, and changes in the demographics of U.S. producers.

Miller sits on the SAF board of directors, growers council and awards committee. As a Society of American Florists member, he has been a longtime advocate for industry issues during SAF's annual Congressional Action Days. In addition, Miller is on the board of trustees of the American Floral Endowment and the current treasurer and past president of America in Bloom.

Research Fund Has New Website

The American Floral Endowment has launched an updated, newly-designed website for the Floral Marketing Research Fund at www.fmrfl.org. The website

features easier navigation to access free research reports and other FMRF news and updates. It also provides a simpler process to submit applications for cut flower consumer-based research and make contributions online.

House Committee Doubles Proposed Research Funds

The House Appropriations Committee has recommended allotting \$500,000 to a key floral industry research fund, doubling the amount that Society of American Florists members lobbied for during Congressional Action Days.

Members of the committee wrote that their recommendation would allow the Floriculture and Nursery Research Initiative (FNRI) "to expand research capacity."

SOCIALMEDIA

Simplifying Your Social Media

BY GARRETT SKUPINSKI, CF, CFD



The following is a new column on social media by Garrett Skupinski. Each issue of the Professional Florist will feature a tip on how florists can use all forms of social media to elevate their business's social presence.

Social media can make or break any company no matter how big or small, so having any level of presence is important. You don't have to become a social marketing master overnight but with a few simple practices you will at least keep your consumers interested and aware of your shop happenings.

Simple Social Practice:

At Least Two Posts Per Week

- Post once at the beginning and then once at the end of the week. You'll have started your consumer's week off and then ended it.

Keep It Simple

- 1-2 Sentences or maximum of 140 characters in a post makes reading

your post quick and simple. Nobody goes to social media to read a book so stay on point.

- Try to always have an image or video along with your post to attract attention.
- Not every photo has to be perfect, just clean and related to your shop.

Being Everywhere Isn't Required

- Pick 2-3 social media platforms to start with. This keeps your presence spread out without having to learn too many different formats or websites.
- Find which social site you find the easiest to use and have it be your main place for posting. (I prefer Instagram since you can post across three social platforms at one time.)
- When you attend a class or travel, share it with your followers for interesting, attention grabbing content.

Schedule It!

- Sites such as Hootsuite, Buffer, etc. help you schedule your posts as far ahead of time as you need.



- Take your favorite seasonal beverage, turn on your favorite music or show and schedule your social media for months in advance.
- Having a consistent post day creates a recognizable day for consumers to watch for contests, sales, or interesting content.

Tell us how you simplify your business social media over on the MFA social pages so we can learn together. Follow MFA on Facebook and go to www.michiganfloral.org. ✿

Garrett Skupinski is the owner and editor-in-chief of Floral.Today, a floral industry blog. He was a contributor to the Nature's Creative Edge and he has been a volunteer at MFA, AIFD symposiums and the Illinois State Floral Association. Currently he is a member of the MFA Young Professionals committee and serves as the chairman of the Social Media Marketing committee.

The robust message of support is a direct result of SAF member engagement on the issue, said SAF Chief Operating Officer Drew Gruenberg, who noted that during and after Congressional Action Days, floral industry members worked hard to educate lawmakers on the valuable role FNRI plays in industry research, and the importance of the floral industry to the overall U.S. economy.

Resources Available to Set Up Pinterest Account

The American Floral Endowment and the Floral Marketing Research Fund have put together resources needed to set up a Pinterest business account, connect it to a company's website, and get florists ready to sell on Pinterest.

Among the resources is a video tutorial on setting up the business account. It features Brooke Raulerson

of Artistic Florist in Fernandina Beach, Florida, who uses Pinterest to work with a bridezilla.

Visit FMRf.org to access these free resources.

Program Initiated for Unrooted Plant Cuttings

AmericanHort and the Society of American Florists are collaborating with U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service to initiate an offshore certification program for unrooted plant cuttings. A six-month pilot program is expected to be launched on October 1, and will include growing operations in six Latin American countries.

Each year, the United States imports more than 1 billion unrooted cuttings of mostly annual and perennial plant varieties. This is an important supply chain for U.S. rooting stations and finished-plant growers. Nearly half of all plants sold in U.S. retail stores start from cuttings produced offshore.

The pilot program will include greenhouse facilities in Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Colombia that produce generally admissible, unrooted vegetative cuttings for import into the United States. The pilot is being designed to determine whether greenhouse certification could effectively mitigate at origin regulated pest and disease risks associated with plant cuttings produced in approved facilities.

Ball Horticultural Co., Dümmen-Orange, Proven Winners, and Syngenta Flowers will participate in the initial pilot. During the pilot, offshore-produced cuttings from these companies' farms will be subject to the same inspection process as cuttings from other sources. The expectation is that a successful pilot will result in reduced inspections and expedited entry procedures thereafter. If successful, the program is expected to be opened to additional countries and producers.

NOTHING RHYMES WITH ORANGE

Food Truck Flowers!

BY DEREK C. WOODRUFF, AIFD, CF, PFCI



Earlier this summer I spent some time with my good friend, Kim, a “garden florist”, thinking of fun, different ways that we could share the beautiful bounty of her garden. The

garden, which began as a beautiful space around her home, has grown to populate some of the most incredible flowers in the Northern Michigan region. Peonies, roses, hydrangea, and lilies are just a few types of flowers bursting from the garden.

One of the many ideas that we threw around was to take advantage of another business that Kim and her husband already own. A’s, Food with an Accent is a food truck featuring Portuguese influenced dishes. The truck has a fun, funky feel, sporting teal with bright pink accents. I thought it would be a perfect venue to sell brightly colored garden flowers in its off-season.

Our favorite vessels to use for vases are vintage jars from Syndicate Sales. These colored glass jars perfectly complement the mixed arrangements, “Chic Garden Flowers”. In addition, a favorite practice of Kim’s is to up-cycle fun-looking beer and wine bottles. Filling these with a sprig of greens and some large stems of flowers gives bringing beer and wine to a dinner party an additional purpose. We also always have buckets of loose stems of



flowers and a variety of greens for purchase for those who like to make their own creations at home.

Flower Fridays is the name of the game. We spend time on Thursdays cutting fresh from the garden and arranging the flowers into vessels in the workshop. We are always sure to use professional grade flower nutrient and finishing spray to get the longest vase life.

Once all of the arrangements are finished, they conveniently overnight in the truck’s cooler and are for sale first thing Friday morning. Our biggest flower fans get an email to let them know what is included in the week’s bounty. We are sure to tantalize them with pictures and lush descriptions of the harvest. At their leisure, customers visit the truck throughout the day to purchase their fresh bouquets.

Next on the docket for our flower truck is hosting an event or two over the summer. Flower crowns are always a popular party project for consumers. After some instruction on simple and professional techniques, guests enjoy a glass of wine



Derek and Kim

and create their own floral masterpiece to take with them.

I can’t tell you how much consumers love the accomplishment of creating their own floral piece. Our flower truck makes a unique setting for our fans to gather and create together.

It is important to continue to think about new and unique ways to sell flowers. In the summertime we are especially lucky because of the bounty in our region. But as professional florists, we are not limited to the season. This same idea of selling flowers can be implemented with commercially grown flowers from the flower shop.

This is simply another way for flower designers to bring flowers to the consumer. It is up to us to creatively display and showcase these flowers so that our biggest flower fans keep coming back. ✿

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

**SAVE THE DATE:
March 2-4, 2018**

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For More Information

Go to www.michiganfloral.org



DESIGN TIP

Using Flexible Mesh Tubing

BY DEANA GRESS, CF, NORTON'S FLOWERS AND GIFTS, YPSILANTI/ANN ARBOR, MI, 2017 MFA ACADEMY WINNER

A few years ago flexible mesh tubing came on the floral design scene. Many florists were unsure of what to do with it. However, there are quite a lot of different things you can create using this basic tip.

1. Gerbera daisies are fun but I do like to make sure the stems are straight. Use 18

gauge wire and poke it through the center of the head slowly to straighten them out. Don't go too far with the wire if you are cutting them short.

2. After wiring all the daisies, slide the mesh tubing. I used red and blue here, but there are a lot of different colors. Cut the length first and after reaching the

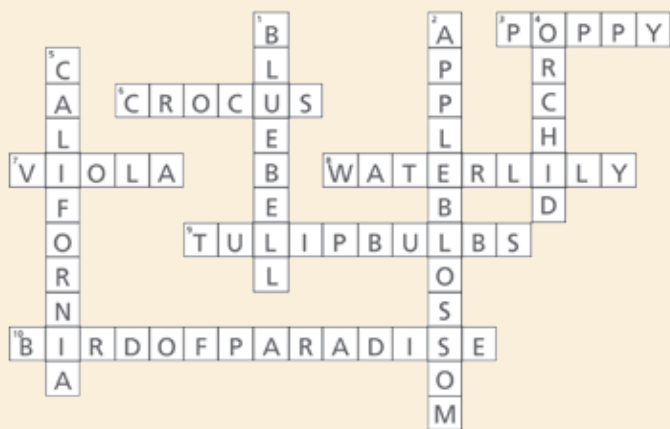
head of the flower use floral tape to secure it in place.

3. Depending on what type of arrangement and flowers, hand-tie the flowers, cut them and place in the vase. Then add loops of tubing throughout the arrangement by tucking the ends into the flowers, making sure to get them as far down as possible. ✿



Flower Power Crossword Puzzle

Answers for puzzle on page 13





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Go to www.michiganfloral.org for complete course information.

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October 9-13, 2017

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Twelve Week Course

Thursday Evenings

September 21, 2017 - December 14, 2017

Time: 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF

Member \$1250 • Non-Member \$1500

Includes all flowers and supplies.

Go to www.michiganfloral.org for complete course information.

Trending with Tropicals Put Something “Exotic” on Your Menu

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Member \$50 • Non-Member \$75

Includes all flowers and supplies.

Simply because tropical designs look dramatic doesn't mean you should be nervous about creating them. Become adept at designing in the “tropical style” on a regular basis by sizing them for everyday use. Why not help your customers express their feelings, whatever the occasion, with an attention getting tropical touch? Set yourself apart from the rest by adding these pleasing styles with an unusual flair to your everyday offerings. Your instructor will demonstrate three differently styled designs with identical materials. Class attendees will choose one style to create and take home at the end of the class. Learn care and handling and helpful mechanics.

You must bring your own tools: floral knife, pruner, wire cutter, scissors, and needle-nosed pliers

Locations:

Flint, Michigan

DWF, 5100 Exchange Drive

Instructor: Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF

Warren, Michigan

Nordlie Floral

A Kennicott Company, 25300 Guenther Road

Instructor: Jerry Baker, CF

Walker, Michigan

Kennicott Brothers Company

1858 Three Mile Road NW

Instructor: Skeeter Parkhouse

Let's Make It a Green\$ Christmas! Prep tip\$ and making the mo\$t of materials

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Member \$50 • Non-Member \$75

As we look toward the winter holidays, there is an obvious need to plan specials and often even “green up” designs to which flowers will be added later. Before the “crush” of orders comes flooding in, let's take a look at how best to prepare. In this class, we will learn how to price and use winter evergreen materials to the best advantage. We often resort to guessing about how much to price when doing evergreen designs; this can be a profit-sucking trap. Forming the habits of proper pricing can make the difference in whether you get candy or coal in your stocking. So let's get started on the right foot! We will demonstrate ideas for several centerpiece styles and a wall/door design with winter greenery and trims. You will get lots of tips and techniques on how to save time and maximize materials for a happy, profitable holiday season. Each student will make a centerpiece and wall/door swag to take home.

Bring your own tools: floral knife, pruner, wire cutter, scissors, and needle-nosed pliers.

Locations:

Grandville, Michigan

Nordlie Floral, a Kennicott Company, 4611 Ivanrest Ave SW
Instructor: Alice Waterous, AIFD, CF, PFCI

Warren, Michigan

Nordlie Floral, A Kennicott Company, 25300 Guenther Road
Instructor: Jerry Baker, CF

Romulus, Michigan

Mayesh Wholesale, 35935 Ecorse Road
Instructor: Laura Parker, AIFD, CF


Flint, Michigan

DWF, 5100 Exchange Drive
Instructor: Cindy Ching, AIFD, CF

**Download registration forms or register on line at www.michiganfloral.org
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MFA Scholarship Committee Seeks Donations for the 2018 Raffle:

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).

the professional florist

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