

# "The Greatest Show on Earth"—Teleflora Live!—visits Hot-lanta!



Teleflora Live!—a two-day education program presented by the Teleflora Education Center—made a stop in early October in Atlanta, GA. Florists from Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee and Georgia attended the Sunday stage show and Monday hands-on classes. "Every single minute was wonderful!" said one attendee from Georgia. "It was interesting, exciting and motivating when I needed it most," said another from Tennessee. "It was the most fun, professional show I have ever seen!" said another from South Carolina.

The program opened Sunday morning with a presentation by Teleflora's Chairman Tom Butler, entitled "10 Business Trends Every Retail Florist Should Watch." Tom also highlighted what Teleflora's objectives are for keeping business and the industry strong. An inspiring design program presented by Hitomi Gilliam AIFD followed and a quick business lesson on "Which Florists Make Money and Why" was presented by Floral Finance's Paul Goodman. Lunch provided time for the attendees and staff to mingle and network with each other.

After lunch, participants were part of a technology talk show—a casual discussion of the benefits and possibilities of using technology to build your business. Kevin Ylvisaker AIFD commanded the stage next with his original design program, "Designing for Generation Y-not," in which he explored where the customers of the future will come from and how they are different. The show's finale was a "reality show" event where members of the audience show their stuff to the crowd.

Sunday's packed format was followed by personalized hands-on classes on Monday in design and business profitability. The business classes are always very popular. Many florists share that they learn so much in these sessions that they can put to use immediately—things to help them thrive in a challenging economy.

Is Teleflora Live! coming to a city near you? Watch for bulletins in future issues of MyTeleflora News. 🐾

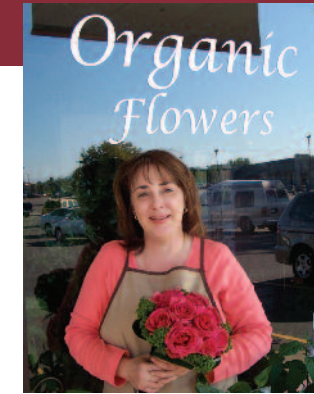


*Teleflora Education Specialists Hitomi Gilliam and Kevin Ylvisaker (top left and center) conducted hands-on workshops on the second day of Teleflora Live! in Atlanta. Participating florists divide into two enthusiastic classes (bottom two photos at left) so that each participant can get maximum individual attention. Over the two days, design trends and techniques are balanced with sessions focused on bottom-line business strategy.*



# myteleflora news

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Share *your* marketing ideas and win \$100! See page 7

## Don't forget education, despite tough times.

It's nearly impossible to read a newspaper or watch the news without being reminded of the nation's struggling economy. To say the least, this year has been challenging for many people and especially for small businesses.

Recovery will come, and the sooner the better, but no one can say for sure when that will be. As we watch and wait, I know that many of you are planning your budgets for 2009 and looking for ways to trim costs and save money.

During this process, I hope you'll remember the importance of continuing education. Now more than ever, it's vital to stay abreast of new design trends and best business practices. Acquiring knowledge is also an investment in the future.

In December, Teleflora's Education Center announces the schedule for 2009. Next year marks the 25th anniversary of this state-of-the-art facility, a member resource that's unique in the floral industry.

Increasingly, consumers want custom floral designs, looks they can't find anywhere else. To meet that need, our lineup features top instructors giving hands-on instruction for everyday and special-occasion design, informed by cutting-edge floral work from the U.S., Europe and Asia.

Also on the agenda: strategies for running your business. A key part of this class is setting up the correct pricing structure for

your floral shop and determining whether you are using the right accounting system.

The Education Center also coordinates Teleflora Live! seminars, which travel to several cities each year.

On a related note, you've probably heard that Teleflora's Rich Salvaggio, Vice-President of Industry Relations and Floral Publications, and a lifelong proponent of education, was recently honored by the industry he has served so diligently and tirelessly for almost 40 years.

This summer, Rich won three major awards: the American Institute of Floral Designers' Award of Distinguished Service, the Texas State Florists' Association's Lifetime Achievement Award and the Southern Retail Florist Association's Harold Mills Distinguished Service Award.

If you haven't already, I hope you'll join me in congratulating Rich and that you'll follow his example in continuing to learn. At its best, education inspires us to imagine, to innovate, to achieve.

We are formulating ways to stay the course in this turbulent economy and education can be a vital ally as we move forward. With patience and perseverance, we will survive and thrive. 🐾

Shawn Weidmann is President of Teleflora.



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faces & places



**Honoring 9/11 victims**

When a new Pentagon memorial was dedicated this past September 11, the stage was covered with flowers—thanks to Paul Brockway, owner of **Conklyn's Florist in Washington, D.C.** The officials responsible for planning the ceremony, which was broadcast on national television, hadn't given much thought to flowers until Paul contacted them and offered to coordinate the floral decorations. Fresh flowers—\$3,000 of white lilies, roses and carnations—were donated by Teleflora's Stems&Bunches. Although he doesn't normally design, Paul stepped in to create an arrangement requested at the last minute. The arrangement was for a bell that tolled with the reading of each of the Pentagon victims' names, and it was shown repeatedly on television. "The one arrangement I've ever made made it onto the news everywhere," quips Paul. Conklyn's locations in the DC area include one in the Pentagon itself, so the memorial has special meaning for Paul and his Pentagon staff, who knew many of the victims.



**Breaking ground**

Sometimes a new location is much more than a new location—it's a symbol of hope, determination and innovative entrepreneurship. That's certainly true of the new headquarters, production and distribution center soon to be opened by **Eastern Floral in Grand Rapids, MI.** The facility, to be housed in a former furniture

factory, includes 10,000 square feet set aside for an International Center for Entrepreneurial Excellence, a new nonprofit that will specialize in helping women and minorities start their own businesses.

Eastern Floral owner Bing Goei is himself a minority success story, having arrived in the U.S. with his family from Indonesia when he was ten years old. His new headquarters (Eastern Floral's current building will remain open) is expected to help revitalize the area. A groundbreaking ceremony in September was attended by (in the back row from left to right), Rod Crittendon, president of the Michigan Floral Association, Rick Huisman of Eastern Floral, local business leader Richard DeVos, Jason Goei of Eastern Floral, and in the front row, Eastern Floral's Anja Burns, Linda Uzarski, and Maureen McKay, plus Bing Goei and Teleflora's Mark Freeman.

**Hall of Famer**

It's quite an honor to receive the Sarasota Business Hall of Fame Award—but even more so if one of your competitors for the award is the Ritz Carlton, notes Art Conforti of **Beneva Flowers in Sarasota, FL.** "What was most rewarding for me was having my father there to share it with us," says Art (seen in the photo with his wife Donna). Art's father, Arthur Conforti Sr., started Beneva Flowers in 1987 and sold the business to his son in 1992. "Can you imagine a family business winning an award of service over the Ritz Carlton? We have learned so much from the Ritz Carlton and used it in our everyday business. I hope this story could inspire other florists." The award is bestowed by a panel on the basis of interviews and a thoroughgoing review of company practices.



**Pulling out all the stops**

When a florist designs her own wedding bouquet, the sky's the limit, right? Marie Noe of **A Bella Mia in Norwood, MA** created a bridal confection for her own special day that looks like it takes two hands to hold, using all white flowers



including lilies, roses, callas, dendrobium orchids, pearls and jewel sprays. No worries about the profit margin here; it's all a labor of love—a beautiful bouquet for a beautiful bride! Best of luck, Marie!



**Celebrating half a century**

**Welborn's Florist in Owensboro, KY** marked a fifty-year anniversary this year; the shop has been a Teleflora member since 1971. Teleflora's Jeff Newlin (holding the plaque) stopped by to congratulate (from left to right) Irene Welborn, O.C. Harrington and Dick Knight.

**Happy day**

Fran Davis, who works for Pat and Tanya Phillips of **The Flower Merchant in Springfield, MO,** looks very happy to have just won both the Silver Cup and The Ozark Cup at the Ozark State Floral Association convention held in Joplin, MO. Along with those impressive-looking trophies she gets a scholarship to the Teleflora Education Center in Oklahoma City—and a hug from Teleflora Marketing Counselor Marty Pulliam.



teleflora in the news

**Teleflora creates flower visibility at celebrity events.**

This fall, floral arrangements courtesy of Teleflora and our member florists were spotted at various high-profile events in New York City and Washington, DC. Among them was a national awards program to honor Latinas serving in the Armed Forces, hosted by the magazine *Latina Style*; Teleflora florist David Hope and his team at the **Flower Gallery in Washington, DC** created more than 30 beautiful centerpieces full of red and white roses, along with 20 bouquets for those honored at the program. In New York, floral displays from Teleflora were displayed at a premiere party attended by the entire *Ugly Betty* TV show cast, including guest star Lindsay Lohan, plus more than 150 guests. Meanwhile, during New York's Fashion Week, top designer Akiko Ogawa presented a collection with a rose theme (pictured); Teleflora turned to **Macres 30th Street Florist in New York City** to create bouquets for Ogawa and other designers.



Flowers were in evidence, thanks to Teleflora and member florists, at newsworthy events this fall, including (clockwise from top left) a program to honor Latinas in the Armed Forces, a cast part for the television show *Ugly Betty*, and New York's Fashion Week.

a word from tom

**Looking for a business boost next year? Look to your state florist association.**

As I write this column, the season for state florist conventions is winding down. This year, I attended every state convention that I could—nearly all of them. While not every state has its own association and convention, those that do are blessed.

One thing I noted is that, due to the challenging economic times, there is more interest than ever in educational programs. Savvy florists know that the best way to stay competitive is to stay ahead of the curve with trends and profitmaking strategies. Responding to this need, the state associations are placing more emphasis on education—which is why Teleflora continues to support them by sponsoring educational programs and also other aspects of the convention.

State florist associations provide good value for retail florists in other ways besides education. As they have done since the associations were formed, they provide an opportunity for florists to meet other florists from around the state, creating a networking relationship to send and receive orders. They also offer a chance to see up close all the latest Teleflora products and services that are available to help the florist's business.

Thinking ahead to 2009, it is worth the effort for you to attend your local convention next year. Plan on it—you can count on Teleflora to be there with you!



Teleflora Chairman Tom Butler with florists and Teleflora personnel at the Arkansas Florists' Association convention in August.



Tom Butler AAF is Chairman of Teleflora.

More updates from Tom can be found at MyTeleflora.com.

## Teleflora's Christmas lineup is even more versatile and marketable than you thought.



**Teleflora's Silver Pinecone Bouquet (08X100)**

- Sell the pinecone candle holders as individual gift items. Add in several replacement tea lights (maybe scented ones!), box them in acetate corsage boxes, and beribbon the outside to make them ready-to-go gifts.
- Create a super-duper version of the featured bouquet using three of the pinecones in the center of a larger tray of evergreens. Be sure to display the standard bouquet alongside it.
- The silver pinecone makes it a great choice for New Year's Eve centerpieces. You can even say that one lucky guest at each table starts the new year off right!



**Thomas Kincade's Childhood Home Bouquet by Teleflora (08X200)**

- Create tablescapes for home holiday centerpieces or mantels. Carve a base from one-inch-thick Styrofoam. Attach one or more Kincade Cottages and add white branches and fluffy fiber-fill snow to create a Christmas scene.

- Include an extra set of batteries and instructions on how to change the batteries with every sale. Your customers will appreciate this extra step and it will save questions after the designs are delivered.
- For added fun, spray the evergreens with aerosol spray snow for a flocked look. Remember to create the circle of greens first, remove the cottage, and then spray the foliage. After the snow dries, you can add the house back into the design.



**Holiday Star Bowl Bouquet by Teleflora (08X300)**

- Display the bowl in the shop filled with silver ornaments and stars for a casual centerpiece idea.
- Create a version of the design with permanent botanicals, designed to last all season—and for years to come.
- Float a single white gerbera in one of the bowls for a simple, classic holiday look.

**Teleflora's Golden Peace Bouquet (08X400)**

- Create a design using the hurricane along with red, white and blue materials for military families who are away from their loved ones this holiday season.



Christmas cacti, or even an ivy plant. A perfect hostess gift!

- Shrink-wrap the jar with the lid or wrap them in nylon mesh and use as giant tree ornaments in a shop display.

- Create a design using all permanent materials. Remove the glass chimney and spray the entire bouquet gold. Add a touch of glitter for some sparkle. The resulting design will look like a piece of jewelry.
- Use the hurricane chimney for holiday weddings. For a candlelight attendant's bouquet, use the chimney in a bouquet holder with a battery operated candle for safety. Surround the chimney with flowers inserted into the bouquet holder.



**Teleflora's Ruby Swirl Ornament Bouquet (08X500)**

- Ornament for the teacher? Remove the liner and discard the lid pick, add wrapped candies inside the bowl and wrap the bowl in cellophane for a fabulous teacher gift.
- Drop in a four-inch blooming or green plant for a long-lasting treat. Try mini poinsettias,



**Teleflora's Holiday Gift Bouquet (08X600)**

- The simplicity of this design's construction makes it ideal for last-minute gift giving. Use one or two short-stemmed "leftovers" from other designs to create something remarkable. Make 15-20 insertions and the design work is done!
- Suggest these for corporate party centerpieces, and even suggest the theme to the party's hosts: "Every Day's a Gift."
- Create a taller modern structural design using this container. Extend the four corners with birch branches and drop in some specimen blossoms to showcase them in style.



**Teleflora's Galway Crystal Christmas Tree (08X700)**

- Merchandise the tree with other crystal giftware in your shop. Cross-merchandise the display area with crystal bowls, ornaments, candlesticks and gems. Perfect for every holiday season.
- Create your own "upgrade package" for the tree. Purchase some smaller coordinating ornaments and package them for sale alongside the trees themselves. Show one tree with the "ultimate" treatment alongside the a tree with the standard kit.
- Always plug in the tree when it's on display in the shop. There's no better way to remind customers that the tree is pre-lighted. ✨

## Congratulations to our sweepstakes winners!

The following florists who purchased Teleflora products for the fall and winter season were automatically entered in sweepstakes and won these exciting prizes:

### Lucky Silver Pinecone Sweepstakes

Five grand prize winners are getting free Teleflora memberships for one year:

**The Flower Mill Unique Floral**, Fergus Falls, MN

**Johnson Floral & Greenhouses**, Austin, MN

**Creation Creations**, Ulysses, KS

**The Flower House**, Kenai, AK

**All City Florist, Inc.**, Melbourne, FL

Twenty-five first prize winners will receive a set of 600 calendars for 2009 imprinted with the shop's information. The 600 calendars include 200 wall, 200 magnetic and 200 pocket calendars. For a list of these winners, please visit [myteleflora.com](http://myteleflora.com).

### Teleflora's Colonial Williamsburg Sweepstakes

One grand prize winner gets an all-expenses-paid trip for two to the 63rd annual Garden Symposium in Colonial Williamsburg: **Libertyville Florist**, Libertyville, IL

Five first prize winners receive a \$500 Colonial Williamsburg gift card:

**Elegant Solutions**, Sherwood Park, AB

**Ambrosia Floral Boutique**, Chandler, AZ

**Bud Stop Florist**, Miami, FL

**Zips Flowers by the Gates**, Decatur, IL

**Drayer's Florist**, Middle River, MD

### Tinker Bell Sweepstakes

One grand prize winner receives a \$500 Disney merchandise gift card: **Flowers of Point Loma**, San Diego, CA

One first prize winner gets a collection of classic Disney DVDs: **Flowers & Gifts by Molly Culbert**, Hoopston, IL

One hundred second prize winners are receiving Walt Disney's Tinker Bell DVD. For a list of these winners, please visit [myteleflora.com](http://myteleflora.com).

Don't forget that the five Thomas Kincade's Home for the Holidays Sweepstakes winners will receive a box of Childhood Home cottages signed by the artist himself. Be sure to open your box of cottages to see if you are a winner! ✨

## Coming this Valentine's Day: the Rubies & Roses Sweepstakes!

Teleflora's exciting promotion for Valentine's Day 2009 will begin on January 19. Customers qualified to enter the sweepstakes include any who purchase a Valentine's bouquet from Teleflora.com and any recipient of a Teleflora codified Valentine's bouquet.

The grand prize winner will receive a stunning ruby necklace. For the first prize, 100 consumers will win a gorgeous ruby and diamond pendant. For the runner-up prize, 1,000 consumers will win a ruby pendant.

Rubies & Roses sweepstakes game pieces will be included in the product boxes of all four Valentine's Day 2009 codified products. You must include one game piece—with your shop name and phone number written on the back—with each of the codified bouquets that are purchased from you and/or delivered by you between January 19, 2009 and February 27, 2009. With the PIN number from the game piece you provide, your customer can go online to [www.teleflorasweepstakes.com](http://www.teleflorasweepstakes.com) to register to win.

Florists who purchase all four codified Valentine's Day products will be eligible to win a grand prize: Teleflora membership for one year. Five florists will receive a runner-up prize of a Stems&Bunches flower pack valued at \$1,000.

In order to be eligible for our exciting Valentine's Day 2009 Rubies & Roses promotion, you must be codified for the entire codified product line-up by December 22, 2008. Don't miss out on the opportunity to be a part of this thrilling Valentine's Day sweepstakes! ✨

## Happy First Birthday, DovePlus!

Just one year after it was launched, DovePlus, Teleflora's web-based alternative to Dove, is being used by over 3,000 florists in the U.S. and Canada. And according to Jay Armstrong, the system's strong growth isn't expected to slow anytime soon.

"We're adding hundreds of florists each week," says Jay. "This includes florists transitioning from Dove as well as new members."

DovePlus offers the convenience and efficiency of using an Internet connection instead of a dedicated phone line for sending and receiving orders. This saves florists the cost of the phone line and offers other advantages like the ability to check orders from home or anywhere there is an Internet connection. You can also see Teleflora

products and florists without having to install CDs.

"With DovePlus, the florist and product directories are automatically updated," Jay explains. "We are also able to push updates electronically, which allows us to make changes and enhancements to DovePlus on a regular basis."

The DovePlus team reviews survey data and support requests to determine and prioritize what changes will be made to the program. Thanks to user feedback, several enhancements to the florist and product lookup areas of the program were made this summer.

Another recent change was the addition of florist ads to the site. Florists that have an ad 4½ inches or larger in the print directory

also receive an online banner ad along the top of the florist lookup screen. Ads change every eight seconds; larger advertisers appear more frequently in the rotation. When a user hovers over an ad, a pop-up window of information will appear. It's a great way to gain exposure and visibility among other florists filling orders.

Upgrading from Dove to DovePlus is simple. Just call DovePlus support at 800-720-9418.

"Upgrading takes less than an hour and that includes time for training," says Jay. "As long as the shop has a high-speed Internet connection and is using IE 6 or 7, there is no reason not to move to DovePlus and save the cost of a dedicated phone line." ☛

## RTI, Dove POS, Daisy and Eagle are all "new and improved" in 2008 and 2009.



Debbie Listman



Jim Talarico

versions of RTI, Dove POS, Daisy and Eagle. Upgrades were free to shops with maintenance agreements. In addition to new features and enhancements, each system includes behind-the-scenes changes that help mitigate the risk of the system being hacked and credit card data being stolen.

"Although we added new, unique features in each POS system," says Debbie, "the biggest changes involved taking advantage of the Internet to receive and send orders, as well as for high-speed credit-card authorizations."

According to Vice President of POS Jim Talarico, the pace of releasing new versions of Teleflora's POS systems isn't going to slow in 2009. In fact, the new versions planned for 2009 have been in the works for quite some time.

"Writing lines of code comes at the mid-point of the release development process," Jim explains. "No code is written until we've reviewed support phone calls,

conducted focus groups with florists and reviewed surveys to help us prioritize what new features should be included in each system."

Another major step in the release cycle is quality assurance testing, which can take several months to complete after the programming is done. During the QA process, technicians run tests that try to identify and iron out "bugs" prior to release. After QA completes testing, the POS system is installed in beta shops for additional testing prior to general release.

Depending on the complexity of the system and the new features planned, a new release can involve over a year of planning, research, development and testing.

"We understand and believe that technology is one of the most important ways that we can help our members succeed," says Debbie. "That's why we actively continue to improve and support RTI, Dove POS, Daisy and Eagle." ☛

The generation of millions of lines of programming code may not be your idea of a good time, but for Teleflora COO Debbie Listman those lines of code are just one of the many reasons to celebrate as the year comes to a close.

"2008 has been an extremely busy year for Teleflora's technology division," Debbie explains. "Our development, quality assurance and support teams have launched new versions of each of our POS systems this year as well continuing to update our new, web-based system, DovePlus."

During 2008, Teleflora introduced new

## Earth-friendly flowers offer a new marketing niche to Cherry Blossoms in Westminster, CO.



Cherrie Silverman holds a bouquet made from Nevado Brothers Organic Pink Intuition—"absolutely fabulous roses," says Cherrie.

It all started when Cherrie Silverman, of **Cherry Blossoms in Westminster, CO**, got hired to create a trade-show booth for OrganicBouquet.com, the marketer of organic and sustainably grown flowers. (Cherrie had met Gerald Prolman, OrganicBouquet.com's founder, three years before working on a Rose Parade float. So when a business-to-business organic-industries forum came to Boulder, CO, it was a natural for Gerald to contact Cherrie.)

"As I was doing the booth, girls kept coming up to me and asking if I could do their weddings with organic flowers," Cherrie

recalls. "The brain started ticking." Why couldn't she market organic flowers right alongside her regular product?

"I had this domain name available, cherryblossomsflorist.net." (Cherrie's original website is at cherryblossomsflorist.com.) "So I thought I would give it a whirl. It really wouldn't cost too much, just the new site and some computer time getting the site recognized, listing it with search engines."

Organic product costs a little more, Cherrie concedes, "mostly because of shipping expenses. But the product is so beautiful! I jump to be the one to process the product as it comes in." So far, according to Cherrie, there are only a few types of flowers available that are truly organic, including roses, alstroemeria, hydrangea, callas, tulips, and sunflowers—"but new sustainably grown farms are popping up everywhere. Many of the Ecuador farms have Veriflora certification. The USDA Organic label is from the farms I use in California for sunflowers and greens. The sunflowers are stunning."

Cherrie keeps the organic and sustainable product in a separate area in the cooler. In fact, she has purchased separate buckets—white for the organic product, black for the regular flowers—and a separate underwater cutter for the organic product. "It's kind of like keeping kosher," she explains. "The organic and sustainable product cannot come into contact with anything that has

already been contaminated with product that has had chemicals introduced." However, because she is buying organic product in fairly large quantities, she is incorporating some of it into her everyday mix.

One problem is preservative, because organic flower food is not yet available, as far as Cherrie is aware. "I have a little info packet telling people to use vinegar, sugar, and an aspirin in the water," she says. "I don't know what else to do."

Cherrie charges a little more for the organic and sustainable product, but not much. In keeping with the concept and the market for these flowers, she uses mostly high-end glassware; all printed material is on recycled paper. She has lots of ideas for marketing the new line and website. Among them, she has info cards going out with every order that offer information about her Earth-friendly product and a 20% discount on the next order. She has sent bouquets to socially responsible companies in her area and to the editors of local papers. The response has been very positive.

"It's been quite the learning process," says Cherrie, an AIFD member and former Teleflora Unit President. For this innovative florist, that's yet another benefit to a new program that's healthy all-around—for the Earth and for her business.

For more information about the Veriflora certification program for sustainable grown flowers, visit [www.veriflora.com](http://www.veriflora.com). ☛

## Be our Marketer of the Month and win \$100!

We're looking for a few good ideas—ideas that member florists have actually put into practice. Do you have a story about a program or promotion that brought consumers into your shop and boosted your bottom

line? If so, please write us at [newsletter@teleflora.com](mailto:newsletter@teleflora.com). Include a photo if you have one. If your story is picked to be featured in MyTeleflora News, you will receive a \$100 American Express Gift Card! ☛