

myteleflora

{news}

showcase your talent
with florist choice
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florist choice: when consumers want excellence, they can trust our experts

From strong partnerships come strong ideas.

As we work together to weather uncertain economic storms, we have programs in place to survive and thrive. Last month, we introduced our Save the Florists campaign, which is designed to counteract the adverse effects of drop shipping. Sending flowers in a box takes more than \$500 million worth of orders away from local florists.

Our aim with Save the Florists is to counter this threat to your livelihood and put orders back in your hands. Whereas other wire services have no qualms about bypassing local florists and drop shipping as much as 80 percent of their orders, Teleflora is completely committed to its pledge that 100% of orders are hand-arranged and hand-delivered by professional florists.

The other side of the equation is to inform and educate consumers, and to stay ahead of the curve in terms of catering to their shopping preferences. People are keeping a tight rein on their personal budgets and, when they do spend money, they want both value and simplicity.

So, I want to make sure you are aware of a new initiative that will create a win-win situation for everyone involved: our Florist Choice program on Teleflora.com and eFlorist websites. Instead of choosing between several arrangements, consumers pick a price and occasion, provide short special instructions and leave the rest to you.

With minimal time and input, they'll receive a uniquely special gift. The benefit for florists is that you can showcase your artistry and maximize your inventory because you can use what's available in your shop rather than stocking a specific flower or vase.

Vital to the program's success will be your enthusiasm and your eye for design. Fulfilling these recipe-free orders to meet or even exceed customer expectations will drive repeat business. And pleasing customers builds trust, between you and your customers and on behalf of the entire network of Teleflora florists.

Trust, along with commitment and common goals, is key to our mutual success. With these components in place, we will reap the benefits for years to come.

Sincerely,

shawn weidmann {president of teleflora}



an education hero

Rich Salvaggio, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, CAFA, was honored at this year's SAF Convention with the prestigious Tommy Bright Award. This award is reserved for members of PFCI (Professional Floral Communicators – International) who have achieved the highest level of distinction as floral educators. Rich "helped shape education in the industry as we know it today," said PFCI Chairman Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, CAFA, MCF, of **Blooms By....JRDesigns** in Ferndale, MI. As Teleflora's vice president of industry relations and publications, Rich heads Teleflora's Units Program, which offers more than 300 business, design and technology programs at the local level each year. Over his long career he has taught florists in all 50 states, Canada, Puerto Rico, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. Renowned as a floral artist, Rich stated in receiving the award that "the best design in the world is no good unless you teach it to someone else."

business smarts

More than two dozen participants from 21 different shops attended this year's Business Smarts Summit, hosted by the Teleflora Education Center. It was the third consecutive year the class was offered. Financial guru Paul Goodman of Floral Finance in Tulsa, OK, showed ways to tighten up control and increase profitability in three areas: facilities expense, payroll, and cost of goods sold. Tim Farrell AIFD, also an instructor and a retail florist himself, shared ideas on how to make holidays more profitable and sane by focusing your sales and production. Other highlights included a session on "Merchandising Your 'Other' Store"—your web site—presented by Teleflora's eFlorist service manager Phil Meadows, and a session on credit-card security with Teleflora Florist Technologies VP Jim Talarico.



Perhaps the class favorite, though, is the chance to share "best practices" in marketing and branding with other participants. Since "the best time to water the soil is when it is dry," this year's ideas were really focused on how to market your business in a shaky economy. Small groups of class participants created mini-business plans for growing their business in areas like sympathy sales, prom work and corporate business. Student Leanna Mayberry of **William J's Emporium** in Greenville, PA attests, "With every idea I shared, I got three or four back."

a word from tom



Rich Salvaggio AIFD, AAF, PFCI, accepts the Tommy Bright Award at SAF. With Rich are Teleflora VP of National Sales Jack Howard, Teleflora CEO Shawn Weidmann, PFCI Chairman Jerome Raska AAF, AIFD, PFCI, CAFA, MCF, and myself.

Teleflora education is all about business

Last month in this column I wrote about Teleflora's commitment to educational opportunities for our member florists. I'm taking up the subject again because it's so important.

We were very proud when Rich Salvaggio, who heads up Teleflora's educational publications and Units Program, won the Tommy Bright Award this year from Professional Floral Communicators International (PFCI). This honor is well deserved.

But Teleflora has always had the very best people as part of our education team. Past Tommy Bright recipients include Rich's predecessor Rocky Pollitz, Marie Ackerman, who currently runs the Teleflora Education Center, and Jim Morley, Vice President Emeritus of Education, among others who have served on the team, past and present.

These folks are great designers and great teachers. But it's important to realize something else about them: all of them are also smart business people who understand very well that it's no good making a pretty design if it's not profitable.

Many of our Education Specialists are world-famous as floral artists. But when I hear any of them give an educational program for Teleflora, I'm always impressed by how they keep bringing the subject back to the bottom line. They're skilled at using design to talk about business.

Don't get me wrong: florists who are good business people realize you have to have good design. That's one important way to differentiate yourself from the competition. But in the end, Teleflora's educational programs will always serve one purpose: to boost your business success.

tom butler (chairman of teleflora)

Teleflora members on the go!



new window decals

Proudly displaying new window decals from Teleflora are Sakina Berman at **Newton Floral Oasis** in Newton, MA, and Joanne Fiore at **Andover Flower Farm** in North Andover, MA. Joanne is also wearing a new apron! Members interested in obtaining the decals should contact their Territory Sales Manager. If you're not sure who your TSM is, call Membership Services at 800.421.2815.



honored in east cincinnati



Mt. Washington Florist in Cincinnati, OH was named "Eastern Cincinnati's Best Florist" this year by readers of that city's Community Press newspaper. The shop is co-owned by Dave Immerman and David Presser. "That made my day," says Dave, who attributes the honor to "wide selection and attention to detail."

out for new business

At **Plaza Florist** in Norristown, PA owner Chris Drummond isn't taking tough economic times lying down. Beyond keeping costs low, this summer Chris launched a sales initiative to bring in new business. Staff has hit the pavement to visit hotels, restaurants, churches, and funeral directors. Chris also attended the Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association Convention to make new contacts in that industry and is pushing visibility on social networking sites. All the effort has paid off! Pictured are staff members involved: Shannon Toal, Chris Drummond, Kenny Ostroski, Renee Tucci, and Samantha Pascal. These same folks were the design team for Philadelphia's Welcome America Parade, for which Plaza Florist donated flowers.



true-blue texans

Here's a gathering of some Lone Star state florists at this summer's Texas State Florists Association Convention: from left to right, Clay Atchison of **McAdams Floral** in Victoria, TX; Selesse Thompson of **Precious Memories** in Temple, TX; Charles Ingrum of **Dr. Delphinium Designs** in Dallas; and Gayle Johnson of **G. Johnson's Floral Images** in Houston. Visiting with them is Tom Butler, Chairman of Teleflora.



* We'd love to hear about your anniversaries, awards and achievements, along with human-interest stories. Take photos with camera settings on "large" or "high-quality" and send to newsletter@teleflora.com.



In Arkansas, Lanette and Marty Pulliam gave June Owen of **North Hills Florist & Gifts** in Sherwood, a scrapbook full of 25 years of memories, in addition to presenting her with a top-member plaque. More Arkansas top members: Butch and Janie Johnston AAF of **Johnston's Quality Flowers, Inc.** in Ft. Smith, with Teleflora's Suzi Lawrence and the Johnstons' daughter Candace; Joe Turner of **Cathy's Flowers & Gifts** in Russellville, who received his plaque at Arkansas State from Suzi Lawrence and Tom Butler; Robert Robertson of **AMF Expressions Flowers** in Ft. Smith, who received his plaque at a Teleflora Unit Program at River Valley Wholesale (Arkansas Unit President Jan Dietrich of Friday's Flowers & Gifts in Fayetteville was there to celebrate along with Suzi Lawrence); Scott Snow of **Scott's Flowers, Inc.** in Paris; Melanie Pittenger of **Siloam Flowers & Gifts, Inc.** in Siloam Springs (with Suzi Lawrence); Rusty Eldridge, manager, who accepted a Top 2000 Plaque for owner Pat Turner of **Springdale Flower Shop** in Springdale; and Glen Schnetzinger AIFD—who balances **Country Gardens** in Springdale, AR with six-week-old Landric, a “flower box baby” already following in Dad's footsteps.



Top members Ed Bugaj (holding the plaque) and John Neumann of **Plaza Florist** in Berlin, CT are big fans of Dove POS.



Stacey Cook of **Duncan's Florist** in Hayden Lake, ID.



Blake and Corey Roberts from **Forest Lake Floral** in Forest Lake, MN.

In Michigan, Teleflora's Don Ball presents a plaque to Teresa Cytlak of **Ridgeway Floral & Gifts** in Three Rivers; Teleflora's Kathy Petz congratulates Kay Kiekbusch and Frank Janousz of **English Gardens** in Dearborn Heights.



a winner in mid america

Now in its third year, the Mid-America Invitational Cup offers champions from several neighboring states the opportunity to compete at the Arkansas Florists Association convention. This year's winner: Wayne Esterle, AIFD, KMF, here pictured with Bill Plummer of **Plummer's Flowers** in Plummerville, AR; Jo Buttram of **Shirley's Flowers** in Rogers, AR, and Tom Butler, Teleflora Chairman. Congratulations, Wayne!



valley floral does it again

"What a great show!" says Teleflora's Suzi Lawrence. "This company is one of our great supporters of florist education." The annual Christmas program at **Valley Floral Wholesale** in Wichita, KS drew a crowd of 200 people, who came in part for design ideas and commentary from Teleflora Education Specialist Sharon McGukin AIFD, AAF, PFCI. Pictured in the photo are Kerry Sallebedra AIFD, Valley Floral marketing manager, Sharon and Suzi.

southern retail

The venerable Southern Retail Florist Association Convention is alive and kicking! Among those at this year's well-attended show were (from left to right) Melanie Jennings, president of the South Carolina State Florists Association, Teleflora Vice President of Publications and Industry Relations Rich Salvaggio AIFD, AAF, PFCI, and Teleflora Territory Sales Manager Claudia Moore.



camelot in the ozarks

King Arthur's court came to Joplin, MO for the Ozark Florist Association convention this year. Among those getting into the spirit of the theme were Teleflora's David Harman and "wench" Jo Buttram of **Shirley's Flowers** in Rogers, AR. Butch Johnston, AAF, of **Johnston's Quality Flowers, Inc.** in Ft. Smith, AR, Executive Director of the Ozark Florist Association, found his wig getting warm and doffed it for a photo with Shelby Shy, also from Shirley's Flowers, and Teleflora's Suzi Lawrence. As the winner of the Johnston Family Scholarship Award, Shelby will be attending a class at the Teleflora Education Center in Oklahoma City.





Teleflora florists walk the red carpet

Fame may be fleeting, but it's also fun. Teleflora florists found that out firsthand when they attended the red-carpet movie premiere of "Love Happens," starring Aaron Eckhart and Jennifer Aniston. Teleflora provided flowers for the film and Jennifer Aniston plays Eloise, a Seattle-based Teleflora florist.

Rosie Acosta and Maria Contreras of **Flowers by Minerva** in Houston, TX, and Julie and Jeff Sklute of **Yardley Flower Co.** in Morrisville, PA, were winners of Teleflora's "Love Happens" florist sweepstakes. Their prize was the trip to Los Angeles and the chance to see this unique portrayal of a florist. Flowers were part of the story so it was fun to see how gorgeous they looked and how they served the plot of the movie.

Also attending were Jacqueline Fitzgerald from Teleflora's PR team and Marie Ackerman AIFD, AAF, PFCI, who runs the Teleflora Education Center in Oklahoma City. Marie served as the on-set floral consultant and was excited to see the final cut. As Marie puts it: "One of the greatest parts of this film is that you see how much beauty and color flowers bring to life's occasions and to the life of the giver."

Seen in the photo are Maria, Jacqueline, Marie, Rosie, Julie and Jeff.

Speaking of Hollywood, if you're a movie buff as well as a flower fan, here's a trivia challenge for you: In "My Fair Lady" (1964) flower seller Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn) sells flowers in which area of London: Mayfair, Covent Garden, Piccadilly Circus or Knightsbridge? Check back next month for the answer.

Manhattan's yellow-brick road

Teleflora bouquets were part of the festivities this fall when Warner Brothers threw an emerald gala for The Wizard of Oz at Tavern on the Green in Manhattan. In conjunction with the September 29 release on Blu-Ray™ and DVD of The Wizard of Oz 70th Anniversary Ultimate Collector's Edition, Teleflora created its unforgettable Oz bouquet, which brightened tabletops throughout the venue.

There was much at the party to delight the hundreds of guests, including appearances by several of the actors who played the Munchkins as well as a performance by Judy Garland's daughter Lorna Luft.

Additionally, a collection of 20 noted designers' interpretations of Dorothy's classic ruby slippers was auctioned to benefit the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.



The windows of Oz

Inspired by Teleflora's Oz bouquet, florists got creative with their windows this fall. In Princeton, NJ, **Monday Morning Flower and Balloon Co.** used green glass rectangle vases to represent the Emerald City, with "poppy fields" and a wicked-looking apple tree close by. At **Terri's Flower Shop** in Naugatuck, CT, Lydia LeBlanc and Stephanie Fusco actually had the movie playing continually in the window, appropriately decorated. The occasion was extra-special for Terri's, since Naugatuck is the birthplace of Adrian Greenberg, who created the costume designs for the movie.



make the most of it: florist choice

It's easy to see why both customers and florists like Teleflora's new Florist Choice program. It's a great service for customers who are busy or who have a hard time deciding on the perfect bouquet. All they have to do is go to Teleflora.com or directly to the site of a participating florist, pick a price, recipient, and occasion. The result: a gorgeous, original bouquet, hand arranged and hand delivered.

For florists, Florist Choice offers you the chance to use your artistic imagination, following only one recipe: the one in your head. There are no containers to buy and no special flowers to keep in stock. It's a clean-slate opportunity to showcase your quality, service and design expertise.

The Florist Choice option is prominently featured on Teleflora.com. For those with an eFlorist site, Teleflora has recommended price points, but individual shops can set the price points to whatever they wish. If you'd like to make sure Florist Choice is featured on your eFlorist site, simply log onto MyTeleflora.com and the eSAT to add it. Or, contact Web Services at 866.983.3932 or webmaster@teleflora.com.

can't decide

Let our florists do it for you.

CLICK HERE ▶



Remember, any florist can feature and fill Florist Choice orders. As a professional, you certainly want to encourage clients and prospective clients to place their trust in you. This unique service is designed to support that idea. It's just one more example of how Teleflora is working to promote local florists to consumers as the ideal choice for the freshest, most appropriate and beautifully arranged flowers they can get.

marketer of the month



somewhere over the rainbow



Rainbow Roses get talked about wherever they go. **Sweet Gardenia Florist** in Dothan, AL decided to take advantage of that fact with a clever marketing campaign. "When we saw that Stems & Bunches had a new grower offering Rainbow Roses at the best price we had seen them yet, we knew we had to have them!," says Sweet Gardenia's B.J. Pitts.

Before ordering the roses, the folks at Sweet Gardenia ordered glossy, full-color business cards with a certificate on the back that could be redeemed for a free Rainbow Rose. They also printed out enclosure cards with messages like "We have something perfect for every occasion under the sun... or over the rainbow! Have a happy day, Sweet Gardenia Florist."

On the back of the enclosure cards was the message, "Interested in how these roses are made? Find out on our MySpace or Facebook Pages. Just search for Sweet Gardenia Florist" and "Please give these cards to your friends so they can come by and get their own Rainbow Rose for free."

When the roses arrived, staff made up bud vases with one Rainbow Rose plus greenery and static. Then they delivered the bud vases with five of the business cards tucked inside an enclosure card. As recipients, "we chose existing clients that we knew worked in busy places such as hair salons, insurance offices, shoe stores, etc.," says B.J.

"Literally, within minutes of the first bud vase being delivered the phone started ringing. Before closing that very first day we had several people come by and upgrade their free rose into a bud vase to take home. The next day people purchased vase arrangements with the roses too. Most of these were people who had never heard of our shop, let alone been in to see what we had to offer. Our MySpace and our Facebook pages saw an immediate jump in views. We have done other forms of advertising, but we've never seen an immediate response like this," says B.J. "We know beyond a doubt that this one brought in new customers. We hope that the next time all those people need flowers, they will think of Sweet Gardenia first."



* Do you have a story about a program or promotion that has worked for you? If so, write us at newsletter@teleflora.com. Include a photo if you have one. If your story is featured in MyTelefloraNews, you will receive a \$100 American Express Gift Card!