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Sept 2010

ALLIED

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Hauntingly

Close to the holidays

Are You Ready?

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WELCOME

Letter From The President

Education.

Plain and simple; education and marketing will be the ingredients that will set a professional floral business and professional floral designer apart from the competition, part time home based businesses and chain stores.



There are very few national, state or local seminars or conventions that offer the floral industry an opportunity to learn new tricks and trends in our industry. Allied Florists of Houston is one of the few remaining allied's in the US. As AFH members you have an opportunity to meet one time per month for well thought out education programs. So many cities and states no longer support education through local organizations and you were wise enough to join AFH, so take advantage of all of the opportunities to advance yourself. Come ready to learn one new marketing secret or one new design trend. Talk with other successful business owners and designers and learn what makes them successful in these tough economic times.

What will be your one "AH HA" moment this month? What will be the one thing that you take back to your store this month that will encourage and inspire yourself, your staff and ultimately your customers. Take a moment and share your ideas at info@alliedfloristsofhouston.org

Robin Martinez - AAF, TMF
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UPDATES

As members of Allied you have the privilege to be listed in our member directory, on line and in the January edition of our monthly newsletter. In order to make this an effective tool for you, we need to make sure all your information is as up to date as possible.

So, we are asking that you take the time to send us the following information to ensure that as we are updating our records we will have the proper information to give to all our members.

Please send an email to:
info@alliedfloristsofhouston.org
with the following information:

Your name
The name of the shop/
wholesaler/grower
you own/work for
Business address
Business phone
Business fax
Website
Email
Wire services you
work with
Description of any
specialties or services

We want to thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please remember that we need your current information as soon as possible. This will ensure that we can provide all our members with your correct information, so that together, we can build a stronger, more united Allied.

Mark your calendar for the first general meeting of the year. You will have the privilege to come and see a stunning display of floral creations by Angels Henry's students from the Houston School of Floral Design during our table top design competition. The top 3 designers will have a reserved spot in the 2010 Houston Cup Competition! Please call Kathy at 281-345-1166 for more information and to RSVP, Thank you!

When: Tuesday, September 14th 2010

6:00 p.m. Networking 7:00 Dinner

Where: Allegria Gardens 18311 Clay
Road Houston, TX 77084

Catering: Fiesta Charra

September

Allied Meeting





SHOW

US WHAT YOU GOT!

You made an arrangement on what? How did you get that up there? You pulled that together with what flowers? How many days notice?

Everyone has had these types of questions run through their head, right? The last minute customer demanding the impossible... sounds all too familiar, right? Well, we want you to show off your near impossible tasks! Send us a picture and a brief description about how you accomplished the impossible! We want to share your stories so we can learn from each other. So go on, show us what you got!

Back 2 the Basics

Do I need to wire my flowers (for example, roses)? I've heard people do this.

Absolutely not! The old fashioned remedy for droopy stems is as obsolete as the Edsel! Many years ago wires would be inserted into the calyx of roses and then wrapped around the stem to prevent the rose head from drooping. This not only dramatically

shortened the vase life of the flower; it was downright mean and unattractive. Properly "processed" healthy fresh flowers that are placed in cool flower nutrient water never need to be wired. If flower heads droop there is something dramatically wrong with the flowers or water. Bacteria in the water, unregulated PH or high sugar levels are most likely the culprits in this situation.



As you begin to plan the decor and inventory for this holiday season, we encourage you to take a look at the latest trends in holiday decor for the 2010-2011 season.

As consumers have evolved into the pickiest purchasers in over 20 years you need to make sure that the products you offer are ahead of the outgoing trends and pushing forward with new colors, designs, and items that are simply irresistible.

When a consumer walks into your store they will make a decision within the first 10 seconds as to whether they like or do not like the item in question. 62-90% of that decision is made based purely on color. You can try to stay safe with the basics, but you can't excite with the basics. Consumers today need to be excited. They need to be under the impression that they simply can't live without the item in question. Otherwise they will not justify the purchase and you will be out of a potential sale.

There are many key factors that contribute to closing a sale, but the initial impact of the item is going to make or break it for you.

You are probably wondering which trends are going to be the "must haves" of this season. Here is a short list of the basics that people will be pining over, so take a look and see if any of these items would be profitable in your area.

For more color trend information please visit www.thetrendcurve.com



1. Eco-Luxe: Thinking green doesn't stop for the Holidays, but it does get dressed up for the occasion. Warm metallics are preferred accents to colors like Frosted Evergreen and Potting Moss.

2. Cooled Down Color: You can't go wrong with polar blues, ranging from watery to near navy.



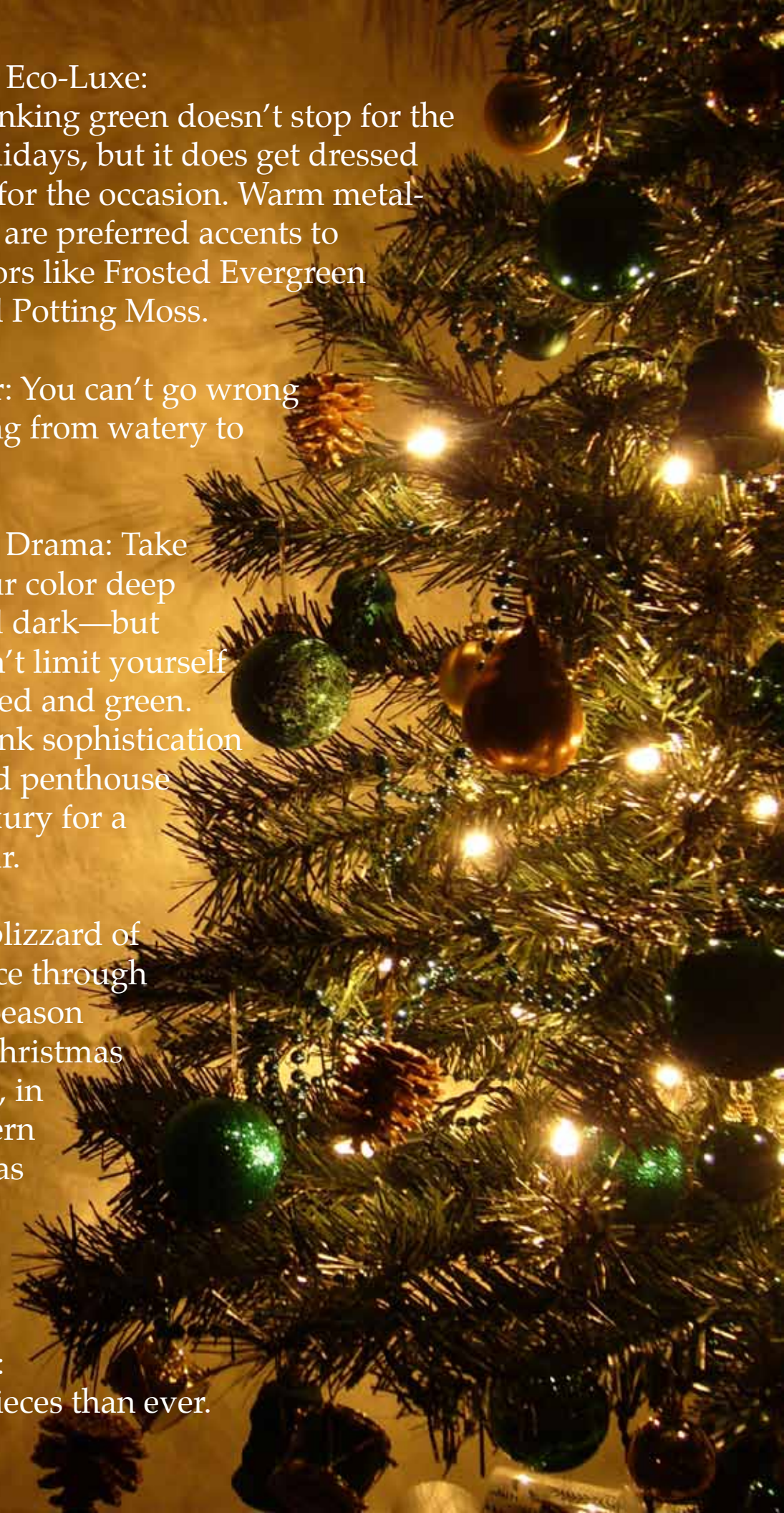
3. Drama: Take your color deep and dark—but don't limit yourself to red and green. Think sophistication and penthouse luxury for a

trend we call Soirée Noir.

4. Santa's Helpers: A blizzard of cats and dogs will prance through the Season on Christmas trees, in pattern and as gifts.



5. Let There Be Light: LED's will light more pieces than ever.



SHARON MCGUKIN AIFD- HOSTED BY SOUTHERN FLORAL SPONSORED BY TELEFLORA

Mrs. Sharon McGukin AIFD President shared with an eager audience some absolutely beautiful wedding designs in her show.

Although she had a broken wrist she still demonstrated to the crowd different varieties of handtied bouquets and other arrangements that were truly sensational.

Since the release of her new book *Flowers of the Heart*, Sharon has been traveling, sponsored by Teleflora, to different wholesalers around the nation sharing with them her tips for your bride that's on a budget.

She passed around numerous bouquets showcasing the mechanics and different ways to finish them off, with ribbon, wire, feathers, curly willow and many other

materials. Her designs were fresh and interesting.

She recommended that as we sell wedding packages to our brides to sell them by color, not by bloom. We are all too aware of the fact that when we need something most is usually when it doesn't come in just right. Guard yourself from this mishap by selling color groups, not individual blooms.

Make sure to get to know your clients and what they are looking for. This way you will be able to get a better feel for what they are looking for and what kind of a budget they have.

Be creative, try new things, and direct your brides to the latest trends. As Sharon said, "We have to train our clients to know what they want."

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Newly Dedicated WF&FSA Conference Website

An entire web page has been created that is solely dedicated to informing YOU about everything there is to know about the 2010 WF&FSA Conference, at the Doral in Miami, FL, November 3-5. The site is a clickable brochure that contains everything and anything you need to know about the conference including how to register, who's already registered and where to book travel accommodations. There are already well over 200+ people registered for the conference, half of which are wholesale distributors. Visit the website today and learn all there is know about this upcoming event www.wffsa.org/conference.

WF&FSA Supply Data Exchange - Free Audio Conference for Wholesalers

The Supply Data Exchange is a protocol developed by the WF&FSA Technology Committee to help wholesale distributors receive data more efficiently from their hardgoods suppliers. WF&FSA is offering a free Audio Conference at 3:00 pm (Eastern), Tuesday, September 14, 2010 to any wholesale distributor who would like to learn more.

The panel of presenters will be hosted by Chuck Macuga, Cleveland Plant & Flower. Panelist include: Joe Dishon, Syndicate Sales, Inc.; Jacque Sir Louis, Smithers Oasis; and Catalina Correa, International Floral Distributors.

Pre-registration is required to participate. Plan one hour for the audio conference. There will be time for Q&A. To register, contact Ken Hess at khess@wffsa.org or 888-289-3372.

Florist Best Marketing Practice -

Cooperate Courtship

With the holiday season quickly approaching one important market segment to keep in mind is corporate accounts. Securing a large cooperate account during the holiday season will generate additional revenue. Face-to-face marketing is a key strategy when it comes to a corporate setting.

As a wholesale distributor, share these proven marketing best practices from the Retail Florist of the Year contest winners, co-sponsored by WF&FSA, with your customers.

2010 Retail Florist of the Year -

Outstanding Merchandising & Display
City Scents Floral & Home, Chicago, IL is the 2010 winner of Florists' Review's 2010 Retail Florist of the Year co-sponsored by WF&FSA in the category of Outstanding Merchandising & Display Category.

Kenyan Flower Growers Concerned About Ethiopia

The Kenya Flower Council is concerned that Ethiopia - the fastest growing horticultural frontier - could overtake Kenya in flower production over the long run. Ethiopia's flower industry grew to 9,000 hectares in five years, compared to Kenya's 200,000 hectares built over the past 50 years.

Russia Sees Huge Growth of Flower Sales

Russia is the sixth largest importer of cut flowers. The annual sales of flowers in Russia are estimated at \$1 billion. The Netherlands provides 75-80% of flower imports, according to the Produce Marketing Association. March 8, International Women's Day, and February 14, or Valentine's Day, are the two most important dates for selling flowers. Over 25 million flowers are sold in Moscow alone on these two flower holidays. ASOCOLFLORES reports that flower consumption in Russia has seen an accumulated growth of 609% so far this decade.

NEWS

FTD Turned 100 on August 18, 2010

FTD celebrated its 100-year anniversary on August 18, 2010. Founded in 1910 by 15 visionary florists who banded together in order to give customers the ability to send flowers nationwide, FTD has become one of the world's best known brands, with the Mercury Man logo displayed in over 40,000 floral shops worldwide.

Proflowers.com in Top 10 Converting Websites

Using Amazon for comparison, across the top ten conversion sites, one of which is proflowers.com, some clear patterns emerge. What stands out most is that all 10 are direct marketers. The categories of goods sold may differ, but all are companies grounded in marketing directly to customers.

Peony Flowers May Ease Ill-Effects of Chemotherapy

Peony flowers may soon help ease chemotherapy's side effects like nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach cramps and weight loss. Given in combination with three other plants, it also cuts tu-

mor growth, suggests a new research from the Yale School of Medicine, US, the Daily Mail reported.

1-800-FLOWERS.COM Launches New 'Guy's' Guide

1-800- FLOWERS.COM is on a mission to help out men who are in the doghouse. The campaign is called, "Guy's Guide to Flowers" and it serves as a one stop resource for the forgotten moments such as the missed birthday or anniversary, as well as the simple but common "we need to make amends" situation.

According to a recent study conducted by 1-800-FLOWERS.COM® and Wakefield Research, men make an average of one mistake a year that is so significant they give flowers to their loved one to help make up for it. The new website is designed to help men find unique gift ideas and tips that will aid their confidence when it comes to making a heartfelt apology.

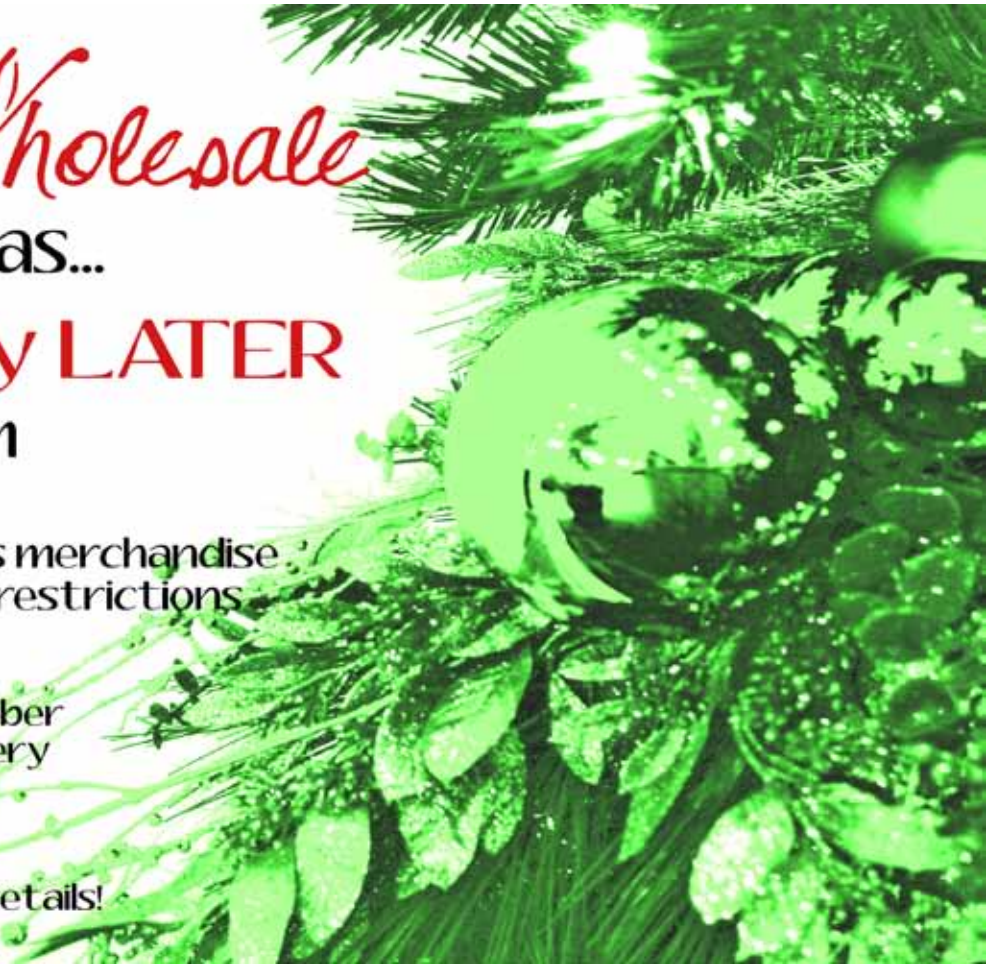
For more information please visit wffsa.org

Taylor Wholesale Christmas... **Buy NOW Pay LATER** Program

Shop NOW for your Christmas merchandise and pay in December. Certain restrictions do apply.

Starting late September thru October we will be extending our hours every Tuesday until 7:00 pm for your convenience.

Call your Floral Partner for more details!
1601 w. 21st Houston TX 77008





THE LIFE OF A TREND

Industries first started tracking the lifespan of a particular trend back in 1945. At that time the average life was somewhere around 15 years long. In 2000 trends were usually lasted somewhere around 6-7 years. Then in 2003 the lifespan of a trend dropped to 5 years. In 2006 it dropped again to 4 and since 2008 trend life cycles are typically 3 years long. In a sense this means you should be rotating your inventory with the exception of the basics every 3 years.

Some trends of course turn into basics and stick around for much longer periods of time. Basics can be any type of design that has withstood the test of time. It may come and go in cycles of popularity but they can usually always be found lingering in some aspect or another.

According to the Trend Curve there are seven stages to a trend. When properly used, understanding these stages can mean big profits for you and your business.

Stage 1: Emergence

In this stage the product is priced higher than at any other stage. Some of the major characteristics of this stage are:

- Considered an artisan creation
- Specialty design
- Designer branded
- Purchased by risk takers
- A trend setters "must have"
- Wow factor
- Highest perceived value

Stage 2: Incoming

In this stage the supply begins to increase while you also start to see the first price break. In this stage these products are still typically too expensive for most consumers. Here are some additional characteristics:

- More awareness
- First price drop
- More aspiration than reality

Stage 3: Pre-Peak

In this stage you will begin to see more mainstream awareness of the product or color. Higher end consumers will be sporting this type of design or purchasing these products as an attempt to be "the first" to own. Other characteristics of this stage are:

- Volume selling
- Established in the market
- Easily recognized
- More affordable

Stage 4: Peak

This stage will receive the highest level of exposure. It's the best time to be a retailer as the supply is the highest. But this also means it is the beginning of the end. This is



considered the sweet spot of the trend curve. There is also an abundant supply so competition is high.

Stage 5: Post - Peak

This is where the sales begin to drop because supply have exceeded the demand. Prices tend to begin to drop significantly.

Stage 6: Outgoing

Evolution into stage 6 will mean that many overstock stores will have these types of items.

Stage 7: Decline

The color or product no longer has a meaningful role in fashion.

Trends can be anything from styles of clothing to colors. Make sure that you are paying attention to the trends, keeping yourself at the forefront and never on the back end of a failing trend.

Kathy's Korner

Kathy's Korner is a new section in the Allied newsletter that's all about fun! Each month we will have a puzzle or riddle of some kind that you must solve.

The first person to email me with the correct answer to the riddle will receive a free gift. Each month it will be a little different so make sure to enter. The answer and gift will be presented at the September general meeting and you must be present to win.

So here is the riddle for September:

Riddle: It is greater than God. It is more evil than the devil. Rich people need it. Poor people have it. If you eat it, you will die. What is it?

kathy@olivetreeflorist.com



CALENDAR

September:

7: Allied Board Meeting details TBA

14: Allied General Meeting featuring tabletop designs by students from the Houston School of Floral Design. The meeting will start at 6:00pm at Allegria Gardens - 18311 Clay Road Houston TX 77084. More details to come.

16: Womens Global Network conference Houston launch party at Arcodoro on 5000 westheimer Houston TX 77056. Please visit www.wgn-global.com for more information.

26: Annual Fall and Christmas show at Pike Peak of Texas featuring Mario Fernandez. Show from 8:00 am to 3:30. Please call 800-392-7753 for more information.

October:

2-4: NAFA annual conference in Columbus Ohio sponsored by Teleflora. Please call 614-475-7751 for more information.

5: Annual Holiday Show at Southern Floral featuring designer Dianna Prickett. For more information please call 713-880-1300.

November:

3-5: WF&FSA conference held at the 650 Doral in Miami FL. Space is limited. Please visit www.wffsa.org/conference for more information.

Have something for the calendar? Email: AFHmagazine@gmail.com

ALLIED BOARD OF DIRECTORS - CONTACT INFORMATION

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Letter from the Editor

As summer comes to a close (even though the heat may not subside for a few more weeks) and we begin to prepare for the holidays I hope that you all had a successful summer; that you were able to use your resources wisely, accomplish somethings that you have had on your to do list for quite some time and enjoy a little down time. Because right now is when the chaos begins.

In our industry we are fully aware that in Houston the busiest time of the year is not a month, a few weeks or even a single day, but instead it is an entire season. It's the holiday season. As the kids get back to school the weeks begin to race and before you know it the time for fall decor will be over.

So I encourage you to flip your shops. Get ready for the fall and even though it may feel extremely to early to begin decorating you have to keep in mind that you want your customers to come to you for their holiday decor and other needs, so you have to be a few steps ahead. Bring it all out, dust it off it needs be and evaluate your inventory. Decide what items you really need to push, which items you need to restock and what items might be better to mark down or donate. You need your valuable space afterall.

Make sure to pay attention to the needs in your area. What are your clients looking for, what is in the craft stores and home furnishing stores in your area. Make sure you are in line or ahead of the curve with what your area wants. Remember, what people choose to purchase in our economy are things they can't live without, so we have to learn to become a must have with amazing products and outstanding cutsumer service.

Until next time, *Frances Egbert TMF*

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A person wearing a white button-down shirt is shown from the chest down, opening a brown cardboard box. The box is resting on a black metal grate. The word "FLOWERS" is printed in large, dark letters on the side of the box. The person's hands are visible, with one hand on the top edge of the box and the other on the side. The background is dark and out of focus.

***They steal your customers.
They pilfer your profits.
Talk about an ugly floral
arrangement.***

Florists lose \$500 million every year to drop-shippers.

When it comes to your bottom line, there's nothing pretty about drop-shipping. That's why Teleflora is 100% committed to helping Save the Florists. This includes guaranteeing 100% of our orders are hand-arranged and delivered by independent florists like you. For more information, call 800.421.2815.

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FLORISTS™**