

DECEMBER 2017

# TEXAS

*in Bloom*





# QUALITY EDUCATION: A COMMUNITY COMMITMENT



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## Upcoming Course Schedule

- Jan 22-26, 2018 **Elements & Principles of Design** Jackie Lacey, AIFD, CFD, PFCI
- Mar 18-20, 2018 **Prom & More** Anthony Swick, AIFD, CFD, PFCI
- Apr 8-10, 2018 **Wedding Bliss** Sandy Schroeck, AIFD, CFD, PFCI
- Apr 11-12, 2018 **Special Events** Jackie Lacey, AIFD, CFD, PFCI
- Jun 3-5, 2018 **Certification & Competition** Jackie Lacey, AIFD, CFD, PFCI

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- **Convenient!** No need to leave the shop; saves time; learn with colleagues
- **Relevant to Floral Business** Topics developed specifically for florists
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[www.floriologyinstitute.com/freewebinars](http://www.floriologyinstitute.com/freewebinars)



Hear what  
florists have  
to say about  
**Floriology  
Institute**

“ This has been the best learning experience for me! I am walking away today with more confidence in my floral design.

- Christopher Branham, CFD, Christopher's Creations - Middlesboro, KY

Can't say enough great things. The quality of everything from the instructor, Donald to group dinners is terrific. Thank you so much for the opportunity to come!

- Laura Kellogg, Laura's Garden - Chattanooga, TN ”

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# Texas in Bloom

NOVEMBER 2017 | VOLUME XXXXIII | NUMBER 11

## From the President



Debbie Woltmann TMFA

Christmas and the holiday season is a busy time of the year for florists. Many of you start installs in early November and do not complete these amazing jobs until mid December. Open houses were successfully held weeks ago with parties, parties, parties scheduled leading up to the celebrated day! Every time you turn around, you are designing flowers and holiday decor for your clients working to make their surroundings festive and fabulous! At the same time you are working to make the most of the end of the year striving to meet your sales goals!

I encourage you to take a moment and slow down just long enough to make notes throughout the season. Track sales trends, what worked in your marketing plan, personnel successes and personnel issues. Take a look at your purchasing to include it all: holiday foliage, flowers, poinsettias, plants, containers, and supplies. Note anything unusual that may have occurred throughout the season such as a seasonal wedding, funeral sales, or a party that was out of the norm. These are important details to consider when tracking sales to better plan for the year ahead. The best time to begin planning 2018 is at the close of 2017! Then simply followup mid year to detail your thoughts before placing your 2018 holiday orders!!

As it is often said, "A photo is worth a 1000 words" so take photos of your shop displays, home and corporate installs and best selling designs to use next year on your website. Ask your employees for their input. Never under value what the staff notices about the activity in the shop.

Take time for yourself! It is easy to lose your enthusiasm by getting burned out during this hectic season. Take a break after the holiday rush! Plan for it! Schedule some time off before Valentine Week begins. Include your family. Make some memories. You will be much happier and more productive when you return to work if you take some time for yourself!

The goal of every florist is to build a more profitable shop. After your rest, return and commit to do whatever it takes to boost your sales and your profits. Make resolutions! Take charge of your future. Determine what you want to accomplish and follow through throughout the year.

Best wishes to you and your family for a Merry Christmas and a celebrated holiday season. I look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

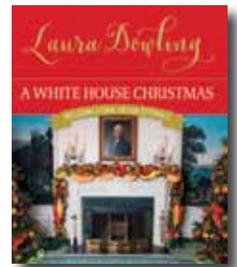
4 TEXAS FLORAL SHOWCASES  
*trending*

6-7 HOLIDAY DECORATING  
"SHARON STYLE"



8 2018 TEXAS  
DESIGNER  
OF THE YEAR  
COMPETITION

9-11



GUEST AUTHOR  
AND FORMER  
WHITE HOUSE  
FLORIST LAURA DOWLING  
A WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS

12 MAKING THE BUSINESS  
OF FLOWERS FUN

13 IDEAS FOR THE SEASON  
OR NO REASON AT ALL!

14-15 EXPERIENCE EXPO  
EDUCATION

### THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS STATE FLORISTS' ASSOCIATION

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# Sharon McGukin AIFD will travel Texas in 2018



*Trending*

Texas is *Trending* and Sharon McGukin will be with us throughout the year as she travels to the three Texas Floral Showcase locations. This presentation will highlight the *Trending* points that retail florists must learn, understand, and apply to stay in business. This well researched presentation written exclusively for Texas will take us to the top!

Sharon McGukin AIFD AAF PFCI inspires others to 'celebrate life with flowers'. She is nationally known for her floral expertise, southern charm, and energetic connection with audiences as an entertaining and informative speaker.

She began her career as a small town florist with floral adventures leading her around the world. She has consulted in Asia for the home décor industry and presented flower demonstrations and tracked floral trends across the United States, Canada, and Europe. From decorating floats at the Rose Bowl Parade to designing flowers for the White House, this floral fashionista has lots of flower stories to share.

Within the floral industry, Sharon is quite involved. She is the Smithers Oasis Design Director and Floral Blogger. She is a Past President of the American Institute of Floral Designers. She is a member of Professional Floral Communicators International and recognized in the American Academy of Floriculture. She often contributes articles or design tips for industry and lifestyle magazines, national newspapers, and blogs.

Sharon and her husband, Tim, live in Carrollton, Georgia. They enjoy a busy life filled with grandbabies, grandpuppies, gardening, and large, noisy southern mealtime gatherings of family and friends.

Texas is delighted to welcome Sharon McGukin to travel Texas in 2018!



**Register Today at [tsfa.org](http://tsfa.org)**

**or call 512.834.0361**

Design Presentation | Dinner | Product Gallery

Registration \$65.00

Texas Floral Showcase

January 24, 2018

Hilton Garden Inn

Longview, Texas

6:00pm | Shop the Product Gallery and see all that is New!

7:00pm | Dinner and Time to Network

8:00pm | Sharon McGukin to present *Trending*

9:30pm | Purchase a Design from the Program to support Texas Continuing Education

**Staying the night in Longview?**

TSFA has a special rate of \$119.00 at the Hilton Garden Inn.

Visit [tsfa.org](http://tsfa.org) for complete information.



*Making Texas Floral Education Possible*

PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



Our Business Is Blooming!



BRONZE



please visit [tsfa.org](http://tsfa.org) for the most up-to-date list of underwriters and their links

# HOLIDAY DECORATING "Sharon Style"

Walking down the stairs, the tearful 5-year-old said  
"I just wish I'd grown up in a house with a normal Christmas tree!"



## The first 'designer' tree

Our kids always loved big decorated trees. At ages 5, 7, and 9, the older two begged for a 'designer' tree at home like the ones in our flower shop. I insisted all three must agree before we made a change. The two older ones bribed the youngest to agree. We decorated the tree with twigs, feathers and a menagerie of trendy ornaments; they loved it!

The next morning, walking down the stairs, the tearful 5-year-old said "I just wish I'd grown up in a house with a normal Christmas tree!" I let him add his treasured 'ornaments' to his bottom third of the tree. "He ruined our tree!" exclaimed his furious siblings.

## The big tree saga

Most years our family cut a tree. The kids chose the tallest one they could find. This led to quite a few surprises!

Who could forget the year our daughter fell from a ladder into the tall tree she was decorating and broke her arm! The hospital did not love our explanation.

There was the year of the bird condo; we cut a huge tree and as it fell a covey of birds flew out. The big tree that delivered a swarm of mosquitoes once it was inside our house. The year our daughter stood on a kitchen stool screaming, as the now warm and awake squirrel, ran out of the tree and across the floor.

Not to mention the year the tree farmer estimated our 16' tree weighed about 350 lbs. When it fell across the den, it shattered most of the decorations among other things. I quickly called for our son to bring his baseball team from practice to set the tree back up - just before our guests arrived for the dinner party. That was not my favorite year!

## A McGukin Family Christmas

Our McGukin holidays are filled with boisterous family gatherings and big southern meals. Our holiday decor can be simple, creative, or chaotic depending on the stage of our family.

When our three kids lived at home, our family tree was the centerpiece of our holiday celebrations. The trees grew as the kids did. The "kids" are now ages 36, 38, and 40 and our traditions have transitioned along with them.

## Creating a 'kid art' Christmas

Our children were creative so we enjoyed making fun 'kid art' trees when they were young.

One year, perhaps ages 2, 4 and 6, I whipped big bowls of Ivory Snow detergent into 'snow' and we 'flocked' our fresh Christmas tree. What a mess!! We only did that one year!

Other years they made traditional kid ornaments - coloring book cut-outs, canning lid photos, designs made of macaroni, pine cones, cotton balls or Legos. Everything was colored, puffy painted, or glittered and glued. We mixed in 'bought' ornaments to establish our themes.

I came home from a wedding set-up one December Saturday to discover three elves hard at work. They had cut every small pine sapling they could find outdoors, put them into mason jars of water, decorated them with hand-colored paper chains and placed them on every heat vent in the house ... while their dad watched the ballgame on tv! I gathered their water-filled designs from the heat vents and helped them create a nice 'tree collection' on the hearth.

## The return of sane trees

Life got easier. Our kids left home, taking their big tree obsession with them. The first year they all were away at college, I placed a small faux tree atop a candle holder and sighed with relief. Our eldest son was appalled. "We're all cutting the family tree next Thanksgiving," he announced.

In recent years, we've had reasonable 7 or 8 foot trees with lots of lights, decorative wire for sparkle and a lesser number of ornaments to pack back into storage!! I'm in love.

Last year, I used two rolls of gold Oasis Floral Mesh around my tree as garland and loved the look. My nephew was less impressed "Aunt Sharon, were you afraid someone was going to steal your ornaments?" he asked.



## Decorating with natural materials

I love using fresh natural materials for holiday decor. I wait until just before the holidays to decorate, due to our warm Georgia weather.

I hang fresh garlands over the doorways, place containers of magnolia, mixed greens and branches by the doors, and add fresh wreaths of cones, fruits and berries.

I gather Santas, Angels or Nutcrackers we have collected for the tables and mantles to mix with those same natural materials. I hang our children's old stockings in garland on the railing. Nothing spectacular. Simple southern décor.

## Changing traditions

We're all type 'A' personalities the rest of the year so our focus during the holidays is on relaxing together, eating and playing with the grandkids. PJs, bedhead, and coffee mugs abound.

The McGrands are now ages 4, 3, 2, and 1 and we're tweaking traditions again. We live on opposite sides of Atlanta and one son in New York. Our traditions are shifting so the little ones can be home for Santa. More cooking and transporting food, less need to decorate at home.

It may be time to get out that small faux tree and candleholder again ...

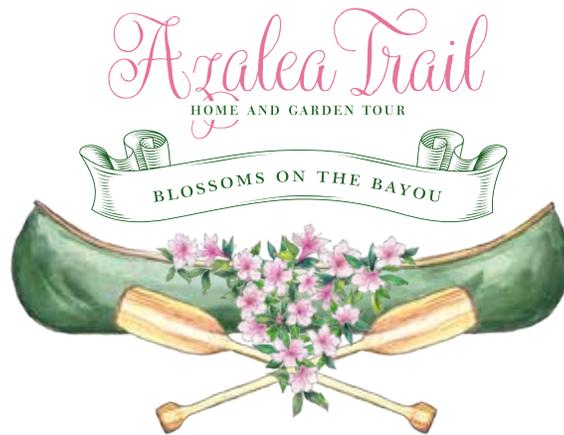
*Sharon McGuikin* AIFD AAF PFCI



**Houston's Azalea Trail Home and Garden Tour  
highlights Texas' longest running  
and most prestigious design competition**

*2018 Texas Designer of the Year Competition*

to be held in conjunction with the 2018 Azalea Trail Blossoms on the Bayou and featuring guest author and former White House florist Laura Dowling.



**Saturday, March 3, 2018**

**Lora Jean Kilroy Visitor and Education Center at Bayou Bend  
Houston, Texas**

*The Texas Designer of the Year Competition is the longest running and most prestigious competition in Texas. The winner, named Texas Designer of the Year, will receive \$1000.00 and the Silver Texas Cup. In addition, the winner will receive up to \$1000.00 to represent Texas at one of the noted National Competitions: The Sylvia Cup held during the SAF National Convention or the National Alliance of Floral Associations' National Design Competition. These awards are funded by TSFA and the Texas Floral Endowment.*

*The first ten designers who are a TSFA member, Texas resident and holds one of the noted designations: TME, CFD, or AIFD or who has competed in an approved professional design competition, may complete the Entry Form to compete in Blossoms on the Bayou.*

*Entry Deadline is Monday, February 5, 2018.*



To enter this Prestigious Competition visit [tsfa.org](http://tsfa.org) for complete information. Download the Entry form and mail the completed form with the entry fee to:  
Texas State Florists' Association | PO Box 170760, Austin, TX 78717  
or email the form to [txsfa@sbcglobal.com](mailto:txsfa@sbcglobal.com)  
and contact the office 512-834-0361 to make payment.

## Guest Author & Former White House Florist

Laura Dowling to present

# *The Texas Designer of the Year Competition*

Laura Dowling served as Chief Floral Designer at the White House from 2009 until 2015. As creative director for flowers and décor, she managed White House floral design for thousands of official and private events, including state dinners, parties, receptions and large-scale installations, such as the Fourth of July, Halloween and the iconic White House Christmas. Her lush and lively floral creations also graced the White House state rooms, East and West Wing offices, Camp David and the Presidential private residence. As Chief Floral Designer, Laura launched innovative strategic partnerships with the nation's top artists and designers, White House policy staff, including the Office of Science and Technology and Presidential Innovation Fellows, creating imaginative, cutting-edge décor and flowers.

The art of floral diplomacy. Laura's unique approach focuses on the premise that flowers can be more than just decorative objects. Her White House floral designs were designed to convey important diplomatic messages, meaning and metaphor. The art of Floral Diplomacy, the art of honoring visiting dignitaries through floral symbolism that articulates compelling artistic and strategic themes, became a signature initiative during Laura's time at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Her first book, *Floral Diplomacy at the White House*, is published by Stichtung Kunstboek and released March 2017. A *White House Christmas*, including floral design tutorials, released in October, 2017, was also published by Stichtung Kunstboek.

A new garden style. Laura is known for her contemporary and romantic style of flower arrangement featuring a free interplay between flowers, floral boughs and branches, berried twigs and leafy vines, combined

with more formally designed bouquets. Inspiration is taken from the splendor of abundant gardens, balancing artistic vision with the beauty and free form of nature. At the White House, Laura created a variety of garden style arrangements, some in hand-made natural fiber containers. Her innovative approach resulted in beautifully sophisticated, seasonal designs that were at once modern and classically refined.

A spirit of collaboration. During her White House tenure, Laura oversaw an expanded volunteer citizens program that opened the White House flower shop to hundreds of people from across the country. This effort built an extraordinarily talented team of volunteer floral ambassadors that helped increase the capacity of the White House flower program, while enhancing engagement and producing inspiring designs and creative results.

A story of inspiration. In 2000, Laura was inspired to change careers, from a strategic communications practice to flowers, after a Paris trip during which she became intrigued by French floral design and history. She studied French floral art in Paris, and extended her floristry training in Germany.

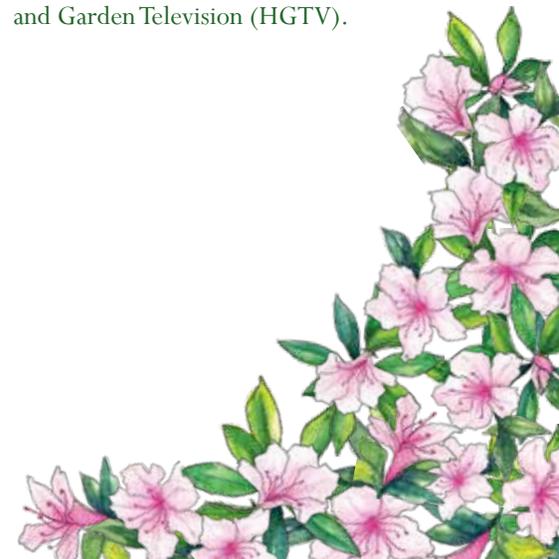
At home near Washington, D.C., Laura established her own floral business and design studio in a basement kitchen. After the resignation of the previous chief floral designer in 2009, a widely publicized White House Florist Competition commenced. Laura entered the search, and following the nation-wide competition, she was selected by former First Lady Michelle Obama in October, 2009 to be Chief Floral Designer at the White House.

A native of Chehalis, WA, a small farming town in the Pacific Northwest, Laura received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science



and master's degree in public administration from the University of Washington in Seattle. Prior to her White House assignment, Dowling was Senior Manager of Strategic Communications at The Nature Conservancy.

Laura is an annual presenter at the Philadelphia Flower Show, the nation's oldest and largest flower expo, as well as a regular speaker at national, regional and local horticultural associations, garden clubs and museums. Her flower designs have been featured in design magazines and on Home and Garden Television (HGTV).



# A White House Christmas

THE INSPIRATION - THE PROJECTS - THE PEOPLE

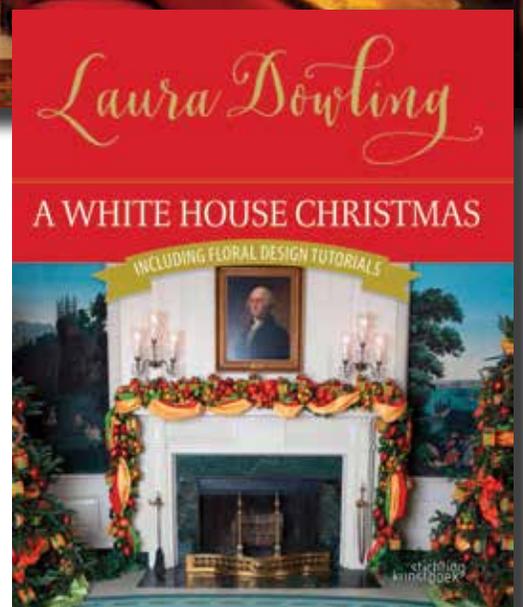


**A** White House Christmas describes Laura's role as head florist overseeing the design and implementation of the dazzling decorations that made the White House holiday season so memorable. Part extravaganza, part historical tradition, Christmas at the White House is always characterized by an inspiring theme, exquisite décor and unifying messages of hope and goodwill. Working with the First Lady and a talented team of volunteers, Laura designed amazing displays for every White House room that inspired and delighted visitors from around the world. In this lavishly illustrated book, she invites readers behind the scenes of the complex year-long planning process and into the White House flower shop,

where most of the unique, intricate and ambitious handmade craft projects were created. From large-scale architectural details such as column covers rendered in patterns and motifs to sugar paste floral vases and robotic versions of the First Family dogs, she describes the inspiration, projects and people that came together to create iconic and magical White House Christmas displays year after year.

Highlights of the book include:

- A room-by-room tour of the spectacular White House holiday decorations, featuring inside stories, historical anecdotes and dazzling photos of dozens of special projects and beautiful décor set against the iconic White House backdrop.



*A White House Christmas will be available for Laura Dowling to autograph during the Texas Designer of the Year Competition. Texas celebrates Laura and her success. Laura Dowling graciously presented during the first Texas Floral Expo in 2015 and we look forward to her return visit to Texas.*

- 15 of Laura's favorite holiday projects with step-by-step instructions on how to make wreaths, garlands, custom ribbons and seasonal floral containers, including ideas for decorating and entertaining in the White House style. With Laura's permission we have included one here!

- A glimpse into the process of selecting, installing and decorating the majestic 18 1/2 ft. Blue Room tree, the centerpiece of the White House Christmas.

- Humorous anecdotes and stories about the challenges of working on such a complex, high-profile project: the unexpected (and charming) antics of children and the First Family dogs at the holiday press preview; how social media transformed the volunteer experience (and led to new rules).

- How to handle mishaps with humor and grace. Inspiring tales of innovation, collaboration and volunteer achievements: the large-scale architectural installations that created impact in the East Entrance, East Colonnade and Lower Cross Hall; robotic replicas of the First Family dogs; intricately patterned, hand-crafted floral containers that displayed seasonal flowers and foliage; and sustainable décor made from recycled paper, aluminum cans and gathered oak leaves.

- A glimpse into how beloved White House traditions, including the Red Room cranberry tree, White House egg nog recipes, horse and buggy delivery of the Blue Room tree, etc. were integrated into contemporary White House design and entertaining schemes.

- A peek inside Laura's own holiday home where she uses the lessons learned from orchestrating the White House Christmas to create her unique holiday style – featuring hand-made wreaths, garlands, and flowers – in historic Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.

## RUCHED RIBBON WREATH



One of the great hallmarks of White House holiday design is the concerted use of recycled and repurposed material to create something new and inspirational. A great pleasure of serving as Chief Floral Designer was the ability to gain access to the vast collection of elements and décor, the beautiful cache of vintage and historical materials from White House Christmases past. My favorite hunting grounds were the giant rolling bins in the back of the warehouse where a colorful collection of holiday ribbons in every hue were stored away, waiting to be re-discovered. Here is an idea for using extra rolls of ribbon to create festive holiday wreath designs with texture and impact. You can add touches of sparkle and natural greens to complete the display.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- A 16 – 18 inch grapevine wreath form
- Thin paddle or wrapping wire
- 4 inch wired wood picks
- 5 – 6 rolls of 3 inch wire edge ribbon
- 1 roll of accent ribbon
- 1 box of small shiny ornaments
- Green trailing ivy

### STEP-BY-STEP TECHNIQUES:

1. Create a single-sided looped ribbon garland using thin paddle wire to make 1 inch loops that are even and close together.
2. Working side to side across the front of the wreath frame, apply the ruched ribbon garland to the frame, tying the ribbon on each side with the wire.
3. Once the wreath is completely covered with the ribbon, add small shiny ornaments to the design, wiring them to the wood picks and inserting them in a balanced pattern on the wreath.
4. Add trailing ivy on the inner and outer surfaces of the wreath to create definition.
5. Finish the bouquet with a jaunty coordinating bow.



# MAKING THE BUSINESS OF FLOWERS *Fun*

*The holiday season is upon us. The shop is prepped for business with new products and in-store holiday displays merchandised to appeal to walk-ins. However, the new reality is far more people will be visiting your website. Is this 24-hour location ready to convert more sales?*

*More than 80 percent of shoppers start the purchasing process with online searches, according to RetailingToday. The key to capturing this business is through search engine optimization (SEO) of your website. This concept may seem mysterious, technical and thereby intimidating but it's an absolute must so it's recommended if you're not comfortable with making changes to your website, to connect with your web developer.*

## USE HOLIDAY KEYWORDS

Successful SEO requires you use relevant keywords shoppers will be using in searches. Obvious keywords would be: holiday flower centerpieces, bouquets; Christmas flower centerpieces, bouquets; etc. But we must also think beyond flowers and try to capture searches for those shoppers who are just looking for gift ideas.

These keywords would include: christmas gifts; christmas gift ideas; christmas gifts for her; unusual christmas gifts; christmas gifts for mom; handmade christmas gifts – you get the idea.

## DECORATE THE LANDING PAGE

Next is improving or even creating landing pages for specific holidays. You may be inclined to load your homepage full of these keywords but that's not the best practice. Google ranks pages – even if they're subpages, high in search if they are highly topical, thus relevant to their users. Most floral website platforms already having category specific subpages for Christmas, Fall, Winter, and so on so it's best to dress up these pages. Let's show you how.

Google recommends every landing page have a unique <title> tag and <meta name="description"> tag. Yes, this is HTML code so get the web developer involved. These tags are what will actually appear in the search results! Here's our recommendation for the tags of this landing page:

```
<title>Holiday Flower Centerpieces, Bouquets & Gifts | Local Florist in [city, state]</title>
<meta name="description" content="[your shop name] provides same-day delivery for the perfect Christmas or Hanukkah flower arrangement or bouquet. Order today. Satisfaction guaranteed!
```

Let's continue our SEO exercise with what you'll be placing on the subpage users will see. Most floral pages are usually photo-heavy product pages with no text – real bad from an SEO perspective. Ask the web developer if you can place an <h1> tag and a paragraph <p> of text high on this landing page. Yes, this may push product photos down just a tad but people won't see your products if they can't find your page in the first place! Here's our recommendation:

```
<h1>Same-Day Delivery for Hannukkah and Christmas Flower Arrangements & Gifts in [city, state]</h1>
<p>Call now to get advice from your local florist on providing the perfect holiday gift. We provide a wide variety of floral gifts, balloons, plush, and candy [list more items you sell] to enhance your holiday celebration.</p>
```



Renato Cruz Sogueco serves as lead business educator at the Floriology Institute and Vice President of Digital Strategy where he develops digital products and services for BloomNet florists, and oversees the online brands and initiatives for BloomNet, NAPCO, World Flowers and the Floriology Institute. He is a frequent speaker at industry events and writes a regular column in Floriology magazine and blog.

## CONSIDER SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING (SEM)

With proper SEO, you'll now appear at the top of organic results but how about the top of the search page? As you know, this space is reserved for ads. We recommend using Google Adwords and advertise the week prior to the holiday. Here are some tips:

Keep the ad short and sweet – you have no choice as Google really limits text copy. The sample below complies with these:

```
Final URL: (your landing page such as) http://www.yourflowershop.com/ThanksGiving-Flowers/
Headline 1: Order Thanksgiving Flowers
Headline 2: [shop name] | Local Florist
Description: Provide the perfect flower arrangement or bouquet this Thanksgiving holiday season.
```

Set "Location" targeting. By default the setting is the entire US/Canada so enter your deliver zip codes by going to Settings > All settings > Change campaign settings > Locations. Click edit to add your zip codes or cities. We recommend a budget of \$20 a day five days prior to the holiday, up until the holiday. The result will be that your ad will now be shown for these searches at the top of the search page and at the top of organic listings.

## GET SOCIAL

Lastly, you'll want to promote your new landing page through social media. Best practice is to write a series of Facebook posts about your holiday offerings which you will want to schedule one every day leading up to the holiday. Consider matching your SEM strategy of advertising a week before the holiday.

In each post, feature a single product and be very descriptive by including colors, varieties, proper setting, approximate size and more. Most important, include a link to the landing page which you just developed. This practice will also boost rank for this landing page in search as Google looks for social signals to gauge relevance of this page.

Great luck this holiday season! For more topics on digital marketing, shop operations, hands-on design classes and more, visit Floriology online [www.floriologynstitute.com](http://www.floriologynstitute.com).



# Ideas for the Season *OR NO REASON AT ALL!!*



from the top. This determines the length of wire needed to create the “prongs” to provide stability needed to balance the upward weaving that would ultimately support the test tubes with florals and candles. It appeared that 3 inches was best. Next, determine the length of wire to create the stem which turned out to be 2 inches. The remaining section of wire completed the top of the design.

Floral tape secures the mid section of wire used for the stem. Prior to completing the taping of the stem, a piece of 20 gauge paddle wire was inserted. Binding wire covered the floral tape. Next place the 3 inch section of grouped wire on top of the wine bottle and bend the wire out and then down to create the prongs that would hold the structure in place. With the 20 gauge paddle wire, weave to secure the prongs in place. Continued over and under and around the wires until reaching the end of the prongs.

to extend out away from the center section. It will look like the spokes to a wheel. Measure out 5 inches on each wire. The same weaving technique used to create the prongs for the base was used to create the base of the basket. This time the weaving technique will extend out horizontally for 5 inches creating a web look. This weaving technique provides a base to the chandelier and creates tension to hold the weight of the test tubes and candles which will be added later. Once the weaving is extended out 5 inches all the way around, bend the remaining wire up to create the sides of the chandelier.

Measure the circumference of the created basket frame. That measurement will determine the length needed of Oasis Wire Mesh to create the sides of the chandelier. Double over the Oasis mesh and bind it to the prongs to create the shape of the basket. Bind test tubes vertically inside the wire basket spaced evenly. Then bind taper candles vertically in between the test tubes. Finally, insert florals into test tubes for an extraordinary design!

Creating a design simply begins with an idea and in this case the idea was extraordinary. The idea was to create a decorative shape to resemble a floral chandelier and fit it atop a bottle of wine to offer a statement design for shops to share through the holidays and looking ahead to Valentine’s Week and other romantic expressions. We are always looking for a way to wow our customers and TSFA’s own Sheri Jentsch AIFD TMF has certainly offered that here!

To create this shape, begin with 12 pieces of 18 gauge wire dividing into 3 parts length wise. Measure the neck of the wine bottle

It is now time to create the basket portion of the chandelier. From the top of the bind wired section (the stem), bend the wires flat

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This is the season where the consumer is seeking something unique! There are several occasions of which this would be perfect including an expression of hospitality during the holiday season or really anytime throughout the new year! The use of test tubes is not a new idea but trending now is the suspension of florals designed in tubes filled with water. Here is the application of reverse suspension. In this design the tubes support the base of the design while creating the illusion that wine corks appear floating around the tubes.

Start with individual clusters of a single tube surrounded by corks. After all the clusters are made, these connect together to create the base. To begin, at the top of the tube, glue corks all the way around to create the first cluster. 15 clusters were needed to complete this design. The number of clusters you make will determine the size of your arrangement. Next, connect the tube clusters using a clear drying adhesive such as E6000 for a permanent hold. Visually the base is heavy so be creative to balance the weight! Add decorative accents and florals to complete this amazingly creative design of Texas wine and Flowers!

Thank you Sheri Jentsch AIFD TMF for sharing once again such amazing ideas!



# MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY *Fantabulously* FESTIVE

*Remembering the Magic of  
Jim Marvin AIFD  
and the Innovation of  
Matt Wood AIFD*



In December there is often a need to fill in a display or add a new one to replace all that is sold! Creating a merchandising vignette or the perfect table scape, incorporating different elements and components to produce a cohesive look is important! Moss deer, boxwood garland and gold wire baskets add contrasting interest while a monochromatic blend of red florals and ornaments unify the composition!

A fast and unique design may be created by making a bow from a premade vinyl garland that has a small width measurement. A large full garland would not give you that bow effect. The bow shown in the picture is made from preserved boxwood and created by Jim Marvin reminiscent of the ones he created for the White House holiday decorations!



Holiday decorating can often be the most exciting time to create floral designs but can also be challenging due to the time span of the holiday or the use of perishable product. The conical topiary in this picture deals with all these aspects with both permanent and fresh product. Fresh oranges mix beautifully with permanent apples, berries and foliages to create a "transeasonal" design that will carry thru the autumn and winter holidays!

A great designer tip is to use salvaged permanent floral stems to pick the fresh fruit into the foam base. This pick will be much stronger than traditional wooden pics and will give you a sense of recycling!



Platinum based components provide a sophisticated background for this holiday wreath and centerpiece using fresh looking botanicals that have been encrusted with clear and iridescent mica and glitter. Glass ornaments in the same colors reinforce this decorative look for the holiday! For more depth and richness gold magnolia leaves are added which further enhance the idea of using "mixed metals"!




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Segmented layered cone topiary of alternating bands of pomegranates and apples against shingled magnolia leaves give a stately look in the classic urn. Movement is evident in the berry and twig vine traveling from the top of the cone eventually cascading well beyond the top of the urn.



Complex but never complicated, this holiday wreath offers movement with twigs, vines and velvety ribbon. Berries and variegated holly foliage offer visual texture with the eyes resting on two focal areas with beautifully placed amaryllis blooms!

Classic shapes in floral design have remained popular through the generations. What makes these so special is the ability to always be updated and give a sense of today. A clean polished silver finish on this metal urn is perfect for this cone-shape topiary of gold-platinum pine cones, an example of perfectly mixed metals! Twigs, florals and glass ornaments come together at the base of the cone contrasting in both form and texture.

Take advantage of pre assembled products such as the pine cone topiary used in this design. Embellish with different products to make it uniquely your own!



# Simply Social



As we look toward 2018 and begin thinking about our goals in the new year, it is easy to think past January and look straight to Valentine's Day. During this time, we might also be tempted to put our social media on the back burner as January is a lull between the holidays and Valentine's Day. However, there is huge potential in having an engaged online audience and it is important to stay focused on keeping your audience engaged, even in a month like January.

One of the reasons we tend to be think past January on social media is due to a lack of ideas of what to post. There is no shortage of content during the holidays as well as for Valentine's Day, but what do we do with January? Often, businesses get caught in the trap of thinking of social media as only a marketing channel and feel at a loss for what to say to customers during times when there isn't something particular to market, but January gives a great opportunity to view social media as a platform for making connections with an audience who wants to hear from your business even when you aren't marketing.

A great way to fill your January with valuable content and keep your audience engaged is to allow your audience a peek inside your preparations for Valentine's Day. One of the biggest appeals for "liking" a business on Facebook, or "following a business on Instagram is the promise of getting a behind-the-scenes look, or seeing the human side of the business. January is a great month to do this! Another wonderful way to keep your audience engaged in January is spend some time saying "thank you" to your audience for your successes in 2017. Be specific when doing this and share stories. Again, this is customer-centric way to engage your audience and humanize your business during a month where your audience may otherwise forget you are open for business!

For more information, contact  
ashley@simplifiedsocialmedia.com

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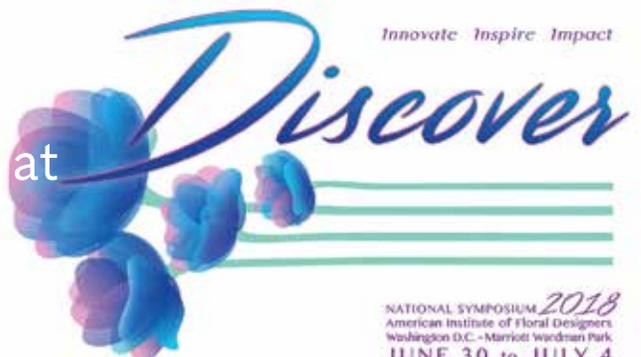
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# It's Up to *You*

Your nominations for TSFA Officers and Directors determine whom you'll vote for in July!

The Texas State Florists' Association Nominating Committee will meet in January 2018 and is now accepting recommendations for nomination of persons desiring to run for office at the 2018 Texas Floral Forum. Candidates will be nominated for the following offices: President, Second Vice President, Retail Director (two to be elected) and Wholesale Director.

Only those members who have been active in the Association for at least two (2) years prior to the election, whose Association dues are currently paid, and who will have sufficient time to devote to the affairs of the Association, shall be eligible for nomination for the office of Director.

Candidates for the offices of President and Second Vice President shall have been members of the Association for at least three (3) years and shall have served on the Board of Directors for at least two full years prior to the election, with membership dues currently paid. If you wish to be considered for an office, or if you would like to nominate someone else, please forward your recommendations to reach the TSFA office by January 19, 2018.

You may use the form on this page or write a personal letter. The committee will appreciate your responding to this request to assist them in selecting a slate of officers for 2018-2019.

To: TSFA Nominating Committee  
P.O. Box 170760, Austin, Texas 78717  
Fax to 512.834.2150  
or email: txsfa@sbcglobal.net

I would like to be considered for the following office:

\_\_\_\_\_

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Recommended by: \_\_\_\_\_

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## *In Memoriam*

Margie McCasland  
Margie Sikes McCasland, Age 89, passed away July 14, 2017, in San Marcos, Texas.

Margie was born January 31, 1928 to Luther Elby Sikes and Roxie Elizabeth Haltom. She grew up in Bryan, Texas where she met and married Dr. Foy V. McCasland on November 28, 1946. They had three children, Rod, Connie and Mike.

Margie was baptized into Christ at an early age and remained a Christian throughout her life. She was always a champion for the underdog and a protector of animals. Margie was an avid Texas A&M fan until the day she died.

Margie and Foy moved to Austin, Texas in 1970. Margie worked for the Texas State Florists' Association where she was a life member.

Margie was preceded in death by her brothers, Robert, Roger Halton, and Eugene Sikes; and sister Merle Hearn. Margie is survived by her loving husband of 70 years, Dr. Foy McCasland; her sister, Shirley Sikes; her children, Rod and wife Wynell, Connie and husband, David Goss, Mike and wife, Brenda. Margie is also survived by grandchildren, Brian and wife, Lezli Goss, Heather and husband Paul Newsoroff, Kimberly and husband, Gene Sawyer, Alissa and husband, Tyler Beers, Stephanie and husband, Chris Page, Courtney and husband Andy Bunting. Margie is also survived by eight great grandchildren.

# VOTE!

# TSFA *Calendar of Events*

Photo credit | Cody Ash Photography



## DECEMBER

- 12 Hanukkah Begins
- 25 Christmas
- 31 New Year's Eve



## JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
- 5-7
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  - Floral Bookkeeping
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- 24 Texas Floral Showcase
  - Hilton Garden Inn, Longview, Texas
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  - 512.834.0361 or to register visit
  - <http://tsfa.org/txfloralshowcase.html>
- 27 Bespoke | Contemporary Wedding Design
  - Hands on Workshop | TSFA School of
  - Floral Design | Cedar Park, Texas
  - For more information call the TSFA office
  - 512.834.0361 or to register visit
  - <http://tsfa.org/education.html>



## FEBRUARY

- 2 Groundhog's Day
- 5 Deadline to enter The Texas Designer of the Year Competition, the longest running and most prestigious competition in Texas. To enter visit [tsfa.org](http://tsfa.org)
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 20 President's Day

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