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FROM THE *President*



TSFA President
Cheryl Vaughan TMFA

It is with great sadness, I begin this message. This past month, we lost our "Kassie," First Vice President and Education Co-chair extraordinaire. My greatest memories of Kassie involve her laugh, smile and enthusiasm for whatever she was involved in. Kassie was forward thinking, with new ideas to increase TSFA's strength. She was a hard working leader that didn't stand by and watch the work be done. She was always right in the middle of it, no matter the job. I have many personal memories traveling with her and spending long hours working on projects. These are memories that I treasure, and I know Kassie would want me to turn them into inspiration instead of sadness. Please keep Kassie's family and friends in your thoughts and prayers during this time. Dianna shared a thought on Facebook that I would like to share here and I think Kassie would encourage each of us in this. The dash in

between one's birth date and death date on a gravestone is so much more than an indentation in a concrete stone; it's your life. Every laugh, every tear, every moment. I am going to live the - with a lot more intent. I think Kassie did live her life with intent and I know she would want each of us to be encouraged to do the same.

So, with Kassie and that thought in mind, I would like to share with you that it is incredibly difficult to believe December is here and the end of year is upon us. Listening to other floral friends, it seems so many are busier than ever and businesses seem to be captivating on every opportunity to flourish. This is one of the keys to growing our business in an ever changing world. Be sure to read all the amazing articles in *TEXAS in Bloom*. Each issue is jam packed with creative ideas to grow our businesses. Thank you Lynn, for working your magic and bringing our events to life in this magazine!

November was full of planning the new year with anticipation of more in person inspiration and networking with our floral family! I would like to thank the TSFA Board for their forward thinking and dedication in bringing TSFA into an even greater association. November also brought our first high school testing in this school year with more to come. It is so exciting to see these students and teachers embrace the floral industry with a strong desire to learn and excel in this industry. Thank you to our amazing education team for all you do to make this a success, and we couldn't do it without Carole and her unending work with this program!

As we are approaching this new year with anticipation, don't let the opportunities to serve this great association pass by. We need your ideas, inspiration and commitment to help this industry thrive!

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy Hanukkah! I am wishing each of you a memory filled holiday with family and friends. Let's all take time to reflect on the year and be thankful for this holiday season. Wishing each of you the happiest of holidays!

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FEATURING TSFA MEMBERS
BETH O'REILLY AND ACE BERRY

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS STATE FLORISTS' ASSOCIATION

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SUPPLY CHAIN WOES AND INFLATIONARY PRESSURES ...**BUT WE ARE STILL ESSENTIAL!**

The floral industry has spent the past several decades perfecting a globalized “just-in-time” supply chain and COVID pandemic has disrupted nearly every aspect of that globalized supply chain, illustrating the vulnerabilities of a usually invisible pathway of growing, transportation, and logistics that gets flowers from where they are or grown to where they are going to be sold in an incredulous short period of time.

cash placed in people’s pockets through stimulative policies (remember that 70% of GDP is tied to personal consumption expenditures, so the alternative would not have been pretty).

Americans took a portion of the money they had been spending on experiences (services) and redirected it to goods for their homes, which were suddenly doubling as offices and classrooms.

the pandemic, sending a container from Shanghai to Los Angeles cost perhaps \$2,000. By early 2021, the same journey was 10-to-15 times more expensive. Many containers were getting bumped off ships and forced to wait, adding to delays throughout the supply chain. Even large companies like Target and Home Depot had to wait for weeks and even months to get their finished wares onto ships.

THE TIMING AND QUANTITY OF CONSUMER PURCHASES **SWAMPED THE SYSTEM**

The supply chain disruptions go back to early last year to the beginning stages of the pandemic and included not only flowers but ancillary hard goods as well. Factories in parts of the world where a lot of the globe’s manufacturing capacity sits were hit hard by the spread of coronavirus cases. Many factories shut down or were forced to reduce production because workers were sick or in lockdown. In response, shipping companies cut their schedules in anticipation of a drop in demand for moving goods around the world. Growers ratcheted down production as best they could after dumping flowers. That proved to be an unforeseen mistake. While demand for some things cratered (e.g., restaurant meals, trips to vacation destinations, spa services, etc.), the floral sector experienced an increase in their demand, promulgated by the

They put office chairs and new printers in their bedrooms, while adding gym equipment and video game consoles to their basements. They bought paint and lumber for projects that added space or made their existing confines more comfortable. They added mixers and blenders to their kitchens, as parents became short-order cooks for cooped-up children. The timing and quantity of consumer purchases swamped the system. Factories whose production tended to be fairly predictable tried to ramp up to satisfy a surge of orders, adding to the logistical backlog.

Scarcity early on caused the prices of many things to go higher in the process, particularly transportation logistics. Because containers were scarce and demand for shipping intense, the cost of moving cargo skyrocketed. Before

Meanwhile, at ports in North America where containers were arriving, the heavy influx of ships overwhelmed the availability of docks. At ports like Los Angeles and Oakland, dozens of ships were forced to anchor out in the ocean for days before they could load and unload (which is still the case). At the same time, truck drivers and dock workers were stuck in quarantine, reducing the availability of people to unload goods, and further slowing the process. This situation was exacerbated by black swan events such as the shutdown of the Suez Canal after a giant container ship got stuck there, and then by the closings of major ports in China in response to new Covid cases. Many companies responded to initial shortages by ordering extra items, adding additional strain on the ports, and filling up warehouses. With warehouses full, containers suddenly served as storage areas, and piled up at ports. Traffic jams of historic size resulted.

Some floral industry businesses, including growers and wholesalers, temporarily closed operations, or scaled back considerably, in response to COVID-19 restrictions and the associated precipitous drop in demand. That constricted supply dramatically in

SO NOW IS THE TIME TO BE SHOUTING FROM THE ROOFTOPS ABOUT THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FLOWERS

the short-term. However, florists who stayed in regular communication with their regular suppliers weathered the storm much more favorably than others. Some were able to pool their orders and have them delivered from wholesaler via ground service such as UPS at rates that allow them to still leverage shared costs. In addition, as the situation continued to involve, some California growers and Miami importers who normally sell only to wholesalers started looking at selling directly to retailers in markets where the usual channels had been disrupted.

Unfortunately, these supply chain disruptions will take until the summer or fall of 2022 before they are sorted out. Even then, there will be shifts in how the floral industry conducts business in the future. As the industry continues to adapt to this changing business environment, especially changes in transportation and logistics, greater communication and collaboration is essential. Suppliers need to know their customers' strategies and operations better so they can better support retailers. And retailers need to understand suppliers' operations, the amount of time needed for breeding, growing, harvesting, and delivering, and plan ahead accordingly.

The price increases implemented in the industry already responding to inflationary pressures will continue, but to a lesser degree next year. For example, the cost of inputs for growers increased by 8 percent this year and is expected to increase by another 3 to 5 percent next year. This means that growers (and firms downstream) should be raising their prices by at least 11-13 percent just to

break even. By late 2022, the transitory part (as the Federal Reserve refers to it) of these inflationary pressures should start to dissipate during the first half of next year. But make no mistake here -- economic recovery and future growth are highly dependent on whether the pandemic is brought under control.


But, as mentioned earlier, final demand has accelerated as the pandemic has gone on, with many consumers discovering the unique health benefits and the social connectivity associated with flowers, which are especially important in a time of stress, anxiety, and social isolation. This resulted in 2020 sales that were up year-over-year over 2019 and sales in the first half of 2021 resulted in yet another year-over-year increase in flower sales over 2020. Unless the Delta variant dictates otherwise, that consumer buying trend should continue to hold until at least 2023 because of pent-up demand. So now is the time to be shouting from the rooftops about the health benefits of flowers. In my humble opinion, that's the fuel for future economic growth in the floral industry. We will likely be contending with this health crisis for some time to come, and the health and well-being benefits of flowers are part of the answer. In other words, we are essential!

Written by
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Ellison Chair in
International Floriculture
Texas A&M University



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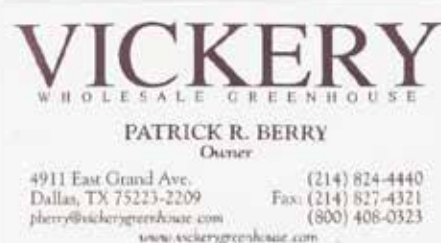
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DALLAS

AWARDS AND HONORS PRESENTED AT THE TEXAS FLORAL EXPO

Photography Credit | Kris Ann Photography



Award Recipient Carole Sayegh and
TSFA President Cheryl Vaughan TMFA

CAROLE SAYEGH IS INDUCTED INTO THE TSFA HALL OF FAME

"It is my honor to present the Texas State Florists' Association Hall of Fame Award. The purpose of the TSFA Hall of Fame Award is to recognize a company or a person who has gone above and beyond to support the mission of the Texas State Florists' Association. This year's recipient has exceeded this definition with significant contributions to the association. She began her career with the TSFA in 2016. She is the first person you hear when you call the TSFA office. During the pandemic, she worked countless hours to make sure TSFA's membership was taken care of. She works to make sure that every member is supported. I have had members tell me that she is patient and caring with all that she does and with each question that is asked. Her exceptional performance is the reason that TSFA Association Coordinator Carole Sayegh is inducted this evening in the Texas State Florists' Association Hall of Fame." – TSFA President Cheryl Vaughan TMFA

TSFA HONORS ED FIMBEL TMFA AND PRESENTS THE JIM ORR VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD RECOGNIZING A LIFETIME OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE

"Let's now recognize one of the hardest working volunteers in the Texas State Florists' Association. It is my honor to present the Jim Orr Volunteer Spirit Award. The recipient of this award has demonstrated their continued dedication to TSFA through countless hours of volunteering. Throughout the past year, this individual has been a key component in the TSFA High School Virtual Testing ensuring that thousands of students received their grades within a timely manner. The recipient participated in all of the in-person high school testings, assisting in every way possible. His participation exemplifies care for the students and the teachers with a shared goal of success. His oversight of the workrooms, during recent Texas Floral Expos, has been exemplary. He has seen to every detail being certain that all ran smoothly. From making sure visiting designers were taken care of to securing product to transporting the numerous needs for staged programs, his tasks were never done until the Expo was complete. He is the first to arrive and the last to leave. He is the kind of person that when your car battery catches on fire on the car you just bought, will wait with you while you watch that car get towed away and then take you to the dealership early the next morning and wait with you to ensure that everything is OK instead of heading home to spend time with his family. If you have a question about running your business or about just how to create a specific design, he is there for advice and counsel. I think he just thought he was going to be retiring, spending more time with family when he sold his shop and moved to Northlake, Texas. Instead, he has been there for TSFA and for that we are profoundly grateful! His hard work and dedication has not gone unnoticed as he was also the recipient of the Jim Orr Volunteer Spirit award in 2017. Please join me in recognizing tonight's recipient, and my friend and mentor Ed Fimbel TMFA." – Kassie Baker TMF



From Left to Right
Presenter Kassie Baker TMF, Recipient Ed Fimbel TMFA and
TSFA President Cheryl Vaughan TMFA

Photography Credit | Kris Ann Photography

TSFA PRESENTS THE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD HONORING THE LIFETIME OF ACHIEVEMENT OF GINA WATERS AAF TMFA AND ANNOUNCES A SCHOLARSHIP FUND ESTABLISHED IN THE TEXAS FLORAL ENDOWMENT

It is truly my honor to present the 2021 TSFA Achievement Award. This year's recipient was active in Texas State Florist Association from the early 1990's when she received her TMF and was elected to the TSFA Board as Retail Director shortly after. After serving her term, she took a sabbatical from TSFA to focus on her family and her business to later return as an amazing asset to our association. Most of you know that Texas State Florists' Association experienced a significant loss this year. TSFA President Gina Waters passed away on Thursday, April 29, 2021, in San Antonio, Texas after a brief illness. She served the association well for decades culminating in her election to the highest office that TSFA members can bestow. Her service as President, for two years, was to have been celebrated during the Texas Floral Expo where she would have served as Chair. Her kind and most generous spirit was at the center of her leadership. All who knew her were better because of all she so generously shared. The many projects and programs that encompassed her involvement were at their best because she quietly led the way to their success. TSFA flourished under her leadership despite unprecedented times. A series of virtual programming to guide Texas florists through uncharted territories was launched at the onset of the pandemic. She worked with the TSFA Education Committee to bring forward the Professional Certified Florist Program to certify professional florists while thousands of high school students were certified under her leadership. Her words brought information and inspiration each month in *Texas in Bloom*. The very essence of the 2021 Texas Floral Expo is filled with her thoughts, wisdom and ideas. Gina Waters AAF TMFA worked within the floral Industry to unselfishly contribute to every opportunity creating unlimited possibilities for others. She truly loved this association, sharing with members a quote, each month, to close her President's Message. So, perhaps the words noted below would have been shared with love and to inspire us all. — TSFA President Cheryl Vaughan TMFA

"You're only here for a short visit. Don't hurry, don't worry. And be sure to smell the flowers along the way." — By Walter Hagen



Accepting are her sons Forrest Waters and Preston Waters.
Son Logan Waters was unable to attend.

Photography Credit | Kris Ann Photography



Photography Credit | Kris Ann Photography

TSFA CONGRATULATES TEXAS MASTER FLORIST GRADUATES DURING THE TEXAS FLORAL EXPO!

From Left to Right
Stacy Rozell TMF, Iuliia Prokhorova TMF,
TSFA President Cheryl Vaughan TMFA,
Victoria Howell TMF and Monica Hernandez TMF



A TRIBUTE TO *Kassie Baker*

Kassie Ann Baker, 38, of Lubbock, Texas, passed away at her residence on November 9, 2021. Kassie was born in Killeen, Texas on May 4, 1983, to Lisa Ann Coble Baker and Vernon Dale Baker. She lived in Lubbock for 20 years, moving there one week after graduating from Lampasas High School in 2001. In high school, Kassie was involved in a wide variety of sports. She was the National Champion Power Lifter for 2001 and 2002, still holding the Lampasas record. She was a member of the National Honor Society. She attended Texas Tech University and South Plains Junior College in Lubbock where she received her Associates degree.

Kassie was a Texas Master Florist. She owned and operated House of Flowers in Lubbock. She was President of the small business association SEA, also known as "The Breakfast Club". Kassie was the proud recipient of an award from The Ronald McDonald House recognizing her efforts in Lubbock. She was inducted into the TSFA Hall of Fame in 2019 with fellow TSFA Education Committee Members recognizing their dedication to floral education and the development of Level One and Level Two High School Certification Programs. She was quite pleased when the House of Flowers was recognized as the "Best of the West".



Kassie served Texas State Florists' Association as First Vice President. Her dedicated service as a TSFA Education Committee Co-chair has contributed to the development of both High School and Professional Floral Certifications. Her involvement on TSFA Committees has strengthened the association to include her work on Membership and Industry Communications. She chaired the first Texas Floral Showcase in West Texas involving all areas of the industry. In 2021, she served as Design Chair during the Texas Floral Expo and as Editor of the Professional Certified Florist Program. She was a TSFA Education Instructor and West Texas New Mexico Florist Association Retail Director.



Kassie is survived by her parents, Lisa and Vernon Baker, of Lampasas and Buchanan Dam, two sisters, Jennifer Harris and J. P. of Lampasas, and Jessica Fincher and Justin of Lubbock, her aunts and uncles, Deb and Terry Lindsey, Brandy and Cory Davis, Angela and Ryan Brisben, and John and Ryan Baird, nieces and nephews, Jonathan Harris, Kadi-Ann Harris, Kaelie Fincher and Radley Fincher and her grandparents, Joann (G.G., Grandma) Morgan and Larry (Peepaw) and Janet Baird. She is also survived by her special friends, Justin Hughes, Tiffany and Brandon Neal and numerous others that made her life complete. She will be missed by her fur babies, Myles and Abbi. Numerous other loving relatives survive Kassie.

Kassie is preceded in death by her son, Mason Riley Baker, grandparents, James Coble, J.C. Morgan, Patsy and Dalton Baker, and Nan Baird and two cousins, Shelly Lindsey, and Wyatt Eicher.



Platinum and white, always in style. Crystal, Mercury glass and pearls, always a perfect accent. Levels of designed florals in white, always in demand. The varying levels of blossoms, each mounded and clustered for impact, showcased a design concept perfect for a Royal Banquet Table, an Altar at the Church, or to highlight a buffet. Two Chairs adorned with ribbon tied dendrobium orchids, designate the place for the Bride and Groom's evening to remember.



The boldness of color captures the eye and carries from one design application to another. Flowing ribbons from clustered floral statements guide to the numerous variations at the base of the overall design. The floral groupings establish the statement design as important enhancing the overall appearance of the setting. Exceptional at it best, this presentation lit the way out of the pandemic into a world that will welcome again elaborately adorned celebrations.

WEDDING PETALS

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Clusters, of garden styled blossoms, create a setting that answers the request for the Bride looking for soft color to surround her on her wedding day. An archway for height and clustered florals on tables adorn numerous levels. The presentation of a bouquet, in this same clustered style, further enhanced with a layering of ribbons to extend color.

Taking it up a notch in color is the brilliance of yellow lemons. The lemon tree was the signature for this design concept. These trees were cleverly created on permanent branches. Just imagine the fresh citrus fragrance and simplicity of style throughout a ballroom to welcome all to a luncheon reception following a morning garden wedding. We will see more in a future issue as the look unveils a setting in French blue with white floral accents and the brilliant color of lemons to complete.



GETTING BACK TO THE BUSINESS OF WEDDINGS WITH SHARON MCGUKIN

Written by Jodi McShan AAF AIFD PFCI TMF

Weddings of COVID... we have seen them all – large weddings proceeding against recommendations, cancellations, multiple date changes, and then the adjusted weddings. We have seen new terms such as: minimony (small ceremony with a larger wedding later), microwedding (up to 50 guests with much more detail in the ceremony), elopement, and tiny/petite wedding (more personalized and planned elopement).

Besides changes in the ceremony size, we are seeing changes in other aspects. More weddings are moving to week-days and off-peak times to save money. Often, this money is being used to make the event more personalized – lucky for us, this often means more flowers! The focus is shifting from quantity to quality.



Photography Credit | Kris Ann Photography

Colors are also changing. For years we associated weddings with white, but the bride of today is not focused on that. We are seeing color become the new white. Wedding dresses cover the spectrum of colors, and flowers spring off the tables full of life with vibrant colors. This can make it much easier for the florist (or harder should the “Pinterest bride” find the perfect purple lily that she swears is real and not dyed).

Dried and preserved flowers are making a resurgence on the scene. This follows the global trends of being more eco-friendly and sustainable. Oasis is also doing this with new products that are compostable and eco-friendly. Flowers easily fit in the eco-friendly bucket (maybe pun intended), but florists need to make sure that we are highlighting this to the public. Do not be afraid to tell your customers what we have been doing for years!

New trends are showing couples also sending flowers to those who cannot attend in person! A great way to include family and friends who are unable to travel to the ceremony or unable to be there in person. Flower jewelry and flower stoles are also coming back onto center stage.

TAKE TIME IN YOUR WEDDING BUSINESS TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE THE EXPERT, AND IT WILL PAY OFF IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS.

Our ultimate goal in weddings is to create a memorable client experience. We can do that in a number of ways.

Know your venues. If you have pictures of the venue with your flowers, even better. Show the couple where they can fill in with flowers to create a true experience – from the venue entrance to the bathrooms. Give them all the options and help them create the scene. If you help them see their dreams, you will not only sell more flowers, you will exceed their expectations and make it a truly memorable event.

Know the trends and how to recreate them. Elevated designs are popular right now, so be prepared to price those designs. Know the cost of rentals, the price of flowers per square foot for arches/table runners, so you can be the expert and demonstrate your confidence and knowledge to the couple. It is also important to know the costs of the rest of the wedding – dress, caterer, etc. You need to make sure you are helping the couple balance the cost of flowers – if the dress is \$10,000.00, and the venue is 12,000 square feet for 100 people, you need to explain that \$1,000.00 in flowers is going to look light (I mean we have to find a nice way to say cheap!). Help the couple balance things and make sure the entire experience is balanced and perfect for them and the guests.

Even if you have more ideas you have discussed with the couple that they aren't ordering, write them down. They might find more in their budget if they keep that in mind and decide they really do want those powder room orchids or rose table card holders. As you are writing things down, sell colors and styles. Avoid selling specific flowers if you can – especially in today's market. Help the couple picture the perfect event in their mind, and then create it for them.

Weddings today are constantly evolving, but they are also the same. Couples want an event to remember, and florists are the artists to finish the venue canvas. Take time in your wedding business to make sure you are the expert, and it will pay off in leaps and bounds. Know your bride and groom, know your venue, know your flowers, know your wedding for this couple, and plan. Organization and knowledge will keep you on top of your wedding game!

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KIRKSEY GREGG PRODUCTIONS ADORNS THE GALLERIA BALLROOM FOR THE STARS OF TEXAS EVENT FEATURING TSFA MEMBERS BETH O'REILLY AND ACE BERRY

Written by Jodi McShan AAF AIFD PFCI TMF

On Friday night the ballroom, adorned in decor of all red, was designed by TSFA Past President Kirksey Gregg AIFD TMF and Kirksey Gregg Productions. Seated in a setting to be remembered, we awaited a presentation that we knew would surpass our expectations! TSFA members Beth O'Reilly AIFD TMF and Ace Berry AIFD TMF had been selected for HBOMAX Hit series *Full Bloom* and they were here tonight to share their stories! While a few settled in for what was expected to be another awards dinner, were they ever surprised!



Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography

Beth began the evening sharing her floral journey - from making bud vases to creating art installations across the country to appearing on *Full Bloom*. She truly took us all back to the basics when she spoke of bud vases but then she showed her true talent in creating a "simple budvase" into an exquisite composition centerpiece. Beth talked of what inspires her and of her mother's influence with lavish table scapes within her Blue Delftware vignette.

She taught us about all things chicken (chicken wire that is) and how to manipulate this simple mechanic to help make great things. Throughout her program, Beth presented how to take her structures and make them our own.



Photography Credit | Kris Ann Photography



Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography

Beth encouraged us all to grow in our journey but not to forget our roots. Our roots ground us and are a part of who we are. She completed her presentation with her beautiful calla lily tower and an exciting finale of a decorated bike. The audience was sad to see her presentation end but delighted to watch Beth pedal her way out on a beautifully designed bike!



Photography Credit | Kris Ann Photography



The excitement definitely did not stop when Beth pedaled on her way as Ace Berry took the stage to share with us his floral journey. While Beth discussed a more organic progression that many of us have experienced, Ace talked about setting goals and working to reach them. Ace spoke about goals he set (which we are proud that one of those goals was to be on the TSFA stage) and how he took floral design and made it his own.



Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography

Ace encouraged us to work with what we enjoy and what fits us. He enjoys larger statements, and he exhibited his talent with tropical statements. It all started with a box – the box that earned him a spot on *Full Bloom* on HBOMAX. He spoke about those who had encouraged him and the lessons he learned along the way.

Through creative flower use and painting, Ace showed us how he transforms a “boring” tropical design to a work of art. Ace made the audience comfortable with understanding that not every style has to be what a designer prefers, and that it is acceptable to make your own way in your floral journey. Using large tropical flowers, he encouraged the audience to use the flowers and tools that feel most comfortable and fitting for the person and the design. He took the principles and elements and showed us how to use them to make big, beautiful tropical designs that make all stop and look.



Ace showed us how we could take something we have seen before and make it our own. He finished the evening with a heliconia tower, similar to the calla lily tower Beth created but definitely in true Ace style. He showed us how to show our style no matter what the project and not be afraid of owning who we are.

Both Beth and Ace were truly inspirational and encouraged designers of all levels to progress in their floral journey. They reminded us that it is not only about the final product, but we are all on our own journey of growth through design, creativity, and life. Thank you both for sharing with us and challenging us to own our own floral journey.

Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography



Beth O'Reilly and Ace Berry's presentations
underwritten by Rio Roses
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TSFA Calendar of Events

Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography



Design Credit | Ace Berry AIFD TMF



Design Credit | Beth O'Reilly AIFD TMF



Design Credit | Ace Berry AIFD TMF

DECEMBER

- 3 TSFA on Demand Release Date
Q&A with Tim Farrell at tsfa.org*
- 25 Christmas Day
- 31 New Years Eve

JANUARY

- 1 New Years Day
- 9-11 TSFA Certification & Competition Class
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- 14 Valentine's Day
- 21 President's Day



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