

OCTOBER 2017

# TEXAS

*in Bloom*



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# Texas in Bloom

OCTOBER 2017 | VOLUME XXXXIII | NUMBER 10

## From the *President*



Debbie Woltmann TMFA

My heart is broken yet my soul is fed by Hurricane Harvey. The flooded destruction is heartbreaking. To see everyone join together to help one another fills my soul. May this spirit of caring continue as we rebuild our Texas. The Hurricane Harvey Florist Fund was established by the AIFD Foundation in concert with TSFA just days after Hurricane Harvey caused catastrophic conditions. This Fund, with 100% of the donations in support of this effort, is in direct response to the questions asked of many in our industry across the US. "What can we do?! How can we help?" I invite you to spread the word to your florist friends in Texas who need a helping hand as a result of Hurricane Harvey. The grant application is online at [aifdfoundation.org](http://aifdfoundation.org).

Thank you to Deborah DeLaFlor for leading the Florida effort to assist Texas! Our friends in Florida sent supplies immediately after the storm landed. It is now our turn to help the floral industry in Florida work through the aftermath of Irma. The Hurricane Irma Florist Fund has been established by the AIFD Foundation in concert with the Florida State Florists' Association. Please contribute what you can to help those experiencing the worst of these storms in Texas and Florida.

TSFA welcomes our new members who joined the association over the summer! My hope is that you each become involved in TSFA. My first involvement began in 1978 as "just a member", then as a member, I went on to be a part of the first class of certified Texas Master Florist and before I knew it, TSFA was a major part of me being a florist. Networking, design and business education, working on committees for the betterment of our industry, and most important the lasting friendships I made, all contributed to the knowledge and confidence needed to make it in the competitive world of small business. Each involvement added to my success as a florist.

TSFA wants you to succeed. You have made the first step! Keep your enthusiasm! Continue to Flourish! Attend classes and programs. Volunteer to assist at events. Take pictures. Sit with a stranger and start chatting. Ask questions. Talk to the designers after the programs. Find a mentor or two. Share email addresses. Mine is [dswoltmanntsfa@gmail.com](mailto:dswoltmanntsfa@gmail.com). There are so many opportunities to grow and bloom in TSFA!

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

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Help the Texas floral industry rebuild! Contribute to:

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# HURRICANE HARVEY FLORIST FUND

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Hurricane Harvey caused catastrophic flooding and devastating conditions in Texas. The AIFD Foundation, working in concert with Texas State Florists' Association, has established the **Hurricane Harvey Florist Fund**.  
*100% of your donation will help rebuild the floral industry in Texas.*

To Contribute visit [aifdfoundation.org](http://aifdfoundation.org).



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# Experience Expo Education



**A New *TEXAS in Bloom*  
feature beginning  
November 2017!**



# The Business of Weddings

**Ian Prosser AAF AIFD PFCI NDSF**

Session Underwritten by FTD  
Texas Floral Education and Product Partner  
Silver Level Founding Texas Floral Education Underwriter



Written by: Jordan Flowers

Wedding and events are a part of every day for a wedding or event florist. It is important to know who your audience is, what they want, and what it takes to show profitability from your work. For decades, Ian Prosser has been involved in weddings on an international level. He is a man who knows *The Business of Weddings*. His business session was outstanding, especially for those who specialize in weddings and events. So, where do we begin you might ask?

With our targeted audience, Brides!

Today, with social media, there are numerous options. An abundance of advertising, wedding apps, Pinterest, and multiple websites to only name a few are all targeted for bride's wind

up leaving the bride confused as to what they want because there are so many options and sometimes simply too much information. So, it is our job to keep it real and help to narrow the ideas. It is sometimes impossible to give them exactly and all that they want in a budget that they hope to maintain. This is why it is so important to know your bride right from the start! From the moment she walks through the door you should have a basic understanding of style. Is she traditional, natural, romantic, artistic, or dramatic? Once you determine style, you should guide the consultation to a look that suits best and open discussion on pricing packages that fit the needs. Offering tiered pricing packages with an option of package A, B, or C opens an easy way to understand all there is to offer and in many ways increases the sales potential.

Details & etiquette are key points in capturing your best success!

Be detailed in your work. The BIG problem most florists have is their overall presentation and attention to detail. Yes, it does make a difference how a client perceives you and your company. Ian's advice: invest in a nice purse, splurge on a pair of shoes, watch, belt, or all together look that sets you apart. If you strive to be an upscale shop, you must be well presented. Present the client someone they can relate to. Do this and they will feel more confident about you and your business.

Be detailed in your invoices placing close attention to the product selections, rentals, and supplied containers. Be invested in the decision making process, and share your portfolio with enthusiasm showcasing your work to illustrate your skill set and how that knowledge may best support their vision!

Once you have these details in place, then network and promote yourself to other like-minded vendors who see your work and all that you and your business represent. Take them for lunch or coffee. Provide these vendors with a portfolio of what you do and what you could do for them. Then watch your shop begin to flourish into a specialized flower shop for weddings and events.

## Become Your Customer's First Thought

**Raul Marrero and Maya Segastume**

Session Underwritten by Rio Roses  
Texas Floral Education and Product Partner  
Gold Level Founding Texas Floral Education Underwriter

Written by: Jordan Flowers

There are many variables that make up a business, and many businesses that sell the same product. In this presentation, we learned the many ways we can *become our customer's first thought!* The strategies discussed included branding, logo recognition, specialization, and most importantly appearance and attitude.

All it takes is 4 E's & 2 P's !

Energy | Energize | Edge | Execution | Passion = Profit

Energy! Excite! A positive attitude is contagious!

Energize! Your employees represent you and the business. Energize them!

Edge! Find it! Specialize! Stand Out! Specialization provides a way to stand out and add to the development of your brand. A brand helps a company stand out above all the chatter. Find your Edge!

Execution! Once you define your business then it is time to execute with successful strategies and a positive attitude to reach the 2 P's!

Passion applied to a well thought out business will lead to Profit! Review the customer base, analyze the competition, determine sales objectives, and truly examine your shop's strengths, weaknesses, and personality. Define strategies for a greater return to fine tune all that you do. Once you have an established a customer base, work to increase sales, offer carefully selected products, create bundles | packages, and implement customer rewards.

Always take time to re-evaluate your image and re-invent as needed. Strive to always be that shop with a great attitude that makes a lasting impression. Be sure your customers know that they may depend on you because you have found Passion in what you do!! Let the 4 E's and the 2 P's lead the way to *becoming your customer's first thought!*



# Wine & Flowers: A Perfect Pair

**Kyle W. Dufour and Lindsay Baerwald**

Session Underwritten by GO TEXAN

Texas Floral Education Partner

Gold Level Texas Floral Education Underwriter

Written by: Jordan Flowers

At the Texas Floral Expo, I had the pleasure of attending the Business Course of Study. Several sessions touched on the importance of finding ways to expand business so that your business stands out among the competition. In listening to the wine and flowers session a thought came to mind! What could possibly be a better way to have my business stand out than to literally wine and dine my customers?!

GO TEXAN promotes all that is Texan. Working to promote wine with flowers, GO TEXAN reached out to TSFA with an opportunity. Flower shops all across Texas have the ability to deliver flowers and wine and the How To's were what this session was all about!

What can you do to get started on this master plan? Develop a business strategy to address the questions and concerns about any legal obstacles. Review your customer profile and explore the options that this product mix might provide. For example, you would be able to offer your customers boutique wines that cannot often be found elsewhere. Variety offer choices to suit taste and reflect the occasion. Offering wines that are original to Texas and are Texas favorites open marketing opportunities with Texas product and to buy local.

TSFA has developed marketing components for wine and flowers for occasions of Romance and Hospitality. Each provides opportunities with considerable sales possibilities for the savvy marketer to expand sales in today's flower shop.

To apply for these permits please fill-out the off-premise prequalification pack. For questions about the application process or to submit your application, please contact your local TABC licensing office. These links are located at [tsfa.org](http://tsfa.org) under the Deliver Texas Wine with Flowers tab. You will also find GO TEXAN wineries and GO TEXAN wine wholesalers at the Deliver Texas Wine with Flowers.



## Build Online Business with a Digital Marketing Plan

**Renato Cruz Sogueco**

Session Underwritten by Floriology

Texas Floral Education Partner

Bronze Level Texas Floral Education Underwriter

Digital marketing practices such as search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), blogging, social media and generating positive reviews are "no longer optional for florists," said Renato Cruz Sogueco, BloomNet Vice President of Digital Strategy during his Texas Floral Expo session *Build Online Business with a*

*Digital Marketing Plan.* "It is mandatory if you expect to grow sales, let alone stay in business. Walk-in traffic is in decline and more and more consumers expect to find you online."

Sogueco shared with attendees critical SEO strategies to ensure their websites are found and ranked by search engines such as Google, including the best practice of supplying a unique Title and Description to every webpage you publish. He advised all to work closely with the website provider to update this information. "Google shared with us they want each web page in the site to stand on its own, so be sure to have a page with relevant content just for weddings, or just for funerals."

He also demonstrated how national marketers take advantage of the fact most florists don't invest in online advertising or search engine marketing (SEM). "When florists don't advertise, it lowers the bid for these ads which allows national advertisers to run inexpensive ads in the marketplace," Sogueco emphasized. He added if more florists were to advertise, that alone could effectively stop this practice.

He also shared an efficient process for generating topics and publishing blogs, posting to social media and how florists can easily generate positive reviews for their business on ratings services through Google and Yelp. You can download slides and resources at <http://www.floriologyinstitute.com/tsfa2017> or email [renato@floriologyinstitute.com](mailto:renato@floriologyinstitute.com).

# Profit in the Design Room Profit in the Office

Vonda LaFever AIFD CFD PFCI

Session Underwritten by TeamFloral



In this business session, TeamFloral covered profitability subjects from correct mark up and setting expectations of sales and design staff to achieving the profit that is so well deserved!

The buzz words in operating a profitable flower shop are **awareness** and **control**. As it pertains to the design room, it's all about being **aware** of the product you use (cost of goods sold | COGS) and the time it takes to produce the arrangement (labor). An easy way to **control** the COGS and Labor is by using design recipes.

The office is where decisions are made regarding the profitability of the shop.

It is necessary to track your sales and purchases each week to be **aware** of the COGS. Compare your sales to your labor hours to have your pulse on your labor costs, either weekly or bi-weekly. Having these numbers at your fingertips increases **awareness** of all that is needed to take **control** of shop finances.

Many thanks to Vonda LaFever, Vice President of TeamFloral for the business session that will lead to possibilities for improvement to the bottom line!

# Making Every Call Count

Lori Wilson

Session Underwritten by TeamFloral

TeamFloral shared the proven way to increase customer satisfaction and increase sales at the same time every day in the flower shop.

The floral professional does not sell flowers, they provide sentiments. If you think about it, your roles range from the matchmaker to the floral therapist, from wedding dream-maker to floral confidant. Why then, do employees start the conversation asking about budget? How much do you want to spend should never be the first question? Perhaps not a question at all!

Focus on the customer's need and not the budget. Offering a solution to their floral needs will build a rapport with the customer allowing you to deliver an exceptional customer experience...and we all know that today it is all about the Experience!

TeamFloral Sales Manager Lori Wilson opened the way of thinking about each and every sale, offering a different approach and applying a new strategy towards Making Every Call Count! Thank you Lori! Thank you TeamFloral!



# It's a Great Time to Be A Florist!

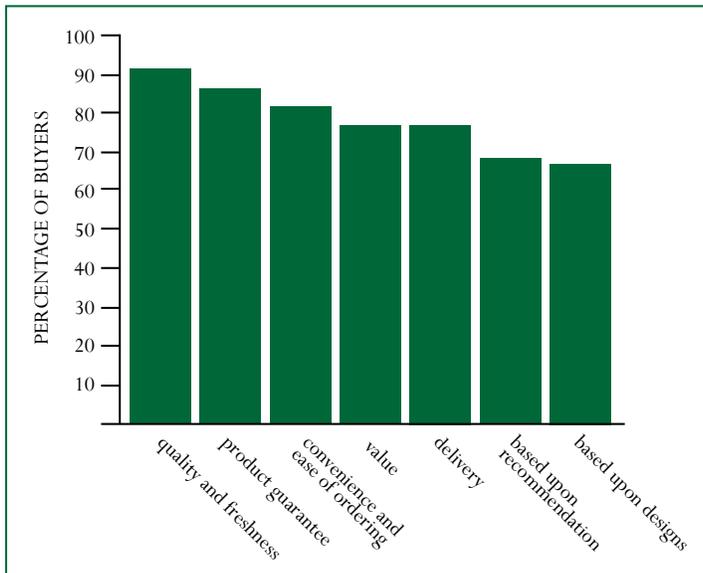
VONDA LA FEVER AIFD CFD PFCI

Luncheon Presentation underwritten by Team Floral

Written by Jodi McShan TMF

Many appeared skeptical when Vonda LaFever AIFD CFD PFCI took the stage at the TSFA Expo and announced "It's a great time to be a florist!" With the rise of DIY and the proliferation of flowers at every turn (supermarkets, online, or straight to the wholesaler), the retail florist today is not the retail florist 15 years ago.

Since 2002, we have experienced a 40% (yes, that's 40!) decline in the number of retail flower shops, and there are less than 14,000 retail florists in operation today. A recent survey conducted by the Society of American Florists (SAF) revealed that the number one stop for people to get flowers today is the supermarket | box store. The rise in the popularity of flowers is not translating to more day-to-day business for the average retailer.



The future of florists – *the wow factor* - the mentality of the flower buyer has changed, and the florists who have not... well, they are either out of business or seeing flat to negative sales. Vonda exclaimed to us that "there is hope!" She put things in terms of looking at today's customer through a new lens. We need to sell up and help our customers create an experience. This experience can be from an everyday purchase to a large gala, but we have to approach the sale in a different way. Anyone can go grab a handful of roses at the grocery store, but as a retail florist, we have something different we can offer – the experience. Lucky for us, the experience is where millennials and many other generations spend the majority of their money. Big memories. Big arrangements. Big impact.

The future of florists returns to an emphasis on – *special occasions* –. With a growing economy, weddings and events are rebounding. Between the slump of the recession and the later average marriage age (29 for women and 31 for men), we have huge growth potential in event work. Today's customer wants to send emotions and an experience – the perfect opportunity for florists!

The future of florists – *sympathy* – there is also a shift in funeral and sympathy trends. Today more than 50% of services are memorial services with the deceased being cremated. This shift is hurting the funeral homes hard. In the past, most of their clientele desired the traditional funeral (\$4,000-\$8,000+); today, more and more are



going with cremation (\$2,000-\$4,000+). Funeral homes have lost a major source of revenue, and Vonda encouraged florists to jump in and help them fill the gap. She encouraged flower shops to offer commission to funeral homes who sell the florist's work and ask for exclusivity.

The future of florists – *our staff* – florists today have to do more than just offer a product and hope the consumer likes it. Gone are the days of customers calling for "something nice for \$50." Today's informed customers want information and recommendations; they need to know what to send to a memorial service or why they can't get beautiful peonies in November. Your staff demands have transformed in the past forty years. Forty years ago the cost, focus, and time was tied up in your fulfillment (production, delivery, etc.); today your cost, focus, and time needs to be on the sale. We have to have trained, experienced staff for our customers to have confidence in us and our service. You must create the – *experience* –.

We must change with the times and meet our customers with a new approach. Be proactive. Take risks. Dream big. Educate your staff. Capture an Online Presence. Get Social on Social Media. Show your customer why your product and service is a unique experience that everyone should have.

She gave us some parting words to live by – spoken by the famed Steve Jobs, "*People with passion can change the world for the better.*"

It is our turn to be that change for our customers.

# PRODUCT GALLERY DEMONSTRATIONS FEATURE

## *Former Texas Designers of the Year*

Former Texas Designers of the Year shared the ultimate in creativity with demonstrations on a variety of topics!

Designers gathered at the Expo and now we will revisit a few how to's and product tips from two of Texas' best! We begin this feature with *Autumn on My Mind!*

Looking forward to the months ahead where we will *Uncork Success with Texas Wine and Flowers*, *Rediscover Everyday* and *See Green* as an influence moving forward!

A Texas Thank You to Sheri Jentsch AIFD TMFA and Alan Masters AIFD for bringing the best of Texas to the Expo!



This design is all about visual impact achieved through texture. The focal is emphasized by layering bold color with textural interest. The variety of pods and sponge mushroom make quite a statement. The texture and color move upward with the horizontal lines of the wheat secured with binding wire. Horizontal speaks variety. An unusual approach to this product and quite appealing!



Autumn is all about color and that does not only mean the tradition of orange and yellow. The bold, bright statement in this design is intensified with a rather simple technique so elegantly applied. The grouping of blossoms adds importance to each placement. Add this idea to your designs each and every day this season and watch the WOW!



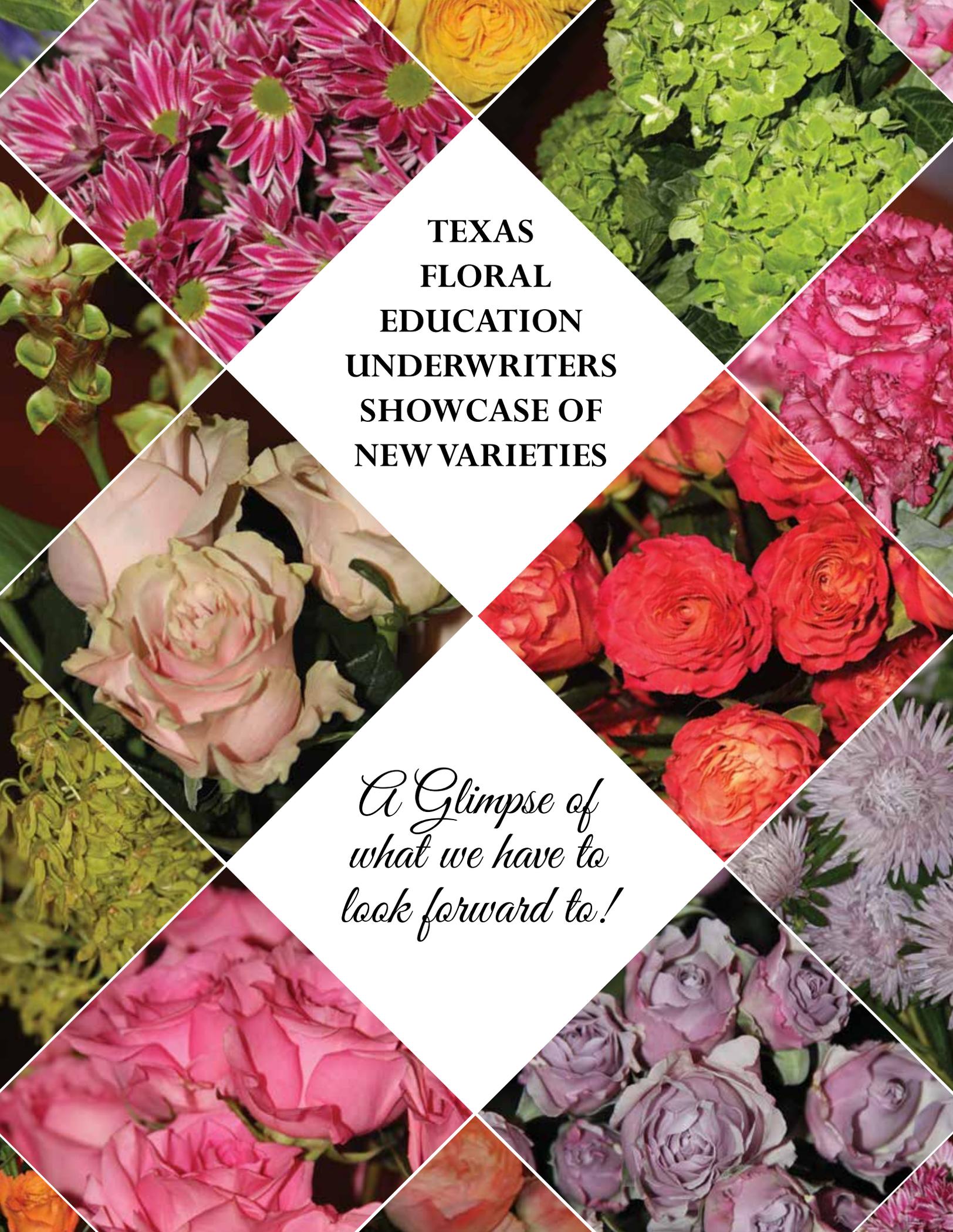


Flowers and Texas Wine open opportunities for today's florist. Whether it be an expression of romance, a way to say Thank You! or an appreciation of hospitality, Sheri Jentsch shared countless ideas during the Texas Floral Expo! Take a moment and revisit your notes to bring all she shared into your shop! With the corporate giving season just around the corner take time NOW if you have not already to discover all you need to know to offer Texas wine to your customer's this holiday season!

For questions about the application process or to submit your application, please contact your local TABC licensing office. Please visit [tsfa.org](http://tsfa.org) and click on the Deliver Texas Wine with Flowers Link. You will find links to your local TABC licensing office and a list of Texas Wineries.

If you missed the Expo or need a refresher we will *Uncork Success with Texas Wine and Flowers* in the December issue of TEXAS in Bloom! Don't miss it!





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

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*New Ideas*



# Making the Business of Flowers Fun

Making the Business of Flowers Fun returns emphasizing the point that will help lead your success in today's retail.  
Create an experience!! Stand out above the rest!

Let's take a look at what Charlie Gropetti AIFD accomplished with these designs during the Texas Floral Expo!



A collection of books will always be a well sold accessory but here Gropetti steps it up a notch where one or more might just support a vase with a couple of blooms. Impressive in a gathering but also perfect as a stand alone, a book to celebrate the teacher of the week or for one who loves the joy of reading.



The simplicity of sunflowers in an textured basket stands out with a vintage clay pot and saucer nestled in moss. Almost anyone could gather a few sunflowers in a basket but in this presentation these blossoms stand out because of the detailing in the design.



Vertical Vines stand tall in a similar basket with a great deal of interest and detail. It is almost as if you stepped into the fall harvest. This timeless arrangement fills space with great interest. The raffia at the base offers a contrast of color and adds interest to the overall.

*Take that extra moment to create a lasting impression making the business of flowers fun.*

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DALLAS

# TSFA *Calendar of Events*

Photo credit | Cody Ash Photography



## OCTOBER

- 4 TSFA Investment Committee Meeting  
10:00 am | TSFA Office  
Cedar Park, TX
- 7-8 TSFA School of Floral Design Classes.  
For more information visit  
texasfloraldesignschool.com or  
call the TSFA office 512.834.0361
- 9 Columbus Day
- 16 Bosses Day
- 25 TSFA Education Committee Meeting  
10:00 am | TSFA Office  
Cedar Park, TX
- 31 Halloween



## NOVEMBER

- 1 TSFA Finance Committee Meeting  
10:00 am | TSFA Office  
Cedar Park, TX
- 5 Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 10 Veteran's Day
- 12 TSFA Board of Directors Meeting  
10:00 am | TSFA Office  
Cedar Park, TX
- 23 Thanksgiving



## DECEMBER

- 12 Hanukkah Begins
- 25 Christmas



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