

SEPTEMBER 2022

TEXAS

in Bloom

Save the Date!
TEXAS FLORAL EXPO

EMERSON

June 23-25, 2023

Sheraton Georgetown Hotel and Conference Center
Georgetown, Texas

EMERSON

“The most recent years have presented challenging times for many of us professionally as well as personally. What better time to invest in ourselves and in our businesses so that we may emerge from this experience with advanced creative skills and knowledge to expand our business sense. I personally invite you to travel to Georgetown in 2023, where leading floral designers and top-notch business instructors will bring their best!”

— *Susan Piland CFD TMF* | Texas Floral Expo Chair

Save the Date! JUNE 23-25, 2023

Design Lectures
Demonstrations
Hands-on Workshops
In-depth Business Solutions
Luncheon Presentations
Product Gallery
Time to Network
Texas Designer of the Year
Competition



FROM THE *President*



TSFA President
Cheryl Vaughan CFD TMFA

Happy September to everyone! With the kids back in school, we know fall will be coming soon along with all the prep work that Autumn brings. We may not have as many fall leaves as other states, but we have some beautiful faux botanicals to work with and give our clients that fall feeling.

It was so good to see everyone at the Texas Floral Forum in Corpus Christi at the end of July. It was a pleasure to have Renee Tucci AIFD PFCI and Tina Coker AIFD in Texas. Their programs were both inspiring and full of ways to sharpen our skills and add that extra flair to set us apart from the everyday. And, what about that Shrimp Boil on the Beach? I thought it was a total success with a good time for not just networking, but enjoying our floral family with some good fun and having time to just visit with one another! Please let us know if you enjoyed this type of activity!

I cannot thank all of the Forum Chairs enough. Our overall Chair, Iuliia Prokhorova TMF, did an amazing job keeping everything flowing and welcoming everyone to her city! Thank you Iuliia! Please thank all of the chairs as you see them because these programs couldn't happen without them. Congratulations to our Jim Orr Volunteer Spirit Award winner, Yolanda Amos TMFA who is the perfect example of what this award is all about. Congratulations to our Hall of Fame Award winner, Pat Berry who is so well deserving and mentor to so many of us through the years. Lastly, congratulations to our Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Tom Wolfe, Sr. who has been a mentor who I know is always available with a listening ear. Congratulations Tom! All of these recipients are so well deserving, and I thank you for all you do for our association and our industry! Congratulations to Mary McCarthy AIFD TMFA who was named the 2022 Texas Designer of the Year! Mary and all things Competition will be featured in the October issue of TEXAS in Bloom! There will be more about our Award Recipients in the Fall issues! There will be more about the Texas Floral Forum over the next couple of months, so don't miss any of it!

The education instructors along with Dianna, Carole and I spent a week following the Forum in Corpus Christi at the ATAT conference for agriculture teachers which includes floral teachers. We had a booth where the instructors were able to visit with the teachers about tips and techniques to help their students succeed, but also help improve their design skills. Dianna and Carole were able to help the teachers navigate the testing process for their students, and the teachers loved meeting Carole to see the face behind the voice that helps them with their testing process. We, as instructors, also taught several classes and main stage presentations on various design styles including very beginning class to more advanced tropical presentations. Possibly the most exciting program for the teachers was the dinner program presented by Renee Tucci AIFD PFCI. She had the teachers in awe and completely inspired by her addition of creative flair to the ordinary while always including the elements and principles of design. Thank you to Renee for always pointing us back to the Elements and Principles! Also, a special thank you to the teachers who helped Bruce Easley AAF CFD TMFA with the centerpieces for this dinner. Those designing were Ashley Bishop, Heather Cox TMF, Jessica Marek TMF, Lisa Pieper TMF and Kristen Stockard. Thank you teachers and the designs were beautiful!

Dianna Nordman, Marisa Guerrero AIFD and I just participated in the Cal Flowers, "All About Flowers" on the beautiful Coronado Island, California. There will be more to come on this event in future issues of TEXAS in Bloom!

I would also like to say that I am honored to serve another year as President of TSFA. Thank you for your vote of confidence. I am looking forward to this year with anticipation of continued success in our industry and our association. I would like to give a special thanks to last year's Board members. You were a hardworking board who were dedicated to making this association and industry a success! I am also looking forward to working with our new Board. I know that each of you are dedicated to both this association and the floral industry. I look forward to new successes this coming year!

There are so many opportunities available for us through TSFA to grow as designers, business owners and professionals. Please take advantage of all TSFA has to offer. A series featuring Renee Tucci AIFD PFCI will continue throughout the fall at TSFA on Demand! Remember that these are available 24-7 so set a reminder to watch when you have the time! Many of these videos are also great training videos, so take advantage of these! Also, please add the Texas Floral Expo June 23 - 25 2023 in Georgetown to your calendar. There are many opportunities to participate and be a part of our success. You will find a list of our committees along with a description of what each committee does in the 2022 Directory, so please look that over to see what might be the perfect fit for you. Please let me know where you would like to participate as this new year begins. I am looking forward to the board meeting and committee meetings as this year begins. I hope to see you soon!

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS STATE FLORISTS' ASSOCIATION

PO Box 859 | Leander, Texas 78646 | 512.528.0806 | FAX 512.834.2150 | www.tsfa.org | dnordman@tsfa.org | caroles@tsfa.org

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THE TEXAS FLORAL FORUM WAS TAILORED TO PERFECTION

Sponsored by the Texas Floral Education Underwriters
Written by Courtney Burkhart TMF

Renee Tucci AIFD PFCI presented the Hands-on Workshop titled “Tailored to Perfection” during the Texas Floral Forum in Corpus Christi. She brought sunshine with her from the time she entered the room. It was a pleasure to learn from her.

Renee incorporated many tailoring techniques within one design, allowing us to experience each on our own. Her signature color, yellow, was on display through the use of terraced sunflowers.



Abstracting Fatsia leaves, by removing part of the leaf, allowed the remaining leaf to shine.

I personally enjoyed creating, what Renee referred to as, a fence of equisetum by vertically stacking segments on wire. Grouping, pillowing and sequencing were used in the design. Detaching petals from mini carnations and from the center of spray roses, provided additional interest. Each of these techniques may be explored in the finished design!

Aspidistra leaves were tailored by cutting, pulling, spinning and taping.





I loved the dahlia-like appearance of orange roses achieved by using Renee's very own Coning Technique. Petals were folded inward to create this look. The design was completed as foam was covered with tree fern sprinkled with mini carnation petals.

Renee Tucci is a born teacher. Instruction was presented with humor and easy-to-follow guidance. This honorary Texan amused us with her love of the word y'all. She is a cheerleader whom inspires confidence in her students. Love of flowers and of education are apparent through the teachings of the self-proclaimed "flower nerd". I appreciated the opportunity to participate in this informative learning experience.


I look forward to reading Renee's new book *Framing Floral Techniques*. With her comprehensive teaching, I aim to continue exploring and increasing my design skills.

Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography



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For Information and to Order Renee's Book,
 Visit <https://www.reneetucci.com/framingfloraltechniques>

THE QUEST FOR SOLUTIONS

Presented by Tina Coker AAF AIFD PFCI

Sponsored by the Texas Floral Education Underwriters

Written by Norman Northen TMFA

The room was a buzz wondering just how this business session was going to happen, what awaited at the four tables and who was going to be at each one? Each of these tables had place cards to be completed and large papers in the center of the table. As we entered the room, we learned that there was seating at tables for up to eight. We selected our spot, with those yet known, opening opportunities for networking and new friends!

First, we were to choose a name for our Team/Company. The teams were chosen: The Steel Magnolias, The Fab 5, Mark's

Minions (as in Mark Knox), and The Poised Peonies. We all made our place cards so that Tina knew exactly who we were from her side of the room. She started the business program by using the example of Mowing the Grass. Grass, "You can mow every day or every week, but about every six months, you need to sharpen the blade. That is what we are here to do today. We are here to sharpen the blade."

Tina suggested that we make a list of problems that each shop currently faces and find a solution that would work or had already worked.

PROBLEMS

- Limited floral products, both fresh and floral supplies
- Flowers of lesser quality
- Minimums going up with added service fees
- Substitutions being enforced with fresh product
- Website pricing that might not be correct for ordering both wholesale and retail with prices changing weekly these days.

SOLUTIONS

- Have a standing order for your fresh flowers so that you know what you are getting weekly, better quality and usually with no substitutions
- Use Mixed Mark-ups to skirt around these problem
Example: 4.5 on weddings and 2.5 on loose flowers
- Use candy bar pricing (sometimes they are smaller than they have been)
- Make sure you are using 3 price points for your designs:
Standard, Moderate and Lush with enough difference between each price point to make a difference. A ten dollar difference is not enough these days.
- Use recipe cards to ensure the designers are following a plan and not overstuffing designs.
- Always design in multiples-if you are making one design-make at least one or two more thus saving time and energy.
- Outsource delivery (by Uber) if this helps your situation.
- Make sure your delivery is profitable.
- For holidays, offer an early order discount so you can plan for those deliveries.
- An average designer should produce 4 designs an hour for basic design work
- Make sure you have a marketing plan. The average shop should be spending between 4 and 7 percent for marketing.
- Keep a checklist for employees of daily and weekly tasks.
- Put everything on the list even if it's something very obvious.
- Staff for the hours that you need the correct staff.
- For part-time staffers think about using college students. They can work different schedules and in Texas with the high school certification program look for those students that have some training.
- Keep your hiring/employment forms on your website so prospects can fill the form out and email directly to you. You might be surprised what you receive.

Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography



Thank you, Tina, for inspiring each of us to sharpen the blade!



TSFA RECOGNIZES TEXAS LEADERS

This is only a glimpse!
Each Recipient will be featured in a future
issue of TEXAS in Bloom! Stay tuned!

TSFA President Cheryl Vaughan CFD TMFA honors Vickery Wholesale Greenhouse as a new member of the TSFA Hall of Fame. Owner and former TSFA President Pat Berry is recognized for his achievement and leadership.



Susan Piland CFD TMF expresses appreciation to President Cheryl Vaughan CFD TMFA and presents a Texas Flag flown over the Texas State Capitol in recognition of her leadership.

The funerals of nineteen children and two teachers in Uvalde were graced with countless floral designs because of her effort.



Former TSFA President Keith Taylor presents the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award to former TSFA President Tom Wolfe, Sr. Tom is the owner of Wolfe Wholesale Florist and Wolfe Florist in Waco, Texas. He is surrounded by his family and friends in honor of this most prestigious award.

From Left to Right
Presenter Keith Taylor, Honoree Tom Wolfe, Sr., Sofia Wolfe, Irene Phelps, Tom Wolfe, Jr. and Victoria Howle.



Former Recipient Ed Fimbel CFD TMFA names Yolanda Amos TMFA the 2022 Recipient of the Jim Orr Spirit Award.

Solutions to **MAXIMIZE** Year-end Profits

Written by: Derrick P. Myers, CPA CFP PFCI
President of Crockett, Myers & Associates, Inc.
Floral Accountants & Consultants

Well, it's official, we are in a recession! Although our government and the news outlets seem to be ignoring it, we have had two straight quarters of negative GDP (Gross Domestic Product) which is the definition of a recession. Q1 of 2022 was down 1.6% and Q2 was down 1.1%, therefore recession. So, what does this mean for your flower shop?

The effect of a recession for the flower business is very ambiguous. Sales for funerals and gift giving seem to only drop slightly during a recession, but everyday business along with corporate work and events seem to get hit a little harder.

Many florists are still on a high from the great sales and profits that we enjoyed in 2020 and 2021. For most florists, sales and profits for the last two years have been the best ever, and money has been plentiful. However, as we go through 2022 and into 2023, don't count on this trend continuing. So far this year, growth has seemed to continue, at least in the early part of this year, but it has been much slower than 2021. As we look more closely at the numbers, we seem to be finding that the number of transactions with customers are actually on the decline and the only reason sales are up is that we have been raising our prices. I believe by the time we finish with 2022, sales may end up flat or even slightly down for the year.

On the surface, this may not sound too bad! Last year was a great year, so sales of the same level sounds wonderful. The problem is that our costs are rising at unprecedented rates, shipping, gas and labor, are up 50% from 2 years ago, and most other expenses are increasing 10, 15, 20, 25% or more. These cost increases can quickly erode our profit margins and drain our cash position, and I don't believe it's over. I'm telling my florists to expect at least another 10% increase in cost over the next year.

SO, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

The very first thing we need to do is protect and maintain our profit margins!! We need to spend time looking at all of our arrangements and recipes and make sure that they are properly priced, and that our pricing models and formulas result in the Gross Profit margin that we desire. As costs continue to climb, we need to be doing this frequently. Yes, this may mean that we have to increase our prices. "I Know, I Know", we can't charge more during a recession can we? The answer is, we have to. Florists have traditionally worked on a bottom-line profit margin of 20% (10% in profit, and 10% in owner's salaries), when we are slow to react to increases in our cost that margin quickly drops. In the last two years, while profits have been very high, I have seen Cost of Goods climbing 2-3% as florists try to keep up with the rising prices of product. If we are not increasing our prices at the same pace as our cost increase, we will quickly see our margins fall.

THE CHALLENGE OF INVENTORY

Inventory has been a real challenge in the past 2 years as well. The Lack of Availability of many products has forced us to buy larger quantities when those products do become available. Since

cash flow has been strong, investing some money into extra inventory has not been an issue. However, as sales slow and money tightens up, controlling and reducing inventory is going to become more important to help you manage your cash flow.

Look at your relationships with your wholesalers and make sure that you are supporting the ones that support you. Good relationships with your wholesalers can come in very handy when you find yourself in a pinch for some much needed product. Also, they can keep you informed about the supply chain challenges, thereby helping you plan what items you need to buy in quantity as soon as they become available, and what items are going to be available whenever you need them so you don't have to stock up. This information can be invaluable to helping your cash flow.

AVOID LARGE DISCOUNTS ON ORDERS!

Re-examine any discounts you offer to funeral homes, wire services, business etc. Make sure that they still provide you with enough profit margin to make them worth your time and energy. Remember the target profitability in the floral industry is 20%, so if you offer a discount of that 20% or more then theoretically you are not making any money!

EVALUATE YOUR WORKFORCE

For the past two years, maybe longer, many florists have been telling me that they cannot find the people they need to get the work done. As a result, the employees that they do have, as well as the owners themselves, have been working at a pace that they are afraid is not sustainable. They are worried that everyone is going to burn out. This has resulted in paying higher wages to get

people to work, when they can find someone. One benefit of a recession is usually a reset to the labor force. Many large companies will have layoffs which put people back into the market for a job. But also, the slower pace in your business may make your current staff perfect!

Each year you probably do employee evaluations. If you don't, then start. This is the time to look at each of your employees, their strengths and weakness, and how (and if) they fit into your organization going forward. Find out from them what their goals are and do what you can to help them achieve them. Quite often their goals will align with those you have for your business, and together you can move the business forward. If their goals are not in alignment with the company's

perhaps it is time for them to move on.

ADVERTISING

Resist the urge to cut your marketing. Marketing should be one of the last areas you reduce because it will help you keep your sales levels up (or from dropping as much) as we go through the recession.

IN CONCLUSION

When we first start out in business, we watch every dollar we spend. We are thrifty, only buy what we need and guard our cash very closely. But, as the business grows, we don't pay as close attention to our spending. We tend to look at our spending in a broader focus, as long as profit seems to be on target, everything is good. During this economic change I challenge each of you to look

more closely at your company's spending. Look deeply into all of your expense categories for at least one month. See if there are any expenditures that you have been paying that could possibly be eliminated or reduced.

Now is the perfect time to focus on your business. Knowing what you can cut as cash begins to deplete will help you whether the storm that appears to be coming. On any journey you need a map to get there, so make yours now!



2022-2023 Texas State Florists' Association BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Not pictured
Retail Director Marisa Guerrero AIFD

THE HEIGHT OF FASHION

*Country girl. World War II Pilot. New York City Model.
Grace Jones went on to become a global fashion icon.
Most important, she always kept fresh flowers in her store!*



Grace Jones' shop, at the corner of Royal and Main in Salado, attracted fashion-conscious visitors from around the country and beyond. The little shop at the intersection of Royal and Main in Salado is still there with the iconic "Grace Jones" sign on top, but it now houses another Salado business. The small but elegant marquee is a reminder that the cut-stone building once served as "the height of fashion." During her lifetime, Grace Rosanky Jones wore many hats. Chances are, they were exceptionally nice hats. Grace, the girl from the tiny Central Texas community of Waelder, became known as queen of the Texas fashion industry, rivaled only by Stanley Marcus of Neiman Marcus fame.

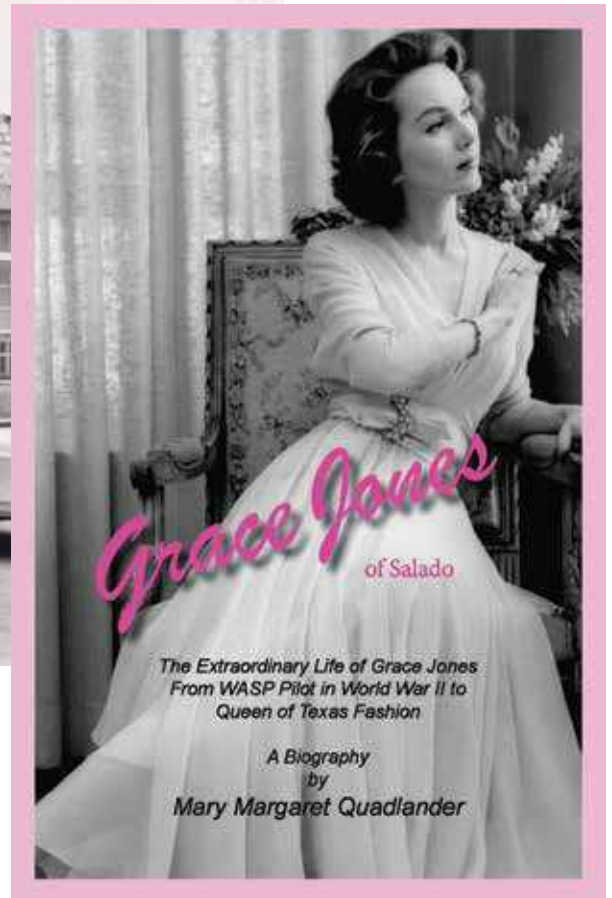
"They were fashion royalty in Texas," Mary Margaret Quadlander said today. "If you asked Stanley Marcus about his competition, he would reply: 'Grace Jones is my only competition.'"

Quadlander is no stranger to the fashion world herself. She was a top Texas designer who built a relationship with Jones that went far beyond business. She has written a book about their friendship and will be in Temple in September for a book signing. The book is titled *Grace Jones of Salado*. "I knew I had a lot of fashion history, and I wanted to do something with that. Although my original intentions were not to write a book, that's how it worked out."

Partial article reprinted with the permission of David Stone, July 12, 2022
Courtesy photo

About the Flowers

Her favorite flowers were white daisies. These became her floral signature. White flowers were always her preference. White flowers were what she most often sent. Her most appreciated style was the look of the garden with her signature white daisies featured as the accent flower. Most important, she always kept fresh flowers in her store!



**TSFA members
Seleese Thompson and
Norman Northen TMFA
invite you to attend
the book signing.**

**PRECIOUS MEMORIES
FLORIST & GIFT SHOP
1404 South 31st Street
Temple, Texas
September 16th
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

TSFA Calendar of Events

Design Credit | Tina Coker AAF AIFD PFCI
Photography Credit | Cody Ash Photography



SEPTEMBER

- 5 Labor Day
- 16 Texas Master Florist Certification Classes and Exam
TSFA School of Floral Design
Leander, Texas
Registration | tsfa.org
- 27 Tropical Paradise Hands-on Workshop | Region 17
Education Center | Lubbock, Texas
Registration | tsfa.org
- 28-29 Level 1 and Level 2 Teacher Training and Certification Testing
Region 17 Education Service Center
Lubbock, Texas

OCTOBER

- 1 Columbus Day
- 7 Tropical Paradise Hands-on Workshop
TSFA School of Floral Design
Leander, TX
Registration | tsfa.org
- 21-23 Introductory Floral Design Class
TSFA School of Floral Design
Leander, TX
- 31 Halloween

NOVEMBER

- 6 TSFA Board of Directors Meeting
TSFA Headquarters | Leander, Texas
- 6 Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 11 Veterans Day
- 24 Thanksgiving Day



TSFA Award Recipient Presentations, Texas Designer of the Year Competition, Texas Floral Forum Leadership and Events, Texas Master Florist Recognition and Texas Floral Endowment Scholarship Recipients will fill the pages of TEXAS in Bloom Fall Issues!



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