

FEELING THE MAGIC

The day I arrived in Orlando for the 2010 Garden Centers of America Summer Tour, there was a welcome reception for attendees in a ballroom of the convention center attached to the Contemporary Resort.

Jim Charlton, who works for Disney's Animal Kingdom, approached me as I was piling my plate full of hors-d'oeuvres. He was friendly enough: asked how I was doing, who I worked for... Then he found out I was a member of the press. "Great," he said. "That means we can have this conversation now," before we got on the buses the next day.



Paige Worthy, managing editor
Phone: 847.391.1050
E-mail: pworthy@sgcmail.com
Blog: lawnandgardenretailer.wordpress.com
Facebook: facebook.com/lawnandgardenretailer
Twitter: @lgrmag

He asked very politely that I not take any photos of "cast members" hard at work "backstage," meaning that any Disney employees doing watering, cleanup, deadheading or anything of the sort were not to be captured on film. He explained that no one needed to see that; part of the Disney Magic is letting visitors see things in their most perfect state to create the most wonderful experience possible.

That's not a request we're used to on these trips. Attendees get off the bus and start taking photos of everything. Part of the beauty in sharing a bus with 50 other people is behind-the-scenes everything, sharing trade secrets, getting that unprecedented access and being able to critique freely.

It was clear, from then on, that this would be a very different tour. How could it not be? Florida is unlike any other state, and the climate alone necessitates that garden centers be uniquely... Florida. A lot of us were just plain out of our element — and really, really HOT — which meant that we were often pushing pretty hard to come up with the usual critiques and conversation stimulators.

So we talked about other things. Like social media.

What a difference a year makes: Last summer, if I brought up Facebook fan pages or Twitter accounts, most garden center owners looked at me like I'd sprouted a pair of Mickey Mouse ears. This year, when we took an informal survey somewhere near Tampa Bay, I'd say about 75 percent

of passengers on my bus raised their hands to say they were giving it a try. And, what do you know — they're getting results!

Speaking of Which...

Are you giving social media a go? Are you just jumping in, or clueless as to where to start? Do you want to learn more? You're in luck. If you're attending GCA's annual membership meeting or the Home & Garden Showplace fall market, which are taking place concurrently at the Las Vegas Hilton, you can hear me talk about it, live and in person. I'll be doing a one-hour presentation on Sunday, Sept. 12, on social media and how to communicate with today's consumer.

I'm geeking out a bit, because I'm on the speaking roster with P. Allen Smith, star of the consumer gardening world and a longtime *Lawn & Garden Retailer* contributor, as well as Paul Erickson of RMSA Retail Solutions. It's an honor to be in such distinguished company, and I can't wait to share some ideas and research with all of you. Get in touch with GCA or Home & Garden Showplace if you want more details on the event.

As for the 2010 GCA Summer Tour in Orlando, you can check back here for photos and ideas in our November issue. What better way to fend off the winter blues than by revisiting the Sunshine State? 🌻

Paige Worthy

EDITORIAL

Editorial Office 847.391.1019
Tim Hodson Editorial Director
thodson@sgcmail.com
Paige Worthy Managing Editor
pworthy@sgcmail.com
Jasmina Radjevic Associate Editor
jradjevic@sgcmail.com
Jason Kenny Designer
jkenny@sgcmail.com

ADVERTISING

Sales Office 817.731.9352
Bob Bellew Vice President, Group Publisher
bbellew@sgcmail.com
Felix Schilling Account Manager
felixschilling@sbcglobal.net
Amanda McAdam Integrated Media Consultant
amcadam@sgcmail.com
Kim Sammartino Integrated Media Consultant
ksammartino@sgcmail.com
Jill Smith Sales & Market Associate
jsmith@sgcmail.com
Donna Aly Classified Advertising Manager
daly@sgcmail.com
Michael Mansour Internet Sales Representative
mmansour@sgcmail.com

STAFF

Circulation Office 847.391.1042
Mike Serino Director of Circulation
mserino@sgcmail.com

For list rental information, call John Ganis at 914.368.1024.

Vickie Crews-Anderson Director of Marketing & Communications
vcrewsanderson@sgcmail.com
Sandi Stevenson Director of Creative Services
sstevenson@sgcmail.com
Adam Terese Custom Media Manager
aterese@sgcmail.com
Erica Rivera Advertising Coordinator
erivera@sgcmail.com

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Dale Bachman Bachman's, Inc.
Kathleen Benken H.J. Benken Florist and Greenhouse
Stan Pohmer Pohmer Consulting Group
Jack Williams Ecke Ranch

CORPORATE

Karla A. Gillette Chairperson
Edward Gillette President, CEO
David Shreiner Vice President, CFO
Ann O'Neill Senior Vice President
Harry Urban Vice President, Events
Diane Vojcanin Vice President, Custom Publishing & Creative Services
Joel Hughes Vice President, IT
Halbert S. Gillette Chairman Emeritus (1922-2003)

Lawn & Garden Retailer accepts no responsibility or liability for the validity of information supplied by contributors, vendors, advertisers or advertising agencies.

Subscription Information

Lawn & Garden Retailer magazine (ISSN 1540-9023) is published ten times a year in January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September and November by

Scranton Gillette Communications, Inc.
3030 W. Salt Creek Ln., Ste. 201
Arlington Heights, IL 60005-5025
Telephone: 847.391.1000 Fax: 847.390.0408.

Subscription rates in the U.S. are \$30 per year (Canada and Mexico are \$50 and all other countries are \$60 payable in U.S. currency). Periodical postage paid at Arlington Heights, IL 60005 and at additional mailing offices. Reproduction of contents is forbidden. Copyright 2010.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Department, Lawn & Garden Retailer, 3030 W. Salt Creek Ln., Ste. 201, Arlington Heights, IL 60005. PRINTED IN USA.



Audit Bureau of Circulations
ABC Membership Applied For