IT HAPPENED IN VEGAS

ast month, Tim and I spent a week in Las Vegas at the National Hardware Show, where *Lawn* & Garden Retailer was a sponsor of the Lawn, Garden & Outdoor Living segment of the show. We saw some new products, visited with advertisers and took in a few sessions. But the best parts of the show, if I do say so myself, were the presentations Tim and I put together.

Creating Inspiration

The panel discussion Tim facilitated on creating inspiration in the garden center was on Tuesday. The panelists were Faith Savage of Syngenta Flowers, Chris Sexton of Fafard and Ron Greening of Dramm Corporation. They all offered a unique perspective on how to inspire customers and got the conversation going up on stage about how color, cleanliness and other important techniques combine for a stellar

in-store experience.





Paige Worthy, managing editor Phone: (847) 391-1050 E-mail: pworthy@sgcmail.com Blog: lawnandgardenretailer. wordpress.com Facebook: facebook.com/ lawnandgardenretailer Twitter: @lgrmag

Calloway's in the Spotlight

On Wednesday, Kim Bird was the star of the Lawn, Garden & Outdoor Living stage. Kim is vice president of marketing for Calloway's Nursery, the 2010 Merchandiser of the Year.

(Look back at our February issue for the feature we wrote on them.) We were thrilled to invite her along to the show with us, and she really wowed the crowd!

Kim presented first on social media at Calloway's — you might recognize her name from our Tech Talk series, too — followed by a case study on merchandising. There were two especially great concepts in her presentations that I loved. The first was how social media works to narrow the "E-gap," the distance between what shoppers expect and what they experience. And the second was the idea of "Apollo 13 merchandising," that each store gets a plan from



corporate for what they need to do each season, but they use their creativity and whatever materials they have on hand to create the displays

beautifully and cost effectively.

Generation Y

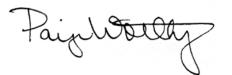
Finally, on Thursday morning, we stashed our suitcases in the booth and hunkered down in our seats for Kelly Norris' presentation on getting Gen Y into the garden. I could go on and on about his



presentation. He was energetic and passionate and challenged so many of the assumptions that retailers make about younger shoppers, especially where gardening is concerned. If you don't know Kelly, you will. At 23, he's already a published author and does speaking engagements all over the country; he's working on his master's degree in horticulture and manages the Rainbow Iris Farm in Bedford, Iowa. In his spare time ("spare time"), he recently created a "bookazine" called Dig This! aimed at showing the sexier side of gardening. Check it out at www.digthismag.com for more information.

The PowerPoint slideshows for all three presentations

will be available on SlideShare.net in the coming weeks for you to view and comment on. I'll provide links in future issues of the Retail Report — stay tuned!





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 Accounts Manager

amcadam@sgcmail.com
Kim Sammartino Integrated Accounts Manager

ksammartino@sgcmail.com

Jill Smith Sales & Market Associate
jsmith@sgcmail.com

Donna Aly

Classified Advertising Manager
daly@sgcmail.com

Michael Mansour

Internet Sales Representative

Michael Mansour Internet Sales Representative mmansour@sgcmail.com

STAFF

Circulation Office (847) 391-1042

Mike Serino Director of Circulation

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

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Dale Bachman

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