

# RESOLVE TO DO BETTER

**W**ith the new year come resolutions. They always do. Exercise more, eat healthier, be nicer, volunteer more — the top four on my embarrassingly long list of personal goals for 2003. I'm sure many of you have similar lists.

But what about your business resolutions? Have you and your staff sat down and set a list of resolutions for your garden center? Goals you want to achieve this year; habits you want to squelch? If you haven't already made your resolutions, now's the time.

## THE TOP FIVE

If you're like me, your list is pretty long. Don't be discouraged; that's a good thing. It just means that you have big plans for your business. It means that you're ambitious, a thinker, a forward-looker. But it also means that you've got a lot on your mind, and you're prone to easy distraction. Try paring your list down to the five most important goals for this year. Here are some great candidates to make it to the top of your list.

5. **Get out more.** No, I'm not encouraging you to party like a teenager, though a night out rarely hurts. We do, however, need to take better advantage of one of our best resources: each other. Everyone has a few secrets, but most retailers would love a visit from a neighbor and would welcome the opportunity to share information.

4. **Experiment.** Try new things. Don't just assume that the same ad, display or plants will sell. Consumers are looking for something that catches their eye. You should strive to surprise them.

3. **Train, train, train.** The Training Challenge, see page 70, is a great method, but even if you don't get involved, you can't overlook the importance of consistently training your employees. They are the only link between you and your customers. One weak link means that the connection is broken.

2. **Update facilities.** I know this is a major expense and that most of you don't have lots of extra cash lying around, but even relatively low-cost things like new displays or employee uniforms can quickly pay for themselves by raising the perception of your store and enabling a high price point.

1. **Hold pricing.** When you see the traffic at Wal-Mart, it's hard not to resort to the same price-cutting tactics, but for the good of the entire industry, we all have to start pricing our products at what they're worth. You can't afford to have good service, high quality and low prices — which two will you prioritize?



Bridget White, Editor  
(847) 391-1004  
bwhite@sgcmail.com

# LAWN & GARDEN Retailer

## EDITORIAL

<b>Editorial Office:</b>	<b>(847) 391-1004</b>
<b>Bridget White</b>	Editor bwhite@sgcmail.com
<b>Carrie Burns</b>	Associate Editor cburns@sgcmail.com
<b>Brandi McNally</b>	Associate Editor bmcnally@sgcmail.com
<b>Kelley Murphy</b>	Associate Editor kmurphy@sgcmail.com
<b>Catherine Evans</b>	Editorial Assistant cevans@sgcmail.com

## ADVERTISING

<b>Sales Office:</b>	<b>(817) 731-9352</b>
<b>Felix Schilling</b>	Account Manager (817) 731-9352 felixschilling@sbcglobal.net
<b>Tami Morrell</b>	Integrated Accounts Manager tmorrell@sgcmail.com
<b>Jean Till</b>	Integrated Accounts Manager jtill@sgcmail.com

## STAFF

<b>E.S. Gillette</b>	Group Publisher egillette@sgcmail.com
<b>Tim Campbell</b>	Publisher tcampbell@sgcmail.com
<b>Judith H. Schmueser</b>	Director of Production Operations jschmueser@sgcmail.com
<b>Linda L. Lambdin, C.C.P.</b>	Director of Circulation llambdin@sgcmail.com
<b>Erica Rivera</b>	Advertising Coordinator erivera@sgcmail.com
<b>Jody Cardinal</b>	Director of Corporate Communications jcardinal@sgcmail.com
<b>Judy Ann Paul</b>	Sales & Marketing Associate jpaul@sgcmail.com
<b>Donna Aly</b>	Classified Advertising daly@sgcmail.com
<b>Joy Stirling Images</b>	Photo Library Wendy Baker, (231) 894-1774 info@joystirling.com

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

<b>Carolyn Allen</b>	<b>Stan Pohmer</b>
<b>Judy Sharpton</b>	<b>Mitch Whitten</b>

## CORPORATE

<b>H.S. Gillette</b>	Chairman/CEO
<b>Sheldon Schultz</b>	President
<b>E.S. Gillette</b>	Vice President Sales
<b>K.S. Gillette</b>	Secretary

## Subscription Information

Lawn & Garden Retailer magazine (ISSN 1540-9023) is published eight times a year in January, February, March, April, June, July, August and September by Scranton Gillette Communications, Inc., 380 E. Northwest Highway, Suite 200, Des Plaines, IL 60016-2282. 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). Reproduction of contents is forbidden. Copyright 2003.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Department, Lawn & Garden Retailer, 380 E. Northwest Highway, Suite 200, Des Plaines, IL 60016-2282. PRINTED IN USA.

## coming next month...

**Industry Views:**  
Rating Christmas 2002

**Green Goods:**  
How to profit from seasonal plant marketing campaigns

**Promotional Strategies:**  
Is TV advertising right for you?

**Management:**  
Warranties, guaranties and returns: How long should you stand behind your products?

**Plus...**

- Fears and myths about water gardening
- What to do with all those pots, planters and containers

## A WORD OF THANKS

Seem like ages since you've received your last *Lawn & Garden Retailer*? We have been on break for a few months. After the great debut you gave us last year, we needed a little rest! But we're back, and as the saying goes, we're bigger and stronger than ever. And we want to say thanks. The support of our readers and advertisers came through loud and clear, so in 2003, we'll be running larger issues and more of them.

From the staff of *Lawn & Garden Retailer* — Brandi, Bridget, Carrie, Catherine, Ed, Felix, Kelley, Jean, Tami and Tim — we wish you and yours a prosperous new year that fulfills all of your wishes.

*Bridget C. White*