

back to school

So, I had a plan. I wanted my last column of 2012 to focus on the unfortunate art many of us have perfected — procrastination.

I actually wanted to use this time to declare my New Year's resolution — to stop procrastinating — well ahead of schedule. See that, I was going to be proactive.

Then I got distracted.

While producing this month's issue, I couldn't help but notice in three different articles, that three different people coincidentally commented on how beneficial area colleges can be to garden centers — whether for aid in marketing, product design, managerial practices, etc.

classroom guinea pig

I won't give away the issue, but I will share one example. Wheatfield Nursery, which is in pretty close proximity to Penn State University (PSU), is now in its third year as a retail nursery. It made its first attempt at hosting an event a couple years ago by way of the Proven Winners Pink Day for the Breast Cancer Research Fund.

In the article "Planning in Pink" on page 12, Wheatfield's promotional manager Melissa Cramer says she hopes to see the Pink Day event grow with each passing year.

Here's how she expects to make that happen:

For starters, she's already started planning for next year's mid-summer event. But what's more impressive is who's helping her with the planning.

Thanks to the contact she still keeps with a former college professor at PSU, creating an advertising plan for Wheatfield Nursery's next Pink Day event is currently part of the curriculum for a horticultural marketing class



at the university.

"Having about 30 more creative minds will hopefully help," Melissa says.

put the pride aside

I know some of you are thinking: "I'm not going to take advice from a bunch of students" and "I've been doing this for X amount of years. What are they going to tell me that I don't already know?"

Give me a break.

Think about it. Like the local news, college professors and their students want to cover topics and projects that are interesting and provide a valuable experience.

Believe it or not, your setbacks and head scratching can be the perfect real-life, hands-on project your local college students need.

The solutions you require are out there. You might just have to go back to school to find them. And like Melissa said, there are worse things than having a class of young and eager minds working to help you. Right?

As for that column on procrastination I initially planned to write. Maybe I'll get to it next year. **LGR**



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Pete Mihalek, managing editor
Phone: (847) 391-1050 | E-mail: pmihalek@sgcmail.com



EDITORIAL

Editorial Office 847.391.1019
 Tim Hodson Editorial Director
 thodson@sgcmail.com
 Pete Mihalek Managing Editor
 pmihalek@sgcmail.com
 Jasmina Radjevic Green Goods 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 & Marketing Associate
 jsmith@sgcmail.com
 Donna Aly Classified Advertising Manager
 daly@sgcmail.com

STAFF

Circulation Office 847.391.1042
 Doug Riemer Director of Audience Development
 driemer@sgcmail.com
 For list rental information, call Geoffrey Gardner at 845.201.5331.
 Sandi Stevenson Director of Creative Services
 & Promotions
 sstevenson@sgcmail.com
 Todd Loesch Custom Media Manager
 tloesch@sgcmail.com
 Erica Rivera Print Media Supervisor
 erivera@sgcmail.com

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