

# Of Conferences And Magazines



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

**F**or the past few years, I've served on the OFA Grower Committee, one of the association's committees charged, in part, with planning the content for the OFA Short Course. In our planning meetings we often have to make tough decisions to develop a good program. On the one hand, we want to create sessions lots of attendees will be excited about — you know, the ones that fill up 200-person ballrooms, the really sexy topics like mixed containers or new varieties. On the other hand, there are hard-core business topics like staff management, accounting and safety that are critical to successful businesses.

To attract people to some of the business sessions, we're often tempted to cheat a little on the descriptions — sneak some cost accounting into a session on trends or hide recruiting tips in a merchandising session. We've even toyed with the idea of opening a large ballroom for a hands-on mixed container workshop using the best new varieties, and once the room is packed with as many people as we can get into it, we lock the doors for a marathon session on business management. No one would know the difference until it was too late, and then we would have them, right?

OK, so kidnapping might be a bit extreme, but you get my point: It's pretty tough to find the right balance between high-demand topics and necessary ones, even though we know that's what will make a good conference.

## Similarities Abound

When it comes to balancing content, magazines are a lot like conferences. Reader surveys we have done and comments we have received over the years tell us that most people like to read articles that will give them new, easily implementable ideas and anything about how to increase profit...as long as neither of those topics has anything to do with cost accounting, record keeping, budgeting or legalities.

We would love to fill each magazine with merchandising ideas, case studies and the like; those types of articles are the most fun for us as well, but in good conscience we can't call ourself a business magazine without addressing the actual "business" side of garden center retailing.

So just as my OFA committee and I try to do for the Short Course, we at *Lawn & Garden Retailer* try to find the right balance of high-demand topics and necessary ones for the magazine. And it's even better when we can combine the two. For a long time we've been looking for a regular columnist to address the financial side of the industry in a way that won't put people to sleep or send them running for something with a little more glamour. This month marks the beginning of a column that has done just that.

"Dollars & Sense" by Bill McCurry is about the finance and numbers part of business, but I think it's the most interesting, easily understood column about the topic I've ever read. Bill makes learning about a tough topic almost enjoyable. You can check out our new column on page 26. Let us know what you think about it and if there are any other topics we can add to help you run a better, more successful business. ✂

## By The Numbers

**1,000,000,000:** Number of Web sites found in a Google search for business management.

**3:** Number of green industry conferences with actual business tracks.

**0:** Number of times business topics have ranked first in one of our reader surveys.

*Bridget C. White*

# LAWN & GARDEN Retailer

## Editorial

<b>Editorial Office:</b>	<b>(847) 391-1050</b>
<b>Bridget White</b>	Editorial Director bwhite@sgcmail.com
<b>Catherine Evans</b>	Managing Editor cevans@sgcmail.com
<b>Meghan Boyer</b>	Associate Editor mboyer@sgcmail.com
<b>Timothy Hodson</b>	Associate Editor thodson@sgcmail.com
<b>Jennifer Hubert</b>	Assistant Editor jhubert@sgcmail.com
<b>Kelley Murphy</b>	Graphic Designer kmurphy@sgcmail.com

## Advertising

<b>Sales Office:</b>	<b>(847) 391-1056</b>
<b>Diane Pirocanac</b>	Vice President, Group Publisher dpirocanac@sgcmail.com
<b>Steve Ostrowski</b>	Group Sales Manager sostrowski@sgcmail.com
<b>Felix Schilling</b>	Account Manager (817) 731-9352 felixschilling@sbcglobal.net
<b>Tami Morrell</b>	Integrated Accounts Manager tmorrell@sgcmail.com
<b>Jan Varnes</b>	Integrated Accounts Manager jvarnes@sgcmail.com
<b>Judy Ann Paul</b>	Sales & Marketing Associate jpaul@sgcmail.com
<b>Donna Aly</b>	Classified Advertising daly@sgcmail.com
<b>Michael Mansour</b>	Internet Sales Representative mmansour@sgcmail.com

## Staff

<b>Judith H. Schmueser</b>	Director of Production Operations jschmueser@sgcmail.com
<b>Scott Figi</b>	Production Manager sfigi@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

## Editorial Advisory Board

<b>Dale Bachman</b>	Bachman's Floral Home & Garden
<b>Kathleen Benken</b>	H.J. Benken Florist and Greenhouse
<b>Stan Pohmer</b>	Pohmer Consulting Group
<b>Judy Sharpton</b>	Growing Places Marketing
<b>Jack Williams</b>	Ecke Ranch

## Corporate

<b>Karla A. Gillette</b>	Chair/CEO
<b>Sheldon Schultz</b>	Vice Chairman
<b>Edward Gillette</b>	President
<b>Bill Clarke</b>	Vice President, Chief Financial Officer
<b>Ann O'Neill</b>	Vice President, Human Resources
<b>Halbert S. Gillette</b>	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 nine times a year in January, February, March, April, June, July, August, September and November 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). Periodical postage paid at Des Plaines, IL 60018 and at additional mailing offices. Reproduction of contents is forbidden. Copyright 2006.

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

