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# TAKING A HUMBLE APPROACH

Every year at this time, I find myself complaining that I never have enough time: I am traveling to a lot of shows and putting two magazines out, and I know I will not see my own bed until at least the middle of February. Yes, I do currently have my hand over my forehead sighing with every breath I take (my mother always told me I would be a great actress).

Then I have a day like the one I had recently where I was walking a show and ran into some good garden center friends who told me their stories. Suddenly, I didn't feel so bad any more.

I was at one of the major gift markets to learn new trends, see new products and get a feel for where the industry is headed this year. I am in and out in about three days with tons of new ideas and boxes of catalogs and press kits. However, garden center retailers, like the friends I mentioned above, have it far tougher than I do.

They spend at least a week at this show going from showroom to showroom, booth to booth, trying to decide what products to buy for their stores for the coming seasons. The days are filled with appointments. There are nightly meetings and 5-7 days of

walking, talking and looking at hundreds of new products, which means time away from families and some pretty sore feet when it is time to get on the airplane.

## A Great Group Of People

I always thought I got sensory overload just looking at the new stuff, but I cannot imagine having to look, shop, decide and buy everything I needed in one week. My point is I want to let you know how much I admire you. So often, customers do not show any respect for retailers. If they only knew everything you do, how hard you work to make your store successful and, in most cases, that you do have a choice of careers, and you chose this one because you love it.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is why I love this industry. It is filled with hard working, dedicated people that want the best for their businesses, their customers and themselves. Every industry has its ups and downs, every job has its ups and downs, but people in this industry never give up. We are an industry that depends on six weeks out of every year to survive, and so many of you seem to do it with ease and tranquility (even if it's not so tranquil behind the scenes).

You are not just a place to pick up plants, you are not a dirt carrier and, most definitely, you are not just a salesperson. You are retail experts, gardeners, designers, hand holders and willing participants. I just hope that with all of the complaining I catch myself doing, you do realize that no matter what, I will still attend all of the shows, research all of the latest in retail and work very hard to make sure the information I bring you helps your business. Because, as dedicated as you are to making your business work, I am just as dedicated to finding ways to help you.

Good luck! There are plenty more shows to come, meaning there are plenty more chances to complain about aching feet. Just know that I understand, and anything I can do to help, just let me know: cevans@sgcmail.com. Happy retailing. ✂

### Meet Jasmina

I want to introduce you to our new associate editor, Jasmina Radjevic. She joined *Lawn & Garden Retailer* at the beginning of January and has hit the ground running. She is a recent DePaul University graduate and has the personality of a true journalist. She will be walking some shows with us in the next few months and probably calling some of you for interviews. Please be kind, because she knows her stuff, and you never know when you are talking to a future Pulitzer Prize winner.



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