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# WELCOME BACK

**I**t's 2007. Can you believe it? All I keep hearing from people is, "Where has the time gone?" My profound response is, "I don't know, but I sure wish every day had an extra hour so I could get everything done." Everyone knows this isn't going to happen, but that is what a new year is for: Making changes,

developing goals, making amends, moving forward and making things more efficient so we don't really need that extra hour. Especially now that January is upon us.

For many of us, January is a huge month for industry trade shows, so we might need 4-5 extra hours each day to fit in all of the new stuff planned for the new year. Garden centers, vendors, consultants, etc., will be traveling around the country this month to learn the latest trends, buy or sell the best new products and figure out where this industry is headed in 2007. If you're not able to hear from as many people as you'd like, we can help you out. We've asked some of the industry's leaders what they think will happen in this exciting new year; turn to page 22 to read their responses.

## Seeing Change

As you read this issue of *Lawn & Garden Retailer*, keep your eyes open for several exciting changes we have been working on. The first one is on this page. After begging and pleading, I have been granted the honor of taking over the "Editor's Report." I am really excited about being able to talk with you each issue, and I'm hoping we can make it a real conversation — one where I hear back from you. If you have any interesting information or just want to say hello, please E-mail me at cevans@sgcmail.com.

This month, we are also announcing the new *Lawn & Garden Retailer* Merchandiser Of The Year Award. We are looking for the best-merchandised displays in the industry. You can enter your store or nominate any industry display you think is outstanding. Then, with the help of some of our industry experts, we will select the top three, showcase them in the magazine during the year and let you vote on the winner. That's right, you will be the ones to decide who wins the final award. For more information on this award, see page 14. I am really looking forward to seeing your best merchandising techniques.

Another addition to the magazine this year is a new monthly column from associate editor Meghan Boyer. The column, "Outside The Industry," will focus on neat examples from successful stores outside our industry. The articles will examine the key concepts that made these stores successful and how you can use that model in your own business. See page 76 for Meghan's first installment.

A second exciting thing we are working on is consumer information. I hear about this from garden center retailers all the time. "Consumer Talk" will help you answer the question, "What do consumers really want?" Located on the back page, this new department will contain information from a group of consumers located throughout the country and is at all different gardening levels. We'll be trying to determine what their thoughts are on such topics as where they buy their plants, how they choose their plants, how they care for their gardens and so much more. We will also be giving the panelists some fun tasks to show you what they are capable of (check out page 114 for a panelist introduction).

One of the final new sections you will see in every issue is "Retailing 101" (page 62). There are so many new garden center employees, managers and even owners out there who need that extra little push into the garden center business. These monthly doses of information come from Jamie Gibson and Emily Stefanski, both from the University of Florida, to show new retailers how to become more successful.

## A New Year

Yes, there is a lot happening at *Lawn & Garden Retailer* this year. Just like in your own businesses, you need to update and change to stay on top of your game. I know you will enjoy all of the new sections we have in store for you, and if you have any specific comments, we'd love to hear them! Have a great year, and try not to work too hard at the January shows. Good luck in 2007! 🍀

## What's New...

See what's new in *Lawn & Garden Retailer* this year:

Merchandiser Of The Year Award . . . . .	14
Retailing 101 . . . . .	62
Outside The Industry . . . . .	76
Consumer Talk . . . . .	114

# LAWN & GARDEN

Retailer

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