

WHAT'S IN STORE?

I'll begin by stating the obvious: 2008 was *rough*. "Gloom and doom" was the new world order. You dealt with rising shipping costs and slowed overall retail traffic, and you had to work constantly at convincing even your best customers that the products you sell are necessary, not discretionary. So what can we expect for the coming year? More of the same, or a whole new game? Susan Reda, executive editor of the National Retail Federation's *STORES* magazine, had these thoughts to offer in her December column:

"Shoppers will have a different outlook for 2009. The free-wheeling approach to spending is a thing of the past.

"There's a movement taking root that can best be defined as 'cheap is cool.' Shoppers feel guilty about wearing pricey suits or expensive shoes so they're making tradeoffs and opting for lower-price versions. That's all good — as long as they keep spending. The one thing no one wants is for shoppers to zip their purses shut and tuck their cash under a mattress.

"Shoppers' memory of an experience...becomes the product; their recollection of the shopping experience lingers far longer and has far greater impact than the good feelings linked to a specific purchase."

Sounds promising to me: Garden centers like yours are already integral parts of the community, offering the kinds of shopping experience that makes people want to keep visiting your store, not the big boxes. And you are in the business of selling lifestyles. It's not about the products; it's about the feeling customers get when they shop with you and the memories they create when they get their purchases home.

Hear from Your Peers

In our annual industry forecast, "Embarking on an Uphill Climb" (page 20), five leaders in the retail and horticultural industry have shared their thoughts with us on what's to come in the next 12 months. There's a lot of overlap in what they've said — which tells me the industry as a whole is really starting to get on track with understanding what needs to be done to stay afloat in this economy — but I'd like to highlight some points made by one of your own: our most recent Merchandiser of the Year, Teri Smith of Smith's Acres in Niantic, Conn. She says to pay attention to trends, stress *value* over low price, teach

employees to upsell, maintain a positive outlook at all times and keep up with the latest technology — because if you won't, someone else will.

On the Horizon

A sharper focus on technology — specifically, some of the tools you might consider to really rocket your garden center into the 21st century — is just one of the things we're planning at *Lawn & Garden Retailer* for this year. A five-part tech series that expands on last year's Web 101 stories will kick off next month. Also in our next issue, we're debuting a monthly "green goods" page that spotlights a plant category you may want to consider for your customers. We'll also be announcing the winner of this year's Merchandiser of the Year award, and our *Christmas Retailer* supplement will include a photo recap of the Garden Centers of America 2008 Holiday Tour. So expect an issue packed full of new ideas — and this is just the beginning! Got feedback or something you'd like to see in the magazine? Send me an e-mail, give me a call or catch me at one of this year's industry events. ✉

Paige Worthy

Paige Worthy
Managing Editor
(847) 391-1050
pworthy@sgcmail.com

LAWN & GARDEN Retailer

EDITORIAL

Editorial Office	(847) 391-1019
Tim Hodson	Editorial Director thodson@sgcmail.com
Paige Worthy	Managing Editor pworthy@sgcmail.com
Darhiana Mateo	Associate Editor dmateo@sgcmail.com
Jasmina Radjevic	Associate Editor jradjevic@sgcmail.com
Kelley Murphy	Graphic Designer kmurphy@sgcmail.com
Jason Kenny	Production Editor jkenny@sgcmail.com
Adam Terese	Web Editor aterese@sgcmail.com
Morgan Jeffrey	Web Production Editor mjjeffrey@sgcmail.com

ADVERTISING

Sales Office	(817) 731-9352
Bob Bellew	Vice President, Group Publisher bbellew@sgcmail.com
Felix Schilling	Account Manager felixschilling@sbcglobal.net
Tami Morrell	Integrated Accounts Manager tmorrell@sgcmail.com
Kim Sammartino	Integrated Accounts Manager ksammartino@sgcmail.com
Judy Ann Paul	Sales & Marketing Associate jpaul@sgcmail.com
Donna Aly	Classified Advertising Manager daly@sgcmail.com
Michael Mansour	Internet Sales Representative mmansour@sgcmail.com

STAFF

Circulation Office	(847) 391-1041
Judith H. Schmueser	Director of Production Operations jschmueser@sgcmail.com
Scott Figi	Production Manager sfigi@sgcmail.com
Dan Soltis	Manager, Prepress Operations dsoltis@sgcmail.com
Mike Serino	Director of Circulation mserino@sgcmail.com
Erica Rivera	Advertising Coordinator erivera@sgcmail.com

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Dale Bachman	Bachman's, Inc.
Kathleen Benken	H.J. Benken Florist and Greenhouse
Stan Pohmer	Pohmer Consulting Group
Jack Williams	Ecke Ranch

CORPORATE

Karla A. Gillette	Chairperson
Sheldon Schultz	Vice Chairman
Edward Gillette	President, CEO
David Shreiner	Vice President, CFO
Ann O'Neill	Vice President, Human Resources
Halbert S. Gillette	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 ten times a year in January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September and November by

Scranton Gillette Communications, Inc.,
3030 W. Salt Creek Ln., Ste. 201
Arlington Heights, IL 60005-5025
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 Arlington Heights, IL 60005 and at additional mailing offices. Reproduction of contents is forbidden. Copyright 2009.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Department, Lawn & Garden Retailer, 3030 W. Salt Creek Ln., Ste. 201, Arlington Heights, IL 60005. PRINTED IN USA.

