

OFA First News

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A PUBLICATION FOR OHIO FLORISTS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERS



1993 International Floriculture Industry Short Course was a huge success. Keynote speaker, René van Rems, California Cut Flower Commission, Sacramento, California, was one of 158 speakers on the program. During his program "How New Is New Floral Niche Marketing," he presented new ideas for retailing.

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RECORD ATTENDANCE

-1993 Short Course In Review

By Cassandra Sheaffer

The 1993 International Floriculture Industry Short Course in Cincinnati, Ohio, July 10-14 attracted 5,540 attendees from 47 U.S. states and 23 foreign nations.

Short Course seminars and events offered a variety of traditional and cutting-edge technology and information, drawn from the experience of 158 speakers from the United States, Canada, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Sunday morning, July 11, the Short Course began with the annual breakfast and OFA business meeting. René van Rems, California Cut Flower Commission, Sacramento,

California, gave a theatrical keynote presentation. Van Rems discussed the history of floral art which he traced to 17th century art and religion.

Trade Show

The Trade Show opened on Sunday, July 11, and featured 358 exhibitors and 588 booths. Exhibitors were pleased with the floor traffic and the opportunity to interact with attendees from almost every state and several countries.

"This is the show where everybody wants to be," commented Gina Antoniotti, Poinsettia Growers' Association, Encinitas, California.

Exhibitors come to the Trade Show to introduce new products and services, and make local, national, and international business contacts.

About 350 new plant varieties were exhibited in the New Varieties display. In the first New Products exhibit, 22 companies introduced new hardgoods and equipment.

"This is the premier show. It is certainly the one where you see the people you want to," said Bob Waltz from Smithers-Oasis, Kent, Ohio.

Ed Mikkelsen of Mikkelsen, Inc., Ashtabula, Ohio, said the Short Course Trade Show is an opportunity

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1993 Short Course In Review

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to gain international contacts. This is the only trade show where Mikkelsens, Inc. exhibits because, as Mikkelsen said, it is "the biggest and the best."

Garry Grueber, Kientzler KG/InnovaPlant GmbH & Co. KG, Gensingen, Germany thought the Short Course was such a good opportunity to do business on an international level that two years ago at the Short Course, he and others took the opportunity to start Proven Winners, an international marketing and promotions group. The group has since met at the Short Course.

Garden Center

In order for independent garden centers to survive they must educate their customers and become more than just a pick-up point for plant products said Marc Cathey, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C.

Cathey's program "Vision Of The Garden Center Future" was the kick-off to the garden center seminars.

Other program topics included pricing, attracting young customers, water gardens, expanding the customer base, environmental issues, newsletters and signage, and image building. A study tour featured visits to five Cincinnati area garden centers.

The garden center program concluded with a reception and idea-generating discussion.



Grower

Saturday's grower program featured a study tour to operations in the Louisville, Kentucky area and three all-day symposiums.

In the Environmental Symposium, speakers addressed future regulations, being proactive to new laws, and dealing with existing ones. Other environmental sessions covered sustainable agriculture, working with the EPA, dealing with the news media, using chemicals and pesticides, and recycling plastics.

Speakers in the Disease and Insect Integrated Pest Management Symposium discussed how to identify, control, and prevent foliar, root, and stem diseases. Management of fungus gnat, aphid, whitefly, and thrips were also addressed.

The Plug and Bedding Plant Production Symposium covered water quality, seed germination, post germination, specialty seeds, varieties, growing media, nutrition, growth control, disease management, and greenhouse structures.

The New Guinea Impa-



"If you're not in the shape to fight physically, mentally, spiritually, then you've lost already," said Yoshimi Shibata, Mt. Eden Nursery, Mt. Eden, California, during the Fresh Cut-Flower, Alternative Crop Symposium.

tiens Symposium drew in the most attendees with more than 350 present. The Poinsettia Symposium was another popular session with a crowd of nearly 300. Zygocactus, potted plants, hanging baskets, azaleas, chrysanthemums, herbs, and Easter lilies were also discussed. Other seminars addressed pests and diseases, new varieties, production methods, automation, alternative crops, and basic nutrition. In all, the grower program consisted of 36 sessions which spanned the five-day Short Course.



Interior Plantscape

"The thing I find fascinating is each plant has its own unique environment in the same scape," commented Chuck Powell, Plant Health Advisory Services, Worthington, Ohio. Powell was part of an all-day workshop on Saturday that kicked off the interior

plantscape program. He stressed the difficulty of performing the "environmental balancing act" needed to keep a plantscape healthy. Powell teamed up with Richard Lindquist from The Ohio State University, OARDC, Wooster, Ohio, to present a disease and pest laboratory.

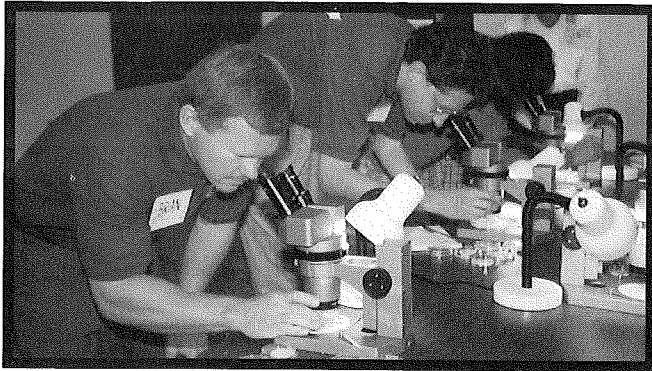
Linnaea Newman, Linnaea Newman Associates, Mundelein, Illinois presented "Fix That Plant." It is easier, more economical and also increasingly necessary because of a shortage of plants to fix up, rather than replace, interior plantscape plants, Newman said.

The Saturday all-day symposium featured a "power lunch," set up to discuss the workshops and other topics, and an evening cocktail party.

Other program topics were water equipment care, public relations, subirrigation, time management, growing



An overhead view of the 1993 Trade Show.



Participants view insects and diseases in part of the Saturday all-day interior plantscaper workshop.

media and water, worker relations, finances, storyboarding, and expanding sales.

Management & Marketing

In Karl Kepner's talk, "How Do We Manage The Future," Kepner, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, offered the thought that the only thing we know for sure about the future is it will be different than today. He suggested several ways businesses can plan for the future.

"There's less to fear from outside competition than from inside inefficiency and discourteous service," said Kepner. He talked about "customerizing" a business, or using a "TLC" (Think Like Customers) approach. He reminded participants that the only reason any business exists is because it provides a service to customers, and the only way a business can remain competitive is to offer that service in a better way than the competition can. He said commitment from every employee is needed to do this.

"If you do an effective strategic planning process, everybody in your organization can verbalize where this organization expects and wants to be within the next five years," said Kepner.

The Management and

Marketing program also featured an all-day symposium on family business, and seminars on society and consumer trends, total quality management, worker relations, value-added service, government regulations, finances, use of color, and marketing to landscapers.

Retail Design

The retail design program consisted of several hands-on workshops, seminars, a design panel featuring funeral designs from around the world, and a retail design contest.

The design contest was split into three divisions. The first division, Floral Headpiece, was won by Blaine Kohler, Maple Lee Flowers, Worthington, Ohio. The Attendant's Bouquet category was won by Barbara Scott, Sunshine Florist, Edgewood, Kentucky. Corinne Calamante, Gali's Florist & Garden Center, Beachwood, Ohio, won the Wedding Bouquet category, sponsored by Smithers-Oasis. Designer of the Year was awarded to Terri Muennich, Bloomer's Florist, Blue Ash, Ohio. First and second runners-up were Scott and Calamante, respectively.

Hands-on workshops covered the topics of innovative foliage designs, balloons, hand-tied bouquets, European

designs, and the use of glassware. Symposiums were offered on niche marketing, gift baskets, marketing to impulse buyers, and jazzing up ordinary designs.

Retail Management

Advertising doesn't have to be a million dollar effort in your store, said Carmen Cosentino, Cosentino's Florist, Auburn, New York. He suggested that retail managers take advantage of some simple advertising techniques such as using wire service materials, computers, telephones, and FAX machines. Cosentino also discussed using newspaper, cable television, direct mail, open houses, and green marketing.

"Remember, once you've advertised, performance is the only thing that matters. Don't advertise if you don't do it well," he said.

The retail management program also offered seminars on computers, care and handling, improving service quality, positioning, profit strategies, hiring and firing, and working with funeral directors and cemetery managers.



Designer of the Year, Terri Muennich, displays some of her floral handiwork. The design contest, featuring wedding designs, attracted 31 contestants.



Young Adult Program

"You live in exciting times," was Roger Herman's message to the Young Adult Program audience. In the Saturday program, Herman, Herman Associates, Inc., Rittman, Ohio, talked about what to expect in the future. He urged young people to help older generations understand new technology.

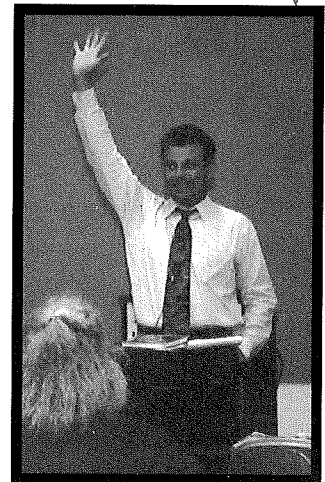
"Adults are going to be looking at you as a threat," he said. "You need to keep them comforted with the fact that you're on their side."

Herman added that we have become so fascinated with new technology we have lost touch with the human aspect of doing business.

"Part of your challenge," Herman told young adults, "is to rekindle this."

The Saturday Young Adult Program also featured an evening river boat cruise. Other program topics were future technology, internships, finding a niche, working with bosses and supervisors, and enjoying work.

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"You are going to screw up worse in the '90s than you ever did in the '70s or '80s. Give yourself and others around you permission to make mistakes," said Phil Sorentino, Humor Consultants, Inc., Columbus, Ohio, during his YAP seminar "How to Make Money, and Have Fun Doing It."

Short Course Milestone

Tayama Reflects On Short Course Past, Progress

By Cassandra Sheaffer

Since its debut in 1930 to this year's 5,540 attendees, OFA's Short Course has evolved from a localized Ohio Short Course to an international event, outgrowing five convention sites to its current location in Cincinnati.

The leading force behind the success of the Short Course for the past 15 years has been Harry Tayama and his wife Lucy. The 1993 Short Course was the last under their direction.

Tayama remembers his first dealings with The Ohio State University and OFA. He said when he came to Ohio State in 1964 as an assistant professor, Professor Alex Laurie wrote him letters of encouragement every week from his retirement home in Florida.

"I was a nobody fresh out of college," Tayama recalls, "and here was this guy who was in the Floriculture Hall of Fame writing to me."

Laurie, who founded OFA in 1929, was the first of four executive directors for the association, followed by D.C. Kiplinger in 1952, and then by Tayama in 1977. All three have also served as professors of floriculture at The Ohio State University and have been inducted into the Floriculture Hall of Fame.

Tayama recalls D.C. Kiplinger's battle with cancer as his most memorable Short Course moment.

After a serious operation, Kiplinger returned to run the Short Course and Trade Show for the 25th consecutive year. Tayama said it was a memorable experience for everybody in attendance.

Tayama assumed the position of secretary-treasurer

after Kiplinger's death in June, 1977. With no OFA staff, Tayama relied on his floriculture colleagues at The Ohio State University and OFA's Short Course planning committees to develop and execute the entire Short Course.

With registration numbers climbing every year, Tayama began to worry his duties at OFA might compromise his responsibilities at the university and began to hire an OFA office staff. He hired the first staff person to handle the Trade Show in 1980. When this person left the job four months before the 1990 Short Course, Tayama asked his wife Lucy to fill in.

Lucy Tayama handled the Trade Show from 1990 to 1992, selling a standing record number of booths in 1991. She also handled Short Course registration and taught kindergarten at a Columbus grade school.

Tayama has overseen many major changes at OFA including hiring an office staff, lawyers and accountants for the association. He said the biggest decision he oversaw was moving the Short Course from January to July in 1983.

"Every two or three years there would be a tremendous storm somewhere in the U.S.," Tayama said, "People were afraid to leave their greenhouses."

"If we didn't change, we would always be at the mercy of the weather," he said. Tayama was not in favor of the change, because it went against a meaningful tradition. The Ohio Short Course was the first in the year followed by New York and Michigan, but the decision was made to change the date to



Lucy and Harry Tayama

mid-July. The decision making wasn't finished there.

"It was a financial problem for OFA. We were faced with not having a Short Course for 18 months, or having two in the same year," said Tayama. "I couldn't see OFA surviving 18 months without a Short Course. This was dangerous in terms of momentum."

Tayama pushed for two Short Courses in one year. Exhibitors were angry, he said, and saw it as a ploy for increasing OFA income. The first July Short Course went on as planned though and broke attendance records.

While exhibitors were pleased with attendance for 1993, the third year in Cincinnati, the figures were not as high as Tayama had hoped to achieve by this time. He attributes this to hard times for the industry because of economic slump and market saturation resulting in low prices.

"The size of the Short Course doesn't matter that much to me," Tayama said. "The improvement in quality is what really counts."

Tayama believes the quality of the exhibits has improved tremendously.

"Exhibitors put more effort into the design and purpose of their booths to make

them as educational as possible," he said. "They use the Trade Show to introduce their new products."

Seminars and speakers have increased in quality and number, Tayama said. He remembers the great controversy when someone suggested running two seminars simultaneously in split sessions, since there was too much information to transfer and not enough time. This year there were nine seminars presented at the same time.

About six years ago Tayama began to travel abroad regularly and the Short Course began to reach beyond the U.S. border. In 1990, the Ohio Florist Short Course became the International Floriculture Industry Short Course. In 1993, 23 nations were represented at the Short Course.

"Short Course subjects have always been at the leading edge," Tayama said. He stressed that Alex Laurie started the Short Course in 1930 to share information within the industry and by sharing this information the industry will improve for everyone's benefit.

"If we do a good job," Tayama said, "there will be enough business for everyone."

Ideal Employees Found Through OSU's Agricultural Communication Program

By Teresa Roll

What can a company do when it is understaffed and needs talented, professional, and responsible additional support, yet can't offer a wage that competes with McDonald's?

Since 1987, OFA has found this additional support staff in The Ohio State University's agricultural communication program. As part of this major, students are required to complete an internship in a communications field.

An intern who is hired at OFA knows or is a quick-study at wordprocessing and desktop publishing programs, has good editing and writing skills, and a grasp of agriculture sciences. Interns in this program receive a bachelor of science degree rather than the liberal arts degree received by journalism students.

The agricultural communication curriculum provides a wide scope of skills for students, including exposure to radio broadcasting, advertising, public relations, graphics design, and publications writing. This diverse course experience makes an agricultural communication student ideal for association work.

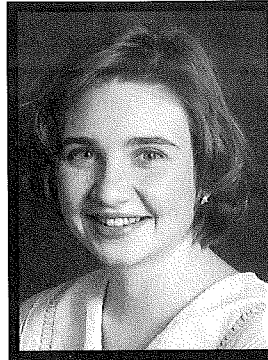
OFA was fortunate to have recruited two of OSU's most talented agricultural communication students to help with publications work and 1993 Short Course projects.

Malinda Feikert, a junior from Benton, Ohio, joined OFA in September 1992. She assists with mailings, has written news releases, and helps with desktop publishing. Mindy was instrumental in typesetting and organizing the 1993 Short Course Trade Show Directory. She also assisted in contacting Short Course speakers and organizing handouts and speaker needs.

Mindy came to OFA with an understanding of consumer and vocational education. She had worked two summers at the Holmes County OSU Extension office as an IPM scout and 4-H/agricultural program assistant, and served as a Pork Industry Queen for District IX (1992) and Northeastern Ohio (1991). Mindy lives in Holmes County, which has the world's highest Amish population. She enjoys raising and showing livestock, and fishing on her family farm.

Perhaps influenced by her contact with OFA, Mindy recently decided to change her major to horticulture. She plans to attend OSU's Agricultural Technical Institute, Winter Quarter 1994.

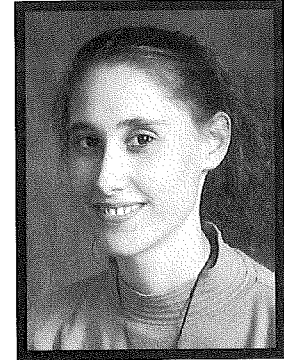
Cassandra Sheaffer, a junior from Jeromesville, Ohio, has been with OFA since February 1993. Her responsibility as staff writer includes compiling press



Malinda Feikert

releases, feature articles, and most of the articles for the OFA FirstNews. She also assisted in organizing the Short Course seminar programs.

Cassy is active in OSU's Agricultural Communicator's of Tomorrow (ACT), from which she received the 1993 Outstanding Sophomore Award. She has been inducted into the Chimes and Towers honorary fraternities, and was recognized for holding the second and third highest GPA in her freshman and sophomore classes, respectively, in the College of Agriculture.



Cassandra Sheaffer

She received her American Farmer degree from the FFA in 1991.

Cassy is especially interested in cooperatives, advertising, and rural sociology. She enjoys creative writing, reading, and music of all kinds.

Full-time staffers Michelle Gaston, Bonnie Haws Norris, and Teresa Roll are all graduates of the OSU agricultural communication program. Winter Quarter 1987, Roll started OFA as a part-time staff writer. Gaston and Norris began as interns in May 1991 and May 1990, respectively.

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