

# Focal Point



## Letter From the President

This is the season of CHANGE! There are so many issues swirling in my mind. How do you do business during a pandemic? Brick and mortar shops are rethinking their business models and event florists have now become ecommerce florists. Expo is canceled for the first time in 68 years! This is heart breaking for the board members, do you feel the same? What can we do instead? We are working on a late fall mini Expo day, details are budding. We also have a series of virtual design tips, tricks and techniques from local designers in the planting stages. We hope you can be inspired by others without leaving your own home, studio or shop.

Please take advantage of the slower summer and isolation moments. This gives us time to plan and make changes! Work on email campaigns, plan a creative marketing strategy for the rest of this year, plan a holiday open house (nope - don't do that!), hold a virtual sale, revisit your original business plan, be creative and try something new! Or take a little time off for rest and relaxation, it's been a crazy year so far!

The biggest change for me with the association is handing over the gavel to your new President, Jessica Hankins. She has become an asset to ASFA implementing and maintaining the new Association Management Software, bringing fresh ideas, and presenting social media classes at Expo. Please welcome her with open blooming arms and reach out to us at anytime at [ASFAcontactus@gmail.com](mailto:ASFAcontactus@gmail.com) if there is anything we can do for you!

See highlights inside the newsletter for pics of my favorite moments with the Arizona State Florists Association from the past couple years! My best wishes for a successful future for all! I miss seeing all of your smiling faces and floral community comradery at workshops and design programs! Looking forward to the next time we can gather, until then stay safe!

Renee' Potter AIFD  
ASFA President 2017-2020

# SURVIVE and THRIVE

Over the past several months, much has changed in the world of flowers. Previously-venerable businesses from farms, logistics providers, wholesalers, retailers, and event designers have closed, gone bankrupt, reorganized, and drastically changed the way they operate. Likely most of you have also had to change your daily routine or even your entire business model to adapt to these new circumstances.

There are countless webinars, YouTube videos, industry guides, and other resources available from the Society of American Florists, the Wholesale Florists and Floral Suppliers Association, company websites, and many others to help floral businesses navigate these uncertain waters. Ultimately, however, these tools and resources may only be helpful if you bring along a few key traits:

## 1. **Be Receptive.**

“The capacity to learn is a gift; the ability to learn is a skill; the willingness to learn is a choice.” --Brian Herbert

Watching the tutorial, listening to the “experts”, or hearing the steps to take can only be useful if you are truly open to learning, introspection, insight, and making meaningful changes. “Business as usual” is no longer; receptiveness to new ideas and willingness to adapt may be the lifeline of your business going forward.

## 2. **Be Active.**

“If everyone helps to hold up the sky, then one person does not become tired.”

--Askhari Johnson Hodari

Being open to change and new ideas is only relevant so far as you put them into practice. Resolve to actively adapt, work and change. Don't wait for an outside magical answer, BE the answer! Help and work together with others in our industry. Join ASFA!

## 3. **Be Progress.**

“The only constant in life is change.”

--Heraclitus

Habitualize forward thinking. Rather than getting caught off guard by world events and market changes, be ready to adapt to change constantly going forward. Operate efficiently and effectively to enable change whenever it is required.

There is no silver bullet, one-size-fits-all answer to the challenges facing each of our floral businesses right now. However, I believe that if we operate our businesses with open minds, willing hands, and forward-looking eyes, we can help each other weather the storm and be better-suited to succeed going forward.

**Ben Henderson, Board Member**

# Out of the Darkness...

Even after the worst storms there is always a rainbow.

As we all come to terms with how to bring our business' back, it important to step back, think, and open our minds to the possibilities, and changes we must make to not only be viable again, but to thrive. ASFA has put out information from The Society of American Florists, and The American Institute of Floral Designers which is really important for us all. They are not just industry experts, but have connections all over the world in all facets of the industry and that knowledge is key to us here in Arizona to know how others are proceeding as well. Our business is still there, but is it the same? Will it ever be?.....probably not. This is where you must open your mind, explore options and think about how you might change your business model to accommodate the shift in retail.

Even the giants and big box stores are re-thinking their business models to accommodate a world shift in the business culture. It is important that we, as local florists, tap into that information, apply what works for us, and re-brand ourselves in this new era of the floral industry.

We are fortunate to belong to an industry that has survived literally every catastrophic economic development this country has seen, and yet we are still here. There is a reason for that, the world needs flowers, they need them to heal, to motivate, to inspire and to make people happy and give them the courage to move forward making a better future for themselves and for others. Please reach out to us here at ASFA, or your floral neighbors in the community to talk, share, brainstorm, it helps so much to just talk, discuss and hear what others thoughts are and how everyone is dealing with the come-back.

There is plenty of business to go around, we just need to take a long hard look at ourselves and see where our niche may be, or what is the best path for us to forage into the future. Events like this often force us out of our comfort zones, and make us make changes we may have been afraid to tackle with out a huge kick in the pants. Take advantage of this time to do just that. If you feel lost, or have employees who need motivating or education, remember the importance of education and how it is the catalyst for a successful shop of any kind. Our fall semester of AzMF Certification is beginning in August, and if you feel like you want to start clean, and get back to basics, or want your employees inspired to be better, do better and make your business successful, let us know. There are scholarships available, and/or we have payment options to ease the burden. Just know we are always here for you to reach out, we get questions, and email all the time looking for information, hope, guidance and ideas. We are only too happy to help you become your best YOU.

**Brian Vetter AAF AIFD PFCI AzMF, Board Member**

# REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESSES

## Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-40 Containing the Spread of COVID-19

Any business, whether for-profit or non-profit, institution, profession or entity that physically operates in the State of Arizona and serves the public or is an employer shall develop, establish, implement and enforce policies that adopt guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Labor, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to limit and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 including the following:

- Promoting healthy hygiene practices;
- Intensifying cleaning, disinfection and ventilation practices;
- Monitoring for sickness;
- Ensuring physical distancing;
- Requiring face coverings when physical distancing is not feasible;
- Providing necessary protective equipment;
- Allowing for and encouraging teleworking where feasible;
- Providing plans, where possible, to return to work in phases; and
- Limiting the congregation of groups of no more than 10 persons when feasible and in relation to the size of the location.

**For more information on all updated business mandates, please visit-**  
**<https://azgovernor.gov>**

**#MaskUpAZ**



STAY **HEALTHY.**  
RETURN **SMARTER.**  
RETURN **STRONGER.**

# Expo 2020 Update

Valued Members and Friends;

After much thought, research, and networking with other state associations, growers, and wholesalers, we find ourselves in the sad position of having to cancel our Annual Expo. ASFA has not cancelled an Expo in our 68 year history, so has been a very difficult decision.

We want to respect the trauma our industry is experiencing from the farms and growers, right through to the retailers. Everyone has been hit so hard, and times are so uncertain, that to attempt to create our annual event is just not feasible. We hope all of you are doing well, working to re-gain business, and re-build your brand, all while staying safe and healthy.

That being said, we are working on an exciting smaller fall event that will come after things are more settled. We are here for you, and will have a great mini-day with some design skills to re-charge your battery, and also some valuable information on how to re-build, and grow your business from this historic interruption in our daily operations. We will keep you posted as more information develops.

In the meantime, we appreciate you, your support, and your commitment to keeping your business running and keeping flowers in peoples homes, hearts, and minds, because as we all know, the world needs flower to heal. ASFA will also be extending everyone's membership through the end of the year, rather than collecting annual dues in July in an effort to help everyone catch up.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Arizona State Florists Association  
Renee Potter AIFD President  
Jessica Hankins 1st Vice-President  
Blanca Mondragon AzMF 2nd Vice-President  
And the Board of Directors



# January Hands On Workshop

Huge thank you to Mayesh in Chandler for hosting such a fun event!



Thank you Kathy Rogers AIFD for presenting! We truly enjoyed your Valentine's day ideas!

# Become a Member for these great Member Benefits!

Show your membership card at these locations for Members Only  
Discount!

## **Tuesday**

Askren 10% off all ribbon, silk flowers & plants

## **Wednesday**

DWF 20% off your walk-in order

## **Friday**

AZ Flower Market 20% off walk-in order

## **1st Friday**

Floral Supply Syndicate 10% walk-in order

## **Saturday**

Mayesh 20% off walk-in order

We Got Flowers 20% off walk-in cooler

### **Askren & Sons**

3828 E Roeser Rd  
Phoenix, AZ 85040  
602-714-6612

### **Askren & Sons**

4701 S Butterfield Dr  
Tucson, AZ 85714  
520-795-9977

### **DWF**

2625 S 16th St 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
602-271-44812

### **Arizona Flower Market**

2050 S 16th St Ste 105  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
602-707-6294

### **Mayesh Chandler**

3365 N Nevada St  
Chandler, AZ  
480-623-3400

### **Mayesh Phoenix**

1805 W Crest Lane  
Phoenix, AZ 85027  
623-582-1290

### **Floral Supply Syndicate**

3322 E Broadway Rd  
Phoenix, AZ 85040  
602-431-1772

### **We Got Flowers**

224 N 5th Ave,  
Phoenix, AZ 85003  
(602) 714-7514

# What exactly are the AzMF Certification Classes?

ASFA offers the AzMF Certification Program twice yearly, once in the fall, and again in the spring. These classes cover 12 modules which touch on all aspects of the flower shop experience. One can learn basic skills to seek entry level employment in a flower shop, or if you already are working in the industry, it helps you elevate your design skills, learn some basic principles and elements, as well as background information and knowledge to be a better more valuable team member where you work.

It is a great learning experience as well as great fun and socializing with fellow florists. The AzMF credential is a great help in gaining employment, and we even seasonally have shops contacting us looking for help, full and part time, and work to match up folks. The classes are small and everyone receives personalized attention and instruction. It is a great value for the amount of education and experience you receive. Here are some comments from past attendees:

“I loved the classes, so much information, and it helped me get hired at Christmas time, I loved it!” -Sherry

“Great classes, great design information, I was wanting to start my own business but had no where to go for help, took the program and felt confident to begin my own business. It was a huge help to me” -Marcia

“Brian was wonderful, he was so patient, and giving with his time and instruction, he made sure everyone understood and was up to speed each class. He made it easy to learn and work on areas I felt unsure of myself” -Liz

**If you have any questions about the Certification program, feel free to check out website at [azflorists.org](http://azflorists.org), or contact Brian Vetter at [bvetter.aifd@yahoo.com](mailto:bvetter.aifd@yahoo.com)**



# Fall 2020 Classes

All certification classes are held on Sundays, located at Arizona Flower Market  
8:30am—4:00pm

**August 2nd**

**August 16th**

**August 30th**

**September 13th**

**September 27th**

**October 4th**

**For questions or additional information contact:**

Brian Vetter AAF AIFD PFCI—602.908.9024—[Bvetter.aifd@yahoo.com](mailto:Bvetter.aifd@yahoo.com)

**We have two scholarships available to help with expenses:**

The Sharron Luoma Scholarship  
ASFA Scholarship

**Scholarship application deadline for Fall 2020 Classes is July 1st 2020**  
**More Details online at [azflorists.org/azmf-certification-program](http://azflorists.org/azmf-certification-program)**

# Floral Education, Knowledge and Experience

How many times have you heard “Oh, I can get that at “X” for so much less” or, “Wow, why so expensive??” There will always be a need for a quick bunch of flowers that can be picked up at the grocery store, some of which employ true designers and budding florists. But what is it that sets us, the “Brick & Mortar” traditional flower shop and Event Floral Studios, apart from non-traditional flower sellers and requires us to charge more for flowers? Yes, most of us do pay more for our flowers than big box stores, but we also provide an expertise that is very valuable to our customers. As floral artists, we have invested time to acquire knowledge and experience, and money for education. How many of us extend that education to our customers? From experience, do we let our customers know where their flowers are coming from? Especially in a time when there are delays in getting our product into our shops....how many are letting our customers know how the floral chain works? How many of our customers know where the flowers come from? I find it amazing that many believe that we grow and pick our own, and have access to every flower there is on any given day.

I’m sure we’ve also all had people tell us that when they retire, their dream is to buy a flower shop and “play with flowers all day”. While it is one of the most creative and rewarding careers, it is also very hard work, and very stressful at times. How do we relay that to our customers so that they put value on what we do as florists and designers? I’ve even been told that being a florist isn’t a real job. Seriously? While talking to customers, and selling them your product, it is a very good idea to give them the origin of the flowers, how they are grown, where they are grown, and a little of the science of growing commercial flowers. Even showing them photos of the vast farms where they are grown will not only impress them, but also educate. I have found that they really appreciate the little bit of information that you provide, that you have let them in to your flower circle, and they become repeat customers because of it. So, how do we accomplish this? By becoming more educated ourselves.

There are many ways that you can gain more knowledge, provide knowledge to your employees if you are an owner, and then pass that information to your customers. Take the classes and seminars that your State Association provides. Go to all of the seminars in your area, some are sponsored by your local suppliers and may be available for a nominal fee. Watch YouTube video's created by the vast talent of Florists, Designers, Event Florists, and yes, DIY Designers. Become a member of SAF and AIFD and subscribe to their publications. Find a floral professional who is willing to be your Mentor and provide insights that you wouldn’t discover on your own. Subscribe to the worldwide digital publications [FloralDaily](#) and [HortiDaily](#), which have news articles from all over the world. Subscribe to other publications like [Florist Review](#), which can also be viewed digitally. Become involved with as many floral based meet ups, social media forums a floral gatherings that you can. We are a unique group of people that have a passion for flowers, floral art, and best of all, sharing our experience with new and up-coming florists.

Remember, whether you are new to the Floral Industry, or a well seasoned professional with many years of experience, there is always something to learn, to teach, and to share.....with each other, and with our customers! Share the Passion!! This is not just a job, it’s an exciting career that can lead you to many opportunities to create and share your talent!

**Michele E LaPorte, AzMF, Board Member**

# Down Memory Lane

Big Thank You to Renee Potter for a great 3 years as ASFA President! You have done some amazing work for our association and for that we are so grateful! Here are some of her favorite photos!



And... a sneak peek look at your new president!



**4840 E Dale Lane  
Cave Creek, AZ 85331**

## **2019-2020 ASFA Board of Directors**

**Renee Potter AIFD  
Blanca Mondragon AzMF  
Diane Gonzalez AIFD  
Terri Robinson AIFD  
Vickie Blair AzMF  
Brent Denham  
Caroline Naylor AzMF  
Jessica Hankins  
Brian Vetter AAF AIFD PFCI  
Michele LaPorte AzMF  
Fred Russ  
Ben Henderson**

**[www.AzFlorists.org](http://www.AzFlorists.org)**