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Grower News

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Editor John Esser

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2018 CFGW Field Trial Evaluations

If you are interested in reviewing the evaluation results from the Summer, 2018 Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin's Field Trial held at the University of Wisconsin West Madison Agricultural Field Station and were featured in our August 2 Field Day go to "University of Wisconsin West Madison Agriculture Field Station" website then click on "Gardens", click on "2018 Petunia Evaluation for Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin" and finally click on "2018 CFGW Petunia Data-Final." This is a list of the over 340 vegetative Propagated Petunia varieties which were evaluated for quality three times this summer. It can be a useful tool to help you make variety selections for the 2019 spring season.

Editor

I Say: Fear is a reaction. Courage is a decision.

Winston Churchill

Introducing Your CFGW Board

In my ten years on the CFGW board and eleven as Executive Secretary I've been impressed by the diversity and knowledge brought by your board so I asked each to contribute a short bio. Here are those I've received written in their words:

Brian Karthaus: In 1957 Karthaus & Sons (KSI) was born. It included Otto Karthaus, and two sons Jerry and Neal. My father Neal and his wife Rita purchased a home not far from their greenhouse in the city of Mequon. From their house within a 5-mile radius there were no less than 6 greenhouses. I would enjoy going with my Dad to growers' meetings, where I saw the importance of networking. Saturdays and holidays were spent filling pots or going out on deliveries with my Grandpa, which usually meant stopping for ice cream. All this exposure gave me my desire to work in the greenhouse industry.

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A member of the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation (WGIF).

I attended Homestead High School, and University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. In 1987 I married my wife Karen, and we have two children Zachary, and Chelsea. While my children have chosen other careers, they spent summers also working in the greenhouse. Which I believe gave them a good work ethic. In 1987 KSI moved to our Germantown location. Many things have changed over the years.

Being President of CFGW has helped me to meet other greenhouse owners and share these changes and experiences that has helped me to become a better grower. I'm looking forward to the changes that have yet to come and the ideas I've yet to learn.

“Think Flowers”



Brian Karthauser in greenhouse with Grandfather Otto

Chris Williams: I grew up in the Janesville- Milton, Wisconsin area, attending Milton High School. I attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and earned a degree in Horticulture in 1987.

In 1990 I married my wife Amy. Today we live in the Janesville area and have 3 children.

My father started K&W Greenery while working at a local bank by growing flowers under grow lights in our home's basement. I started working at the family business at an early age. I am currently part owner at K&W Greenery in Janesville, WI.

My interests include being outside, entomology, and Wisconsin sports especially Badger basketball.

Paul Ruszkiewicz: I was born and raised in southeastern Wisconsin and have lived here all of my life. I graduated from UW-Milwaukee with a BA in Accounting and passed the CPA exam. In my earlier years, I owned real estate with my brothers and began flipping houses before it became popular.

Loving a break from winter, I also sold pumpkins and Christmas trees in Florida. A friend of mine introduced me to the greenhouse business and I began buying and selling flowers and loved the business. For years I purchased plants from local wholesalers and then began growing plugs from seeds and cuttings. I currently sell plugs and some baskets to other greenhouse owners and operate a seasonal retail business.

The most helpful thing to me in all the years that I have been involved in the greenhouse business has been my joining CFGW. I have learned so much and have built relationships with others in the business-what a plug!

Chris Peterson: Chris Peterson has been part of the Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin since the late 1970's. He began his greenhouse career with Jack Baylis and Milwaukee Greenhouses, working at the Milwaukee East side location. During his time there he also worked with Herman Neuman at his greenhouse location.

His next job was with Bob Harvey and Edgewood Greenhouse, located in Mukwonago WI. During that time, Chris became involved with the CFGW board as treasurer, when Dick Schneider was the executive secretary. The next board position he held was President and

served in that capacity until Larry Ross became president.

In 1999 Chris, and his business partner Ken Fenske, bought Edgewood Greenhouse from Alan Harvey. Since that time, he has remained a board member, and continues to value the organization and the benefits of membership.

John Lewandowski: Is retail and Marketing Manager of Bluemel's Garden & Landscape Center has worked in the retail greenhouse industry for over 20 years. John has had a greater involvement in the green industry over the last 7 years or so having served on the Gardens Beautiful, Wisconsin Green Industry Federation (WGIF), Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin (CFGW), and the Wisconsin Nursery & Landscape Association (WNLA) boards.

With no degree or formal horticultural education, John has been able to advance his career through hands-on experiences and plenty of trial and error. John's primary focus and interest is the retail side of the greenhouse business, specifically the marketing side which includes an emphasis on customer relations, web design, social media, promotional strategies, and branding. He is proud to serve on the CFGW board as well as the WGIF and WNLA boards representing the CFGW.

Tom Hartman: Bachelor of Science degree in Floriculture production and technology from University of Wisconsin. Worked as a grower/ section manager for Park Floral Englewood Co. Worked as a grower/ production manager for Greiling Farms. Built Hartman's Towne & Country Greenhouse in 1985. I've been running our Greenhouse & Garden Center with my wife Diana and now our son Chris since then.

We have another son Scott and his wife Erin and 2 grand-daughters. I've been growing flowers all of my life. My older brother and I built our first greenhouse when I was in grade school and he was in high school to grow transplants for our garden and it grew from there into a spring bedding plant business that my mother eventually became involved in when I went off to college so it's been part of our family since the 1960's.

Megan Lambert: Megan has been working as a sales representative with BFG Plant Connection for the last 5 years. She has a bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota in Horticulture and has been around Horticulture her whole life, growing up and working with her father who is also in the industry.

When not at work she loves spending time with her husband, Mark and her daughter, Izzy who is 5. When she is not spending time with her family or working, she can be found quilting or crafting!

Betty Bless has been a Wisconsinite her entire life. While growing up, she developed a passion for plants from her Mom who taught her about gardening and wildflowers. Betty studied at the University of Wisconsin- Madison, earning a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Horticulture. During the summer between her junior and senior year, she was given the opportunity to work for one of the best mentors in the industry, Ron Schraufnagel at Irish Lane Greenhouses. That is where her twenty-nine year career began.

She worked as a Grower for Ron for nine years, before embarking on a seventeen-year venture into the native plant world at Prairie Nursery. Her experience there was managing the day to day of a mail order seed and plant nursery, landscape design and installation company. Things have come

full circle now for Betty. She has returned from the “weeds” and is now back in the mainstream. After working for America’s Best Flowers for 2.5 years, she just became owner of North Parish Gardens, Ron Schraufnagel’s business that he started when he sold Irish Lane Greenhouses. When she has time off, she enjoys camping on her land in Marquette County, traveling and reading.

John Esser: I’ve been married to Joann for 50 years and we have two children and five grandchildren.

I’ve had a life long interest in growing plants and started working in a retail nursery in high school. I have a BS degree in Horticulture from Iowa State University after college I worked Laos for four years, three years as a grower at a wholesale pot plant greenhouse then 32 years in sales to Wisconsin’s greenhouses for the Fred C. Gloeckner Co. In partial retirement I enjoy being Executive Secretary for the CFGW, garden, hike, kayak, volunteer through church and Kiwanis and travel.

What Color Will Be in the Most Demand in 2019?

If you’ve been in business for long you will realize what flower color in most demand changes each year. Most know that there is a company, Pantone, that tracks and predicts color trends. That company has predicted that Living Coral will be the color that consumers will be looking for in 2019.

PANTONE 16-1546 Living Coral

An animating and life-affirming coral hue with a golden undertone that energizes and enlivens with a softer edge, vibrant, yet mellow PANTONE 16-1546 Living Coral embraces us with warmth and nourishment to provide

comfort and buoyancy in our continually shifting environment. Living Coral is a nurturing color that appears in our natural surroundings and at the same time, displays a lively presence within social media.



PANTONE
16-1546
Living Coral

About Pantone Color of the Year

For 20 years, Pantone’s Color of the Year has influenced product development and purchasing decisions in multiple industries, including fashion, home furnishings, and industrial design, as well as product, packaging, and graphic design.

Making the Color of the Year selection process requires thoughtful consideration and trend analysis. To arrive at the selection each year, Pantone’s color experts at the Pantone Color Institute comb the world looking for new color influences.

About The Pantone Color Institute™

The Pantone Color Institute is the business unit within Pantone that highlights top seasonal runway colors, forecasts global color trends, and advises companies on color for product and brand visual identity. Through seasonal trend forecasts, color psychology, and color consulting, the Pantone Color Institute partners with global brands to

leverage the power, psychology, and emotion of color in their design strategy.

(I've edited down Pantone descriptive paragraphs about the color as well as selection process to keep the article length down. Search Pantone's website for a more detailed description and another swatch of the color. Editor)

Pantone

Termites, the First Farmers?

Humans think we invented agriculture. Archaeologists suggest that human farming first began about 23,000 years ago and the first reference to greenhouses was in Roman in 30 AD. The first greenhouses in the U.S. appear to have been built about 1737. But, according to scientists we as humans are just beginners. African Termites have been farming fungi on plant leaves for millions of years. Termites cut and collect leaves and carry them back to their mounds where fungi breakdown the plant material into edible sugars which the ants can eat and feed to their queen and young.



Termite Mound in Botswana

The Fungi that the ants culture replaces the ant's digestive system making inedible plant material into ant food. This is not dissimilar to what we humans use cows, cattle other livestock for. These animals consume grasses, which

are inedible for humans, and convert it into milk and meat which we can eat.

Termites, to maximize production, in an environment with extremely high day temperatures, cold nights and highly variable humidity closely control the temperatures inside their mounds as well as humidity levels to provide optimum conditions for fungal growth. Outside temperatures can run from near freezing to over 100° f. Termites are able to hold the temperature fluctuations in their mounds to 30 degrees. More importantly, for optimum fungal growth, humidity levels are held close to 80%. Maintaining ideal growing conditions is done by opening and closing the openings in the mound allowing air to enter either cooling or heating the mound.

Though these mounds are built of soil they are hard as concrete. A must to put up with elephants using them for scratching posts as well as predators.

Fungi produce large amounts of CO₂ (Carbon Dioxide) as a byproduct of decomposition. CO₂ can kill the termites, so they must also vent this gas or suffocate.

Termites have developed the ability to farm fungi by controlling the temperature, humidity and CO₂ levels to optimize their growing conditions just as we try to do in our greenhouses. They learned this technique millions of years before you and I entered a greenhouse.

Nature always impresses me!

Editor

I Say:

The percentage of Africa that is wilderness: 28% (now get this...). The percentage of North America that is wilderness: 38%.

Board News

As you know the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation (WGIF) ended operations on June 30, 2018. The CFGW board has agreed to join with the Wisconsin Nursery Landscape Association (WNLA) to replace what WGIF did by providing the green industry representation with the State of Wisconsin. CFGW board member John Lewandowski has agreed to be our representative on that board. Contact CFGW Board Member John Lewandowski at jlew1977@icolud.com if you have suggestions, comments or questions about the WNLA.

The CFGW Board decided to continue the CFGW Field Trials at the University of Wisconsin West Madison Agriculture Field Station as in the past. The Field Day will be August 1, 2019 and we will be trialing Zonal (vegetatively propagated) Geraniums and seeded pot Dahlias this summer. John Esser will find speakers for that program.

Board member Tom Hartman and son Chris will again locate sources and obtain as many varieties of Geraniums and Dahlias as possible. They will root the cuttings in their greenhouse. The liners will be grown into 4 ½" pots at the University of Wisconsin Horticulture farm greenhouse in Arlington, Wisconsin then planted in the West Madison trial beds in early June. Contact Tom at hartmansgreenhouse@yahoo.com if you have suggestions for varieties or sources of Geraniums and Dahlias.

The board decided to continue with the Fall Greenhouse Conference and will continue to hold that event at the Natural Beauty Growers greenhouse in Denmark, Wisconsin. The event is scheduled for Wednesday October 16, 2019. The board asked John Esser to

contact Dr. Charlie Hall and Dr. Craig Regelbrugge as possible speakers.

In an effort to increase attendance at the Fall Conference there will be a drawing, in the name of the vendors (with no increase in vendor rental costs) for twenty five door prizes of \$25 each. There will also be a silent auction for items donated by CFGW members. Funds raised from this auction will be donated to a social cause to be determined by the board. Contact Paul Ruskiewicz at kim@paulspetalpushcers.com if you have something to donate or have questions.

To attract new members the board approved offering new CFGW members a 50% discount on their annual membership dues for one year plus two free tickets to the Fall Conference for the next fall's conference.

The board has also decided to offer one \$1,000 scholarship each year to a Horticulture Student in a Wisconsin university of college. The mechanism for that scholarship is in the process of being established.

Editor

Program Schedule 2019

- February 19** @ Carlin Sales. Speaker to be determined.
- March:** Site/speaker to be determined.
- April:** Site/speaker to be determined.
- June** @ Boerner Botanical Garden, Hales Corners, WI. Annual round table discussion of the spring, 2019 season.
- August 1:** U.W. West Madison Ag. Research Station Field Trial of Zonal Geraniums and Dahlias.
- September:** Site/speaker to be determined.
- October 16** – Fall Greenhouse Greenhouse Conference at Floral Plant Growers, Denmark, WI.
- November:** @Karthaus & Son's, Germantown, WI. Speaker to be determined.