



**PFCI** | RISE & SHINE



**OPEN & COMMUNICATE!**

**Thursday, July 7, 2016 | In conjunction with the AIFD National Symposium 2016**

## Meet The Moderators



### **Vonda LaFever, AIFD, CFD, PFCI**

Vonda is a freelance designer from Niceville, Florida. With over 40 years of experience, she has owned and managed her own retail shop in Dixon, Illinois, for more than 20 years. She continues to design and consult in the retail segment.

Active in the industry, her talents have been employed as a floral instructor at Kishwaukee College where she also assisted with the Student AIFD (SAIFD) program. She has served as a Teleflora Unit President and a

Regional Unit Director for the Central Region. Vonda is an accredited member of the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD) serving 2 years on the National Board as the Membership Chairperson. She is an AIFD certified Evaluator/Judge and has served on the membership committee for 11 years. She is a member of the Team of Teleflora Education Specialists. Vonda also utilizes her industry experience as an operations manager and financial coach for TeamFloral, a consulting company in the industry.



### **Sharon McGukin, AAF, AIFD, PFCI**

An entertaining and informative speaker, Sharon McGukin (Mac-Goo-kin) is known nationally for her floral expertise, southern charm and energetic connection with audiences. Having started her career as a small town florist, Sharon's floral adventures have taken her around the world. From consulting in Asia for the home décor industry and presenting flower demonstrations or tracking floral trends across the U.S., Canada, and Europe, to decorating floats at the Rose

Bowl Parade and designing flowers in the White House, this floral fashionista has lots of flower stories to share.

Sharon is a member of the Smithers-Oasis Design Directors and has served as AIFD President, and a member of the PFCI Board of Trustees. She is the author of "Flowers of the Heart: a Bride's Guide to Choosing Flowers for Your Wedding." Sharon and her husband, Tim, live in Carrollton, Georgia. They enjoy a busy life filled with grandbabies, grand puppies, gardening, and large, noisy southern mealtime gatherings of family and friends.



### **D Damon Samuel, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, NAFD, NMF**

Damon is the in-house floral designer for the Bill Doran Company in Omaha, Nebraska, and owner of Design Expressions by D, an independent design consultation and event company. Damon does presentations for regional and state floral conventions on floral design and new products. He is chairman of the PFCI Board of Trustees, and has

served on many other industry boards and committees throughout his 30-year career including acting as president of the Nebraska Florists Society and president of the South Central region of the American Institute of Floral Designers. He also conducts advanced floral design classes for the Metropolitan Community College Horticulture Department in Omaha, Nebraska.



### **Lisa Weddel, AAF, AIFD, PFCI**

Lisa owns L. Weddel Design in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, and has worked as a wedding consultant and head floral designer in various shops including her own. Her design work has been recognized in *Architectural Digest*, *Colorado Lifestyles and Homes* and *The Knot*. Weddel has presented at seminars

and conventions throughout the industry as well as in the Denver community. Lisa is past PFCI chairman and is vice president of the American Institute of Floral Designers South Central Chapter.



**PFCI** PROFESSIONAL FLORAL COMMUNICATORS INTERNATIONAL

**For presentation advice or PFCI information, visit [safnow.org/pfci](http://safnow.org/pfci) or e-mail [pfci@safnow.org](mailto:pfci@safnow.org).**



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## **Go Local. Be a Star.**

**Find out how to become the “go-to” celebrity expert on flowers and floral design in your area.**

**Moderated by Sharon McGukin, AAF, AIFD, PFCI**

### **Be a Speaker**

Civic groups are always looking for speakers for their programs. Create a “Need a Speaker” postcard that includes a brief bio along with your contact info and mail it to local organizations. Share flower tips with Garden Clubs or Women’s Clubs. Offer tips for designing with flowers from your garden for Master Gardener’s groups. Present speaking or business tips to Lion’s or Rotary clubs, etc. Provide a handout of the information presented and a card or brochure about your business, with your contact info included. This is a great way to meet new contacts, expand your network, and reach new customers.

### **Hit the Airwaves**

Contact your local radio station and offer to come in during their off-peak time to record free 30-second tips and techniques that listeners can use to organize their personal events, wedding ideas, holiday decorating tips, cut flower care, etc. The station can then use these free blurbs as fill in sound bites throughout the season. People recognize your name, connect it to your voice and begin to think of you as an expert in that subject. For example, one year, I did 50 Wedding Tips that the radio station used throughout the spring and summer wedding season. I gained referrals from those spots.

### **Become a TV Celebrity**

If you have a local TV station, contact them to volunteer to do 3-minute spots showcasing seasonal “How-to Hints” on a regular schedule. You provide the time, talent, and materials. They share a time slot and audience with you.

### **Launch Your Writing Career**

Contact your local newspaper and offer to do a free column monthly sharing seasonal information that readers can use for decorating with flowers. Blog for your city’s webpage. Offer to write free articles with photos for small, local magazines. Send out a quarterly newsletter of design tips, stories, and inspiration from your business.

Not a writer? Assign the task to an employee who does love to write. Or, create a bulleted list of design points, tips, or instructionals and hire a freelancer to put that information into written form for you.

### **Create a Calendar**

Develop a monthly calendar of local events. Using social media and your text or email lists, ask locals to contact you with the dates and times of area community, church, school, sports, or cultural events. Print a sheet that contains all of the submitted events on one calendar month. Add your business contact info and duplicate the sheets to give away.

Offer a free copy of the calendar at your business on the same day of every month, perhaps the 25<sup>th</sup> of a month for the calendar of the following month. The individuals must pick up the calendar at your business; limit one per customer. Creating higher walk-in traffic. Build in-store displays that will promote merchandise that customers can use for those events of the month. One shop that did this found it extremely successful. In a short space of time, people began lining up outside the business early each morning of release day to be sure they got their calendars first.

## Organize a Charity Event

Put together a plan for a local event such as a Bridal Fair, Flower Demonstration, or Holiday Decorating Event. Contact a local civic club such as a Women's Club, Garden Club, or Master Gardner's Group and ask them to participate.

Delegate to the volunteer group all advance event advertising, ticket printing and sales, and the acquisition of free press from community media. They receive and handle the funds collected from ticket sales. A portion of the proceeds go to their organization and a portion to a charity that both entities agree upon.

Create a committee of volunteers within your two organizations. You provide the speaker and any design labor and design materials that are needed. The civic group secures the donation of the event time at a facility and provides the volunteer labor for set-up and take-down, and hosting attendants for the day of the event for such jobs as registration, seating, parking, etc.

Invite the participation of other businesses in your local network to participate. For example, for a wedding showcase invite caterers, photographers, cake bakers, formalwear shops, etc. for a small fee that helps to cover your costs.

The advance advertising and promotional materials, local press and social media feature the three entities. The charity, you or your business, and the civic group that you are working with. Post-event promote stories and photographs of the successful event highlighting everyone's participation. These events are a win-win for all.

## Plan a Photo Shoot

Set up a camera and backdrop near your delivery exit. Have your driver snap a photo of each design before it leaves your business. Use the best of these shots for your website, blog, or promotional materials.

Hire a photographer. For special holidays, decorate a local home and post photos and stories about the how-tos of the project. Create wedding designs at facilities that you frequently decorate for brides. Create a story. Invite local press. Use the photos to design postcards that promote your work in these sites. Provide them to the facilities to hand out to clients when they book events.

## Polish Your Social Skills

Use social media to broadcast interesting news and ideas. 4 to 1 is the ratio that is recommended for special interest and 'personal posts' versus 'ask for business' posts.

Each variety of media has a different purpose and audience reach. Tailor your posts to the message style of that particular media.

- **Facebook** – 'What's happening' in your life or business - Journal
- **Instagram** – 'Wish you were here' - Postcard
- **Twitter** – 'Hello out there' - Online loudspeaker
- **Pinterest** – 'I can do that' - Digital craft or art show
- **LinkedIn** – 'Let's network' - Chamber of Commerce meeting

Ask for signed permission from brides to use their wedding shots in your postings.

Share or Re-tweet the interesting news and events of others. Write articles for LinkedIn.



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## Hot Topics for Garden Clubs.

Learn which subjects draw the biggest garden club audiences and build your repertoire of popular presentations.

Moderated by Lisa Weddel, AAF, AIFD, PFCI

- Everyday Extraordinaire
- Fun Floral Designs
- Unusual containers
- "A Glass Act" - Unique Floral Designs in Glass"
- "Table Talk!" Creative Tablescape
- Floral Mechanics and New Techniques Made Easy
- Flower Arranging the Easy Way
- "Gardens of Japan" - famous gardens of Tokyo, Kyoto and other cities
- "Holiday Magic" - Christmas & New Year's
- Latest Floral Design Trends
- Color - Have Fun With It!
- Colonial Christmas Decorations
- European Trends and Materials
- Let's Break the Rules
- Flowers and Music

*Top programs for 2015-2017 for the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut*



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## Being PFCI.

**Find out how to earn PFCI credentials and become a member of the floral industry's premier speakers organization. Discuss the application process and learn what to include on your audition video.**

**Moderated by D Damon Samuel, AAF, AIFD, NAFD, NMF, PFCI**

1. Review PFCI Membership Application
2. "PFCI Audition Presentation Guidelines" Video
3. How to make your presentation "Sparkle and Shine"
4. Checklist for the PFCI Audition DVD
5. Q & A



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## **Pack A Powerful Program.**

**Pick up tips to help you engage audiences through rich, relevant programs they won't forget.**

**Moderated by Vonda LaFever, AIFD, PFCI**

- "Ask questions. Toss them a candy treat. Walk off the stage and down into the audience to let them know you care."  
– Kevin Ylvisaker AIFD PFCI
- "Use a handout where each person can participate and respond."  
– Lynn Lary McLean AAF AIFD PFCI
- "Provide a handout with headings only. Ask them to jot down various points as they are covered in the commentary. Invite responses at the end of the program by distributing a post program questionnaire."  
– Lena Malouf AIFD PFCI
- "Put yourself on their level and don't be afraid to laugh at yourself!"  
– Arliss Krieger PFCI
- "I encourage them to ask a question. When they do, I ask other audience members for solutions. People love to participate if they are encouraged."  
– Kathi Thomas AIFD PFCI
- "Eye contact with individuals shows them that you sincerely care about them. Nothing will win them over faster."  
– Jack Baker AAF AIFD PFCI
- "Speak to the audience as equals. Be friendly, approachable and work to break down any barriers that may exist."  
– Alan Parkhurst AIFD PFCI
- "Involvement is contagious. Prior to the show identify several enthusiastic individuals who are not shy and would like to be involved. Involving just a few encourages others to participate, too."  
– Steve Brickner AAF AIFD PFCI
- "I always thank the person who asks me a question. I believe this encourages others who might be sitting there thinking about asking a question to do so."  
– J Schwanke AAF AIFD PFCI
- "Make them laugh. Everyone loves to have fun!"  
– Carol Caggiano AIFD PFCI
- "I find 7 or 8 people in the audience and focus on them as if I am having a fireside chat. This is especially good with large audiences – makes it seem like a small intimate group 'heart-to heart' discussion."  
– Rich Salvaggio AAF AIFD PFCI
- "I use a 'shock treatment' statement... Something like, 'Customers are NEVER wrong.' Then I pause. It gets their attention and then I explain why customers are never wrong. Add a bit of humor – it also goes a long way."  
– Richard Seaboldt AAF AIFD PFCI

- "Ask for their suggestions on how or where to use a design. Encourage them to think 'beyond the box.'"  
– Kirk Pamper AAF AIFD PFCI
- "I always ask them rhetorical questions... gets them thinking deeper than just listening."  
– William Santos AAF AIFD PFCI
- "I pass out 3 x 5 cards and ask them to write out their best tips for success. I read the good ones from the stage. Many people will write an idea – but are reluctant to say it aloud in front of others." – Jason McCollum AIFD PFCI
- "A change of pace usually makes the audience pay attention. If the program is in a slow pace – I'll conduct a raffle or give away some samples to vary the pace and liven things up."  
– Jim Morley AAF AIFD PFCI
- "Show enthusiasm. But be yourself – and you'll have them in the palm of your hand."  
– Richard Milteer AAF AIFD PFCI
- "First find out who they are and then tailor your presentation to them."  
– Joey Schwanke AAF PFCI

*From "PFCI Presentation Tips: Involving the Audience," [safnow.org/about-saf/awards/pfci/presentation-tips-involving-the-audience/](http://safnow.org/about-saf/awards/pfci/presentation-tips-involving-the-audience/)*