

Greetings fellow florists!

My name is Kathy Jones, I am the current president of the South Dakota Floral Association. I am reaching out to you for a few reasons. First is to invite you to our yearly convention, it will be March 1st – 3rd in Pierre, South Dakota at the Ramkota. We will also have round table discussions that are always very informative. There's a vendor fair with a variety of companies. We have two fantastic designers coming and doing stage presentations as well as hands-on classes, Gerard Toh and Lynn Tischler.

Lynne Tischler EMC, AIFD, PFCI, AAF

Since 2002 Lynne has been the lead floral artist and owner of Your Enchanted Florist. LLC in St Paul MN. Her growing works of art have received numerous awards from the cities of St Paul and Minneapolis. You will find her container creations in Midwest Home magazine. Lynne's bridal work has been featured in the knot (Minneapolis and New York) as well as bride's magazine.

Some of Lynne's floral adventures include placing 7th in the FTD America's Cup in 2022. Participating in the Sylvia Cup and helping SAF (society of American Florist) host this prestigious competition. Working with Shaffer Deigns at the Philadelphia Flower show for years. Fleuramour in Belgium, One Presidential inauguration, Two White House Easter Egg rolls, designing at the Minnesota Governor's Mansion, Minneapolis Art in Bloom and the Swedish institute.

In her spare time, Lynne enjoys spending time in nature with her dog, discovering new restaurants and playing board games with her family.

Gerard Toh AIFD, CFD, CCF

Gerard Toh is passionate about flowers and is equally passionate about sharing his love of design. He owned three stores over the course of 25 years. In his wide-ranging career, he has grown his craft and gathered experiences throughout many facets of the floral industry.

He won the California State Designer of the Year when he started competing which led him to become active in the floral community, participating in associations like the California State Floral Association and Teleflora's Los Angeles Coastal Counties Unit. He has held positions such as director at large of the American Institute of Floral Designers and have been active on several committees. He has presented at National AIFD Symposium twice.

As a freelance designer and consultant, Gerry's jobs have been as diverse as Art Director for a national magazine, and creative director for a silk flower manufacturer in China where he directed product development and managed 5 showrooms. He is a member of one of the floral design teams that bouquet up the Accent Décor Showrooms in Dallas and Vegas. He is also the showroom designer for Harvest Imports and consultant for a floral container import house, Modern Containers Inc, and several other floral shops.

Having been an educational specialist for Teleflora, Gerry has taught and lectured on floral design throughout the states and shares his insights and knowledge with the floral community. One of his current jobs includes bouquet development and photo and video styling for Teleflora.



Gerry was also the publisher of the Southwest AIFD chapter's digital magazine: Design In Line for 7 years. His experience comes from his self-published book "Floral Vignettes" on Blurb.com which he calls a journey of flowers, collecting and home. Having discovered that creating websites was just as fulfilling as designing flowers, he also diversified into laying out advertising posters too. He was the co-chair for the AIFD magazine: Focal Points.

He dreams of traveling the world, visiting all the gardens and flower shops someday and living out his life motto, "Always take life in small steps and enjoy every little miracle along the way."

Saturday night we will have dinner, a DJ, a 1950s themed costume contest, and a centerpiece contest with a couple chances to win \$\$\$! So, get out your poodle skirts and black leather jackets! Not only is the weekend filled with inspiration and education, but it is also a ton of fun! You can catch up with old friends and make some new ones. The floral industry is a wonderful and fulfilling business, but it can also be exhausting and stressful. A weekend to talk with other florists who "get it" is a great way to recharge after the hectic holidays. We'd love to invite you to join the South Dakota Floral Association. Our membership booklet is filled with our members information, great for shop-to-shop orders but I also find I use mine to reach out to other members when I'm trying to find something or need to brainstorm the latest crazy thing I'm trying to create. The experience and talent in our association is amazing. If there's something you need help or advice on, someone in our group can help. You certainly don't have to live in South Dakota to participate, we have members in several states, like me! The members have made me feel welcome and encouraged me in so many ways. Please consider attending our convention, first time attendees can come for free. We are a fun bunch, we're all about learning and having a good time while we're at it!

On a more serious note, I do have a question(s) for everyone:

What would you like help with?

- Social media?
- Employee training?
- Wire services - yay or nay?
- Specific design training - tropical, wedding, artificial?
- Home decor buying and display?
- Where can SDFA help you?
- Something I'm overlooking?

I'm far from an expert on everything but I know people. If I can answer any questions or send you a registration form with more information, please give me a call.

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