

Von: SANA - Gerdie Olivier <gerdie@sana.co.za>
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IGCA E-News

www.intgardencentre.org | info@intgardencentre.org

Message from our IGCA President

Season's Greetings to all!

What an eventful year the IGCA had!
There were numerous new
challenges and exciting experiences.

The congress in the UK was very
well organized and a lot of fun. We
had many varied experiences and
saw several different garden centres.
Every time it is fascinating to see
how each garden centre is a unique
reflection of the owner's personality.
Furthermore, the numerous talks



with colleagues from all over the world were captivating and inspirational.

I am looking forward to our next congress in October in South Africa. In our IGCA administrative meeting we were already shown that there is a wide variety of culture, people, and of course plants and garden centres to be found. I am excited to see all of you.

It is my wish that we will gain new members in 2020 and build even closer relationships between those already part of the IGCA.

Special thanks to Gerdie for all the great work she does for us.

Happy holidays and warm wishes for the new year!

Martina Schullian

Update from Australia

by Leigh Siebler



Spring has not been great in Australia. Yes, our economy is just firing, and general retail is poor, but the main factor is the weather as it has been against us in most areas.

NSW, South Australia and Queensland have bushfires and drought, Victoria was either too hot or too cold and other states had similar stories. Bad weekend weather did not help. Most were reporting flat or slightly up sales YTD. But like farmers, garden centre operators move on and try something different to entice customers in to and buy.

Plant Party - Let's Talk Plants

This is a new promotion for GCA and we will run something similar in Autumn (March). Strong corflute signage set the scene. We focused on the strengths of garden centres-plants and information. Yes, garden centres talk plants 52 weeks of the year but we highlighted it and created an event opportunity.



Plant Party signage at a number of Garden Centres

I have been lucky enough to be in Japan for the last three weeks. Japanese are surely the retail experts, Gurus even. There are shops everywhere, so competition is fierce but they excel at quality, display, presentation, packaging, service and more.



Japanese Garden Centre, Ozaki Flower Park owned by Akihiro Ozaki

If you want to learn about retail, then come to Japan.



Lovely Japanese shop display (Loft)



*Unusual names for some shops in Japan
Awesome Store*

News from Canada

by Rebecca Doutre



Garden Centres in Canada are gearing up for a successful (and cold!) Christmas – a recent report from the Retail Council of Canada asked over 2,500 Canadians from coast to coast about their intended behaviours around the upcoming 2019 holiday shopping season. Great news for Independent Garden Centres - 85% of Canadians consider it important to buy from a retailer within Canada this holiday season.

The average anticipated holiday spend is \$792 – something our garden centres can capitalize on with unique gift ware and fabulous seasonal décor! To read the full report, visit: <https://www.retailcouncil.org/research/holiday-shopping-survey-2019/>

Garden Centres Canada (GCC) is hosting their second annual GCC Summit in Edmonton, Alberta, July 6-8, 2020. During this unique Summit, independent garden centre owners and operators from across Canada come together to

discuss, share and be inspired! EVERYONE is invited. This event is over two and half days and includes a welcome reception, all day tour of unique garden centres big and small and a full day of engaging speakers. We are very excited to have Corey Bordine as this years keynote speaker!

<https://www.monkeybarmanagement.com/about/>

We are still in planning mode with many ideas and more yet to announce. If you are interested and would like to be kept up to date on what is developing for the 2020 GCC Summit please let Anne know at anne@canadanursery.com.

2019 in Czech

by Michal Ferencik

This year we have created as Association a special award. This award will be for personalities of the Czech Horticulture profession. For those who have long term work, effected, or grow the horticulture in Czech, and not only in Czech Republic.



We are using Czech design for the award which you can see on the picture. The association created the criteria and the unique award is also financed by the association.

The first horticulture personality who were awarded this award from our association was Mr. Josef Holzbecher, this man built up in his live together with his wife to become one of the European top class alpine perennial nurseries.



Mr Josef Holzbecher receiving his award

He enriched world assortment of alpine perennials bringing them from many expeditions to the different mountains. He created the many expositions in the Brno Arboretum, which is highly known also by the World leading garden architects.

Update from France

by Etienn Bodin

FNMJ, the French Garden Centre Federation, took part in a career fair in Bordeaux on November 28th.

From young graduates to unemployed and retraining people, FNMJ welcomed around 400 people.



The visitors discovered the different jobs in garden centers and pet shops, and the training possibilities we had to offer.

At our booth, the visitors could wear a true vegetable dress that one of our members created for the occasion, guaranteed to impress!



This action was part of our overall plan to work on attractiveness of our sector towards the young generation. We are also organizing a National Seminar on the 19th of December to deepen our thoughts on the matter.

Hello from Germany

by Peter Botz



We are looking forward to the 60th anniversary of our garden-centre association!

We expect more than 320 people in Munich that includes some members of the founder generation.

We will have a short look back on our history but mostly focus on looking forward to creating the future. Please see our invitation card below:

Save the Date!

60 Jahre 

19. - 21. Januar 2020 in München



A group of 50 people explored the Christmas markets in Vienna's garden centres as well as the production company for christmas ball ornaments in Slovakia for three days at the beginning of December.

They all also enjoyed the castle Schönbrunn with its historical Christmas market.

Wish you all a Merry Christmas and all the best for the new year!

Update from Ireland

by Fergal Doyle

Garden Centres have performed well in 2019, with strong growth reported throughout most of the year, with the final quarter, stronger for those Garden Centre retailers who are continuously developing the experiential side of their business and creating destination experiences, with the Santa Experience continues to show strong growth throughout this sector.



The underlying strong performance of the Irish economy and a return to stability and growth in the construction industry is helping underpin this, with the Irish

consumer investing in their homes, and in particular the lifestyle element, of bringing the outside of the home, more to the inside. The garden, large or small is becoming a key part of the home for entertaining and relaxing.

The Garden Centre sector remains a vibrant and dynamic retail space, and the need to continuously innovate across the physical offering, the experience and digital, will be key to sustained success.

News from Japan

by Akihiro Ozaki

This autumn was not good for Garden centre sales, because of the weather conditions. Two big typhoons had direct impact. Normally typhoon season finishes around the end of September, but we were hit by a typhoon in October. And the consumption tax is raised 8% to 10% in October, that's also big reason for it.



Moss is used in Japanese gardens and bonsai. There are about 1,700 varieties growing in Japan, creating many beautiful landscapes throughout Japan. It is also popular as a tourist resource.

In addition to the garden, moss has been actively been commercialized as moss ball and terrarium alone or along with other plants, and it is very

popular as an interior for especially young people.



Awards for the best Dutch Christmas Shows 2019

by Frank van der Heide



This year the awards for the best Dutch Christmas shows in garden centers were presented for the 6th time in a row. With these awards the trade magazine TUINZAKEN and Tuinbranche Nederland want to bring the Dutch Christmas shows to an even higher level than they already are. We also want to motivate the garden centers to build inspiring shows with additional attention for hospitality and sustainability.

At December 4th the garden centers were awarded in the categories Small (Tuincentrum de Biezen, Beek en Donk), Medium (Intratuin Geleen), Large (Tuincentrum Vechtweelde, Maarssen), and Extra Large (Tuincentrum Daniëls, Vlodrop and Intratuin Zoetermeer).

There were also awards for the best Christmas concept (Tuincentrum

Coppelmans), Hospitality (Life & Garden Etten-Leur), Catering (Intratuin Halsteren), and CSR (Avri Bloem- en Tuincentrum, Dongen and Tuincentrum Leurs, Venlo). An independent jury visits and judges all the participating garden centers.

On the website of the [‘Beste Kerstshow’](#) you can find all the pictures of the awards winners.

You can download the after movie of the evening on <https://we.tl/t-j77ku8k0yX>

News from South Africa

by Gerdie Olivier

Our peak trading season, from August through to October has changed to a Summer trade season with the promise of sustained sales over the Festive Season and into the New Year.

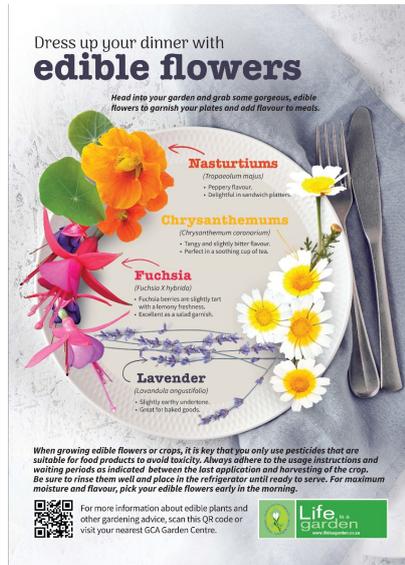


In general trade conditions haven't shown much growth due to economic and weather conditions.

Northern parts of the country have had a dry start to season with rains coming later than usual. There are some areas that still haven't experienced much rain and water restrictions are in place. Other areas have experienced flooding over the past few days following heavy rain.

Our ongoing consumer marketing campaign, Life is a Garden, is now in its tenth year and has become invaluable in communicating to consumers. The campaign focuses on social media channels ([Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#)) to spread our gardening message with our [website](#) remaining the central information portal. To enhance our campaign and give exposure on

consumer level, regular articles are published in print media and POS material is available for retailers to use in their garden centres.



The planning of our IGCA2020 Congress is going very well and we are looking forward to showcasing the best of our association and showing delegates our beautiful country. Up to date we have received 114 bookings. To read more about this event, go to www.igca2020.co.za or contact Gerdie on gerdie@sana.co.za.

With the year ending we want to wish all our Association friends and fellow IGCA members well over the holidays and we look forward to a fantastic 2020 for the green industry.

Switzerland: Rental Christmas trees - A new Trend?

If one doesn't want to buy a Christmas tree, the garden centre Schutz in Filisur offers grown Christmas trees in pots for rent. What started as a small business in 2016 is becoming more and more popular.



by Othmar Ziswiler

This year the number of rental trees rose to several thousand, which are rented out all over Switzerland and will be taken back in the new Year.

And the best of it is that one can hire a family tree at the Gardencenter Schutz. The same tree is delivered every year shortly before Christmas. The family can see the tree grow alongside their children. This is another step towards a society who rather hires than buys (things). This trend is particularly noticeable in Swiss cities.

Update from UK

by Iain Wylie



It has been a very busy year at the UK GCA.

It was a privilege and honour to host the IGCA Congress in Windsor back in September and great to see 220+ delegates from 21 countries around the world here.

As well as visiting a dozen or so great garden centres, the delegates heard talks from experts on garden centre retailing, visited our leading department stores and took in some great visits highlighting history and culture in England.

The group gathered for the Congress photograph at Hatfield House, where Queen Elizabeth I held court in the 16th Century and afterwards viewed the historic gardens before rounding off the day with a mediaeval banquet.



And a big thank you to the UK volunteers who made it all happen.....



The association is in good health we had a record number of new members join us this year and our garden centre membership numbers are at their highest ever.

Members have generally had a good year, despite all the uncertainty within the country. Plant sales remained strong in spring and summer but the wet weather in autumn did dampen gardeners' enthusiasm. Centres are focusing on Christmas trade now and all seems to be going well, although members have a busy few days ahead of them and it will remain to be seen whether customers have bought early or if the trend continues until Christmas Eve.

Preparations are well underway for our annual Conference in January where we expect 300 delegates to attend what will be a great opportunity to network and see speakers that can help them plan for the year ahead.

I would like to wish everyone, on behalf of the UK GCA, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

USA: GrowIt! Releases 2020 Houseplant Report

by Katie Gustafson, Marketing Communication Specialist, AmericanHort

In the past few years, consumers have gone absolutely insane for houseplants. Whether they are buying plants for foliage or flowers, taste or texture, owning and caring for houseplants is a trend that is continuing to grow. Do you know which houseplants are the most popular? What the consumer's greatest challenges are? Or what kind of pots they prefer?



GrowIt! recently released the [2020 Houseplant Report](#) – a wonderful resource filled with consumer insights that can help your independent garden center capitalize on this trend.



The report contains facts, graphs, and data collected from over 900,000 interactions on the GrowIt! app and over 10,000 responses from GrowIt!'s National Indoor Plant Week survey. [Read the report today!](#)



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|LIST:IGCA Admin|

Our mailing address is:

International Garden Centre Association
PO BOX 514
HALFWAY HOUSE, Gp 1685
South Africa

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