

Donzell's closing, recyclable sleeves, the Resilients and help us ladies out



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Donzell's in Akron to Close

Garden center closing announcements are becoming too common, I'm afraid to say. This week, I have the news that Donzell's Flower and Garden Center in Akron, Ohio, is closing after a 66-year run. The news release attributes the closure to the seasonality of the garden center business, with "increasingly quiet" summer and fall seasons and a lack of nearby specialty stores to help increase store traffic. Slow housing starts has also been a contributing factor, the release says.

The release continues, "We, the Donzelli family, love our industry and are grateful for 66 years of serving the surrounding communities. We will miss our many long-time customers; many have been patrons of our business for decades. We plan to help our full-time staff find new positions and some will be relocated to our Cleveland location, Gale's Westlake Garden Center, which the family also owns and operates."

The store will begin the closing process sometime this month. The Waterloo Road property is on the market. You can read further about the closure on Ohio.com.

On Another Note ...

This week, the closure of Behnke Nurseries in Beltsville, Maryland, garnered an article in the *Washington Post*, a publication read coast to coast. Give the article, "Behnke's closure is a reminder of the tight rope that many garden centers face," a [READ](#). Not just because it is incredibly well-written (superb writing, *WaPo!*), but because it shines a light on—and a much-needed directional signal toward—the greatness of the local independent garden center for the folks who are or will become our customers.

Read it and then [reply to me](#) with your thoughts on the surprisingly tender piece.



Are You a “Resilient?”

Do you read [The Shortlist](#) from McKinsey & Co.? There is an insightful piece in the latest edition about how to survive a downturn—and by a lot of accounts from experts, we’re heading in that direction. McKinsey examined more than 1,000 publicly traded companies on their journey back from the 2008 downturn and found that about 10% of them did better than the others. This group of companies is what McKinsey is calling “the resilientists.”

So, how’d they fare better than others? They planned before the economy totally tanked. They cleaned up their balance sheets and were able to acquire assets while others were dumping them. And they cut costs before the economy turned sour while their compadres were still adding costs.

Every market downturn is different, however, and the actions that a company takes to become one of “the resilientists” in the next economic slump are likely not going to be the same. The market, technology and the flexibility for action within a company will be completely different. The common factor between “the resilientists” of then and those of the future will be anticipation.

So, how are you preparing to be a “resilient?” Share your plans with me at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Arett Pottery Showcase

Arett Sales is quickly booking up appointment times for its annual Pottery Showcase. Happening July 15-August 15, the Pottery Showcase will have 100 pallets or more of exclusive pottery styles and offerings from six major pottery companies, including:

- Deroma USA Inc.
- Harbor Gardens (New)
- Jacson Pottery
- Pacific Home & Garden
- Sunshine Ceramica
- Woodlodge (New)

You can see this pottery palooza at Arett’s Moorestown Showroom in Moorestown, New Jersey. But you’ll need to schedule an appointment first. Give them a call at 800-257-8220 or click [HERE](#) to schedule your viewing time now.



It's National Pollinator Week!

If you planned an event, stocked up on pollinator plants or simply put up some posters, kudos to you for remembering, because I totally spaced on the week (it must have been the late arrival of spring here).

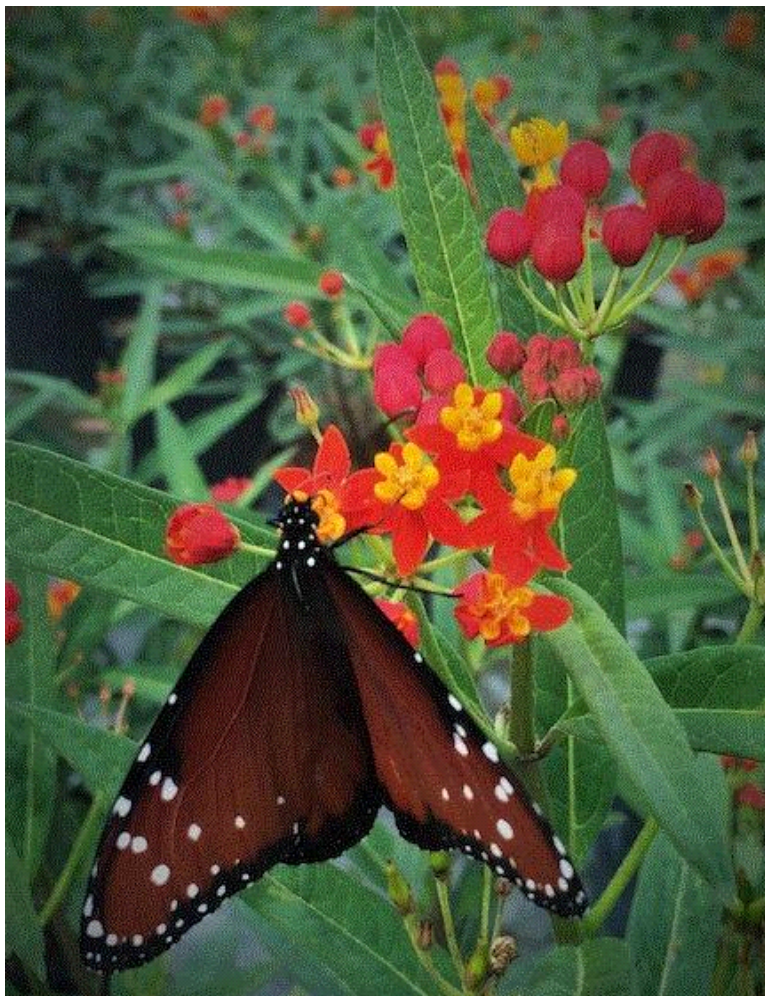
I was tipped off about National Pollinator Week by a press release from the University of New Hampshire, where they recently built a "bee hotel." Pretty snazzy digs, I say!



The bee hotel created at the New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station. Photo courtesy of the [UNH website](#).

But the gist of the [RELEASE](#) was to inform folks about their continuing research on the state's bee diversity and population levels. The long and short of it is that the value of pollination worldwide is more than \$200 billion per year, but the abundance and diversity of pollinators is in decline.

Doing something about pollinator populations isn't as hard or as complicated as one thinks. Arm yourself with knowledge and then take action, like the folks who built that bee hotel did. Or, like my buddy David Bache did. David is the sales director at Garden Industries in Loxahatchee, Florida, where they are restoring a portion of their property as native [mesic flatwood](#). The 2-acre area near the front of their nursery is being cleared and restored to provide much-needed habitat for both native and migratory pollinators. With slash pines, dense low shrubs and a seasonal wet-dry cycle, the area is filled with migratory hummingbirds during the winter. They'll install native *Zamia pumila* along the area's edge to create a waystation for the rare blue Atala Butterfly, whose only food source is the *Zamia*.



The efforts to support local pollinator populations by UNH and Garden Industries are just two of the thousands of projects going on out there. What's your pollinator project? Let's share your idea [HERE](#).

About That Plastic Sleeve Recycling

One of the tricks of my trade is to put information out there to you—maybe something controversial, maybe stated in a somewhat sensational manner—with the purpose of getting experts or people in the know to weigh in on the topic. Joe Persaud, president of Palm Tree Packaging, fell for my little trick and contacted me about the plastic sleeve recycling issue I brought up in last week's *buZZ!*

In short, Joe says Palm Tree offers several recyclable sleeve options, like paper sleeves (which are also biodegradable).



They also offer sleeves made out of the materials that Fox Packaging is using for their fresh market customers—HDPE (recycle code #2) and LDPE (recycle code #4). “HDPE is our most common sleeve material,” Joe informed me. “This is the material that most grocery bags are made of. While it is true that you cannot recycle these in regular municipal facilities, they are still recyclable. It is just a different process.” He offered a [LINK](#) to a site where you can input your zip code and find nearby collection points (typically grocery stores). Garden centers would have way too many recyclable materials to drop off at a grocery store, but maybe your garden center could become a collection point or you could find a more appropriate drop-off facility.



One of Palm Tree Packaging's recyclable HDPE sleeves.

The recyclable sleeve issue came up in regard to sleeves being used for hanging basket transportation. Joe says that a lot of the HDPE sleeves they sell are for 10- and 12-in. baskets, although they do stock a variety of sizes and can also do custom. The LDPE is more of a custom item, he says, but they can definitely make them for hanging baskets.

Joe reminded me that the sleeve is an effort to find a solution to a transportation issue—allowing more plants per truck and thereby reducing the carbon footprint of that crop. And a protected plant at the end of the truck's journey is more saleable than one that looks roughed up and would eventually be thrown away, resulting in wasted inputs.

"I agree we do not have a perfect system at the moment," Joe wrote. "I personally think a lot can be done to improve the recycling efforts all around. It is possible to recycle all the products we make in the proper channels. A lot of work needs to be done to improve the waste channels."

Spiffy Websites

In the age of social media, are websites still relevant? We know they are, but why? Well, I Googled that question and found this [POST](#) on NeonHive. You should read it, by the way, as it gives you four reasons to not neglect your website. But here's the short answer quote to my question: "Why should you part with your hard-earned cash to build a new website when you can make a Facebook page in an evening? The answer is simple. Your social platform simply acts as

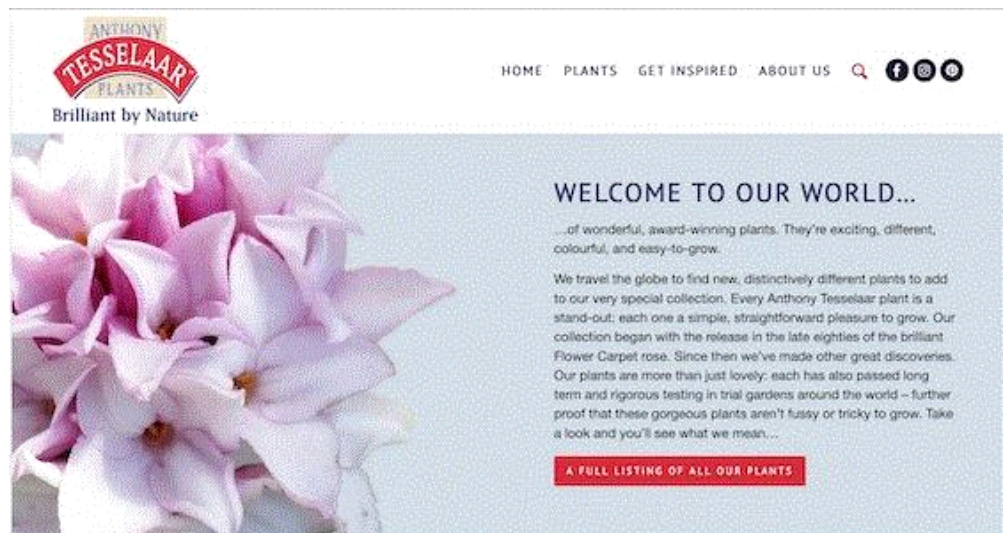
a funnel to your true home in this digital world; your website.”

With that said, I have two industry website news items for your consideration:

National Garden Bureau. NGB.org was named a Gold Award Winner in the 2019 Hermes Creative Awards. This is an international competition, people! NGB’s site was created by Verve to be a clean, modern and image-driven site that can easily be updated on a daily basis. “The Verve team was amazing in helping us design and build a new site that is easy for home gardeners to navigate, yet presents all the important information we want to provide site visitors,” said NGB’s executive director Diane Blazek. “The flexibility of our site has enabled us to create new programs and benefits for our members that in turn, provide inspiring garden ideas for consumers that drives them to invest in our industry’s products.”



Anthony Tesselaar Plants. They’ve just redesigned the Tesselaar.com site, allowing for easier navigation from both computers and mobile devices. That is so key nowadays! Just two or three clicks can get you anywhere you need to go on the site. Each plant page allows visitors to click through to Tesselaar’s photos on Flickr, which growers and retailers can download and use for themselves. And the new site also includes more than 20 “Get Inspired” articles on pollinators, container gardening, etc. that you folks can use for your own newsletter/social media/website purposes.



Webinar Alert!

Just a reminder about the Ball Publishing webinar happening TOMORROW, **Ellepots + HydraFiber = Young Plant Success**. This 1-hour Ball Publishing webinar takes place **Thursday, June 20, 1:00 p.m. Eastern**. The Blackmore Company's Dr. Bill Argo has studied pH and nutritional management of container-grown crops for quite a while and he knows his stuff. In this webinar, he will share his research on wood fiber substrates and will also offer guidelines for growing in Ellepots.

Bill will be joined by Daniel Norden, Senior R&D Manager and Technical Specialist Manager for Profile Products, who will share findings from university and grower trials that used HydraFiber Advanced Substrate. Chris Beytes will host. Register at www.growertalks.com/webinars.

Help Some Ladies Out

Those ladies would be managing editor extraordinaire Jen Polanz and myself, as we prepare a few articles for *Green Profit's* upcoming August issue (omg, August already??). We are working on a couple of stories for the magazine's gift-themed issue—and we are sure you have the information we are looking for. The information we are in search of includes:

Holiday Gift Bundling. We are looking for ways you bundle products together for gift-giving occasions, making it easier for customers to grab a gift and check that person/task off their lists. Like a garden tote filled with tools, or a stocking filled with a bottle of wine and a garden-themed opener. We want your go-to ideas for this one.

Last-Minute Gift Ordering. Vendors, I'm sure you've dealt with garden retailers needing to fill last-minute gifting and holiday orders. Do you offer last-minute deals? Quick shipping? Are your products "Made in the USA," so have quick-and-easy delivery? If you have products, policies or procedures that make stocking the quick-turn gift department easier, we want to know about it.

For the Holiday Gift Bundling story, shoot your ideas to Jen at jpolanz@ballpublishing.com. For the Last-Minute Gift Ordering story, I'll take your thoughts at ewells@ballpublishing.com. And thanks in advance for your help!

Heading to Nashville next week for the GCA Summer Tour. Hope to see you there! Meanwhile, comments, questions, suggestions? Drop me a line at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Ellen Wells
Editor-at-Large
Green Profit

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