

The Fall Event, bentos, romance, webinars and 10-cent beer



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025

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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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On to the Tour
Botanical Bento
A Fine Romance
Webinar Alert!
Another Webinar Alert!
10-Cent Beer

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Another Inspiring Fall Event

The following two items come from my amazing colleague Jen Polanz, who attended the Garden Center Group Fall Event a few weeks back. She has such great stuff to share with you!

The last week of September I hopped on a plane to head south to Raleigh, North Carolina, for this year's Garden Center Group Fall Event. Every year the location changes (I'll tell you where it is next year at the end!) and this year's location featured five very different garden centers on tour day.

Before I get to the tour, I want to commend the service providers and Danny and Karen Summers at the Group for the hard work they put in to this event. It's a sold-out conference, and it provides equal amounts of time to learn from service providers as well as to network and learn from your peers. From what I hear every year, sometimes you just need to talk with someone else who understands what your business is like.

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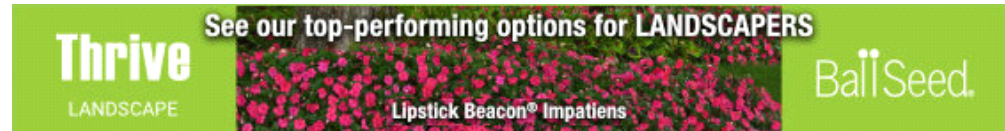
PLANT PRIDE & PROSPER



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Just some of the topics covered included how to set yourself apart from everyone else by providing a unique and memorable experience ([learn more about keynote speaker Dan Gingiss here](#), and check out his book!), creating an exceptional culture starting with onboarding, looking to the very near future with the impact of AI (closer than you think!), and multiple panels with retail owners and managers who stand out in specific areas and how they do it.

Dan, who by the way, made me cry (in a good way, and I wasn't the only one!), conducted a really fascinating focus group with multiple customers of the retailers who were on the tour. One of the customers said they would like more education, to be able to think like a pro. I don't know if you have many customers who are like that, but it got me to thinking that a Garden Pro Program might attract a few people who are willing to pay to get "trained up" like a pro.



On to the Tour

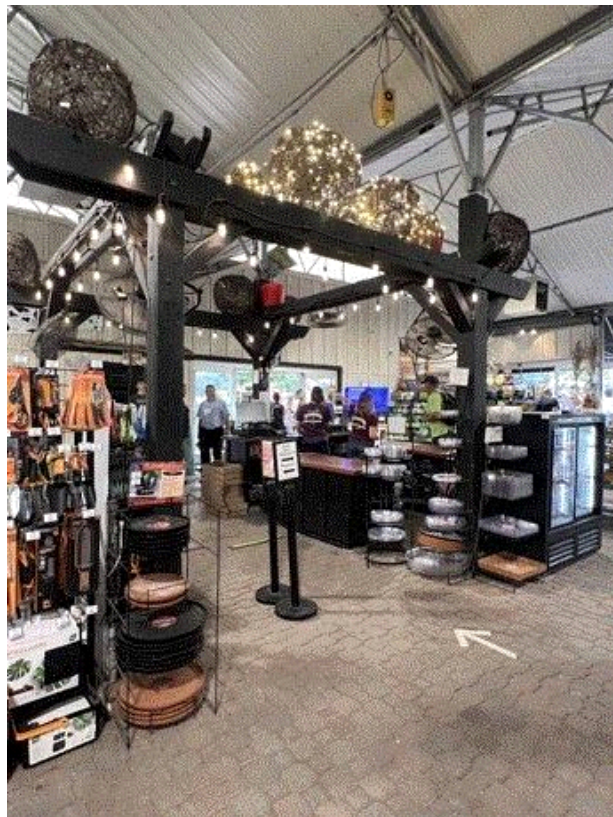
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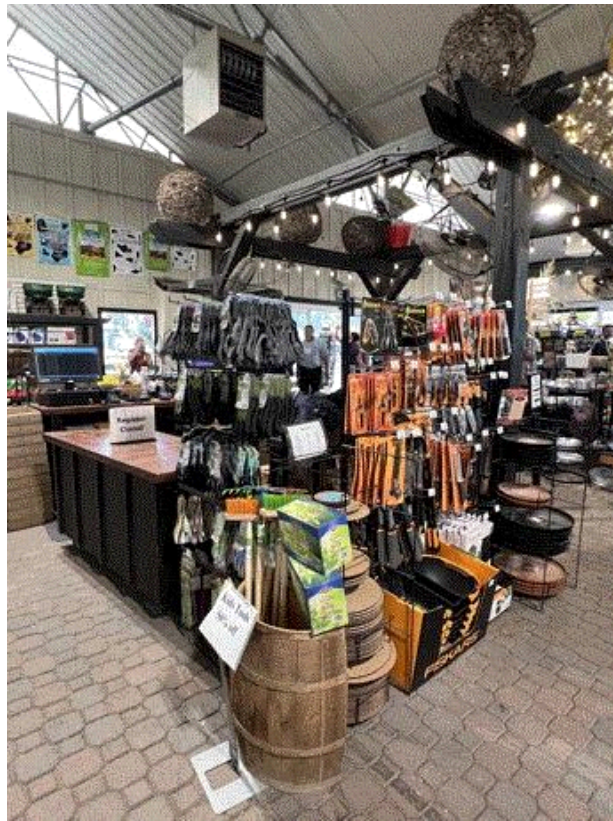
I'm only going to highlight one stop here and I'll get more over to Ellen in the coming weeks. There were some really cool ideas at each stop, and it was probably the most unique tour I've been on because they were all so different. Our first stop, and the one that really won my horticulture-loving heart, was [Homewood Nursery & Garden Center](#). Nestled amidst towering pine trees, this serene shopping experience was a real delight. Their message, "Rooted In Raleigh," was clear and concise, and you can tell they know who they are and what their mission is.





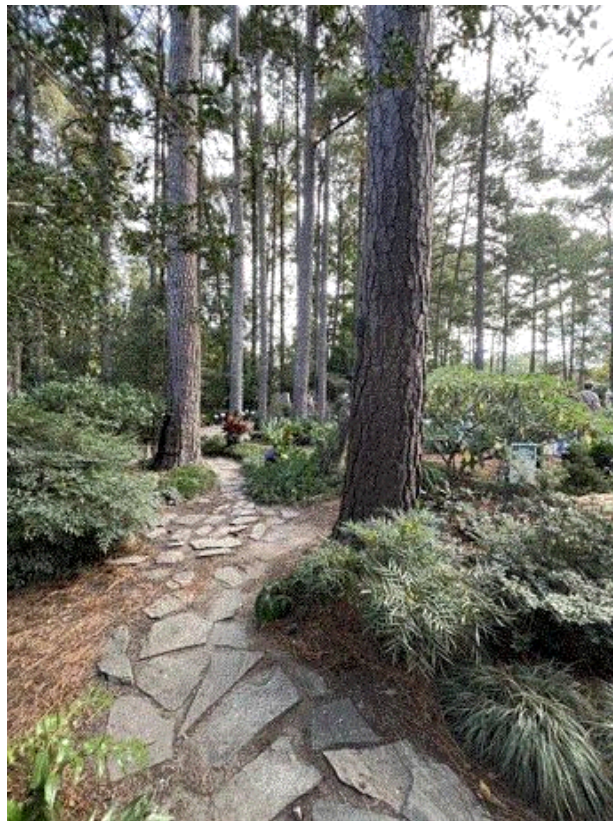
The retail areas were clean, clear and easy to shop. I especially liked their checkout areas, which had festively decorated pergolas that made them easy to spot, and they were decked out with great impulse buys like tools, gloves, drip trays, beverages and snacks. Arrows on the floor clearly marked traffic patterns.





The outdoor displays were peaceful and very shoppable with clear signage and inspo. I could have stayed here for most of the day. And who doesn't want to follow this path?





Turning indoors, the Potting & Design Center was a highlight, as were some of the designs around it showing off their skills. Signage continued to rock inside, as did the teaser for what's to come at Christmas, which are the beautiful poinsettias they specialize in.





Speaking of teasers, I promised I would reveal the next location. You might already know this, but if you don't, get ready to rock it out in Cleveland! Can't wait!

Thanks, JP! I love your idea of a Garden Pro Program! As someone who has become somewhat proficient in the kitchen because I cook or create something food-related nearly every day, may I suggest a Garden Pro Series where participants do the things and get their hands dirty, perhaps on a weekly basis? And maybe even in a greenhouse garden before the growing season begins? Practice makes perfect—or at least more confident.



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Botanical Bento

Speaking of gardening workshops, the next trend from Garden Media Group's 2026 Garden Trends Report is one that you could turn into a hands-on workshop appropriate for when gardeners are stuck indoors. The trend is the Botanical Bento.

You might be most familiar with the term “bento” from having it as a lunchtime choice at your local Japanese restaurant. The food-type of bento box typically takes the form of a curated assemblage of noshables, each of them separate, but visually harmonizing as a whole meal. Give bento a horticultural instead of culinary twist and you have yourself a botanical bento.



The Garden Trends Reports explains the pleasure of a bento box this way: “Everything has its place. Every element is curated. It’s portable pleasure, packaged with care. That’s what today’s consumer craves. Not just ‘little treats,’ but lovely moments made accessible. It’s not random. It’s art. This is the antidote to doomscrolling, and brands that offer organized delight stand out. Can you create the same feeling for a garden in a box?”

Creating a botanical bento box would be a fun houseplant workshop, and could be the culminating activity in your Houseplant Garden Pro program. Thoughts on how that can be done? Drop me a note about it [HERE](#). If you would like to read the rest of Garden Media Group’s 2026 Garden Trends Report, you can find it at this [LINK](#).



A Fine Romance

Romance is in. That’s according to [THIS ARTICLE](#) from the folks at Marketing Brew. In fact, romance-related shows and books and even TikToks are so popular nowadays that even brands such as Doritos are getting in on the romance action—although in Doritos’ case it might be better labeled as boorish.

What’s driving a trend toward romance? Nic Climer, the executive creative director of the marketing agency Rapp, explains it as such: “The world is on fire for all of us. So, I think the thing we are all trying to do right now, and we’re all trying to attach to, is to feel something real.”



Plants and romance go hand in hand. A secret rendezvous in a tropicals-filled conservatory? On point. A romantic dinner with a floral bouquet gracing the table? Absolutely. Flowers are instrumental in a budding relationship (pun intended). Combine the two in some Jane Austenian way for your customers whose hearts go pitter-patter.

Already doing it? Share what you've done [HERE](#). I'll be waiting with bated breath.



Webinar Alert!

The folks of digital workplace solutions agency [BoomerWrangle LLC](#)—John and Souny Kennedy—are inviting you to their upcoming “Garden Center to E-Commerce Powerhouse” webinar. The webinar features one of their top influencers and program advocates, Allie Bast of Bast Brothers Garden Center. Join BoomerWrangle and Allie on October 20 at 1 p.m. Eastern to hear how Bast Brothers has successfully transformed their garden center into a thriving online business.

During the webinar you'll learn how Bast has made the shift to online sales, what systems and processes have supported their growth and what challenges and lessons they've encountered as they went online. In other words, learn from their missteps!

And if you're a supplier, you should join in on the “Garden Center to E-Commerce Powerhouse” session, too. During it you'll understand how supporting IGCs through inventory, fulfillment and partnership is a win-win for online growth—for you both!

You'll want to take a look at how Allie Bast has set the e-commerce system up for Bast Brothers, so head over to [BastBrothers.com](#) to see it in action.

Register for the 1 p.m. Eastern October 20 webinar [HERE](#).

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A Second Webinar Alert!

This one is from the folks at America In Bloom and it is meant to help you develop a year-round container program for your community.

Join in on Tuesday, October 14 at Noon Eastern to learn how a well-planned container program can transform your community by bringing color, charm and a welcoming atmosphere to where the public needs it most—downtown streets, parks and gathering spaces of all sorts—and in all seasons.

You may not be associated with your community yet, or perhaps you may be saying, “Well, I’ve already got a gig with the community.” Whichever the case, you can learn how to create a new program or even improve the program you currently run. This webinar will explain how to:

- Plan seasonal transitions that fit your climate, budget and volunteer capacity
- Choose plants, foliage and décor to make each display unique and appealing
- Engage volunteers, businesses and residents in supporting and sustaining the program
- Build a system that works for your community all year long

Creating common beauty is the foundation of creating community. This webinar, presented by Castle Rock, Washington, beautification cheerleader Nancy Chennault, will tap into her years of hands-on experience and community-driven passion. Did we mention it’s free of charge? It is! Register for it [HERE](#).

10-Cent Beer

Looking for a way to lure folks to your store? Former *Green Profit* columnist Judy Sharpton once wrote about the power of the “\$1 beer!” sign—something as simple as that to draw attention and possible customers. Well, a brewery in East Berkeley, California, is discounting that \$1 by 90%, offering half-pints of beer for just 10 cents.

Now, anyone will tell you you’ll soon lose your shirt at those prices. That’s why [Triple Rock Brewing offers the 10-cent brews](#) for a limited time only—to be specific, from 5:10 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. every day.



There are other rules, too:

- The bartender picks which beer is on promotion each day.
- You have to present an actual dime—no change is given, no taps of a credit card, no

double nickels—just an old-fashioned FDR-headed dime.

- You can have just one beer at the special price.

Triple Rock Brewing's general manager said of the offer, "Everybody just comes in and gets to meet each other. People get their half pint and then after they're done with their half pint, they kind of linger around and go, 'Oh, maybe we'll get a full one.'"

Am I suggesting you apply for a liquor license and offer beer for 10 cents? No. But maybe there's something else you can offer for super-cheap for a super-limited time on certain days of the week. Not just to garner sales, but to draw neighbors out of their homes and into that couch-comfortable third space where they can find community.

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, etc., drop me a line if you'd like at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Ellen Wells
Senior Editor-at-Large
Green Profit

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