

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, Peter Moran Join Hall of Fame

Chris Beytes

Two more floriculture notables were inducted into SAF's Floriculture Hall of Fame during the organization's recent convention. They are Bobbi Ecker-Blatchford, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, and former SAF CEO Peter Moran. Bobbi passed away in 2015; her daughter, Cyndi, and son, Bruce, accepted the award on her behalf.

As a young girl, Bobbi worked in her family's floral and greenhouse operation in Waverly, Iowa. She went on to start her own company, The Flora Pros, in Chicago. During her 60-plus-year career, she became a noted speaker, commentator, award-winning floral designer and a consultant to manufacturers, growers and distributors in the U.S., Canada and South America.

She was recognized and honored by many industry groups, including the American Institute of Floral Designers, International Floral Expo and the Michigan Floral Association, which inducted her into its prestigious Hall of Fame in 2012. The Society of American Florists recognized her with its 1997 Tommy Bright Award. In 2010, United Flowers, a division of Preesman, named a rose, 'High & Icon—Bobbi Ecker,' in her honor.

As for Peter, he joined SAF in 1985 and became SAF's executive vice president and CEO in 1991. During the next 26 years, he oversaw several significant changes at the association, including the implementation of a strategic plan that shifted SAF from a segment-driven organization to one guided by its key objectives of providing government advocacy, business guidance and consumer marketing.

Peter also led several efforts to put flowers in the consumer spotlight, including his oversight of SAF's involvement in coordinating the floral décor for four presidential inaugurations.

More recently, Peter led the SAF board in leveraging the association's headquarters, which the industry purchased in 1983, for the benefit and future of the association: In April 2016 SAF sold the building and purchased more cost-efficient space less than 2 miles away in Alexandria.

"Peter's broad outlook helped SAF each time it faced a new challenge," said former SAF President Bob Williams. "Peter always had the longest view in the room. Not the only view, but the longest."

Charlie Hall receives Paul Ecke, Jr. Award

Also, our good friend and occasional GrowerTalks contributor Dr. Charlie Hall received the 2018 SAF Paul Ecke, Jr. Award, which recognizes exemplary devotion to profession, industry and community.

Charlie, Professor & Ellison Chair in the Department of Horticultural Sciences at Texas A&M University, is an

internationally recognized expert in the production and marketing of floral industry crops and is well-regarded across academia for his research and teaching. Additionally, his presentations on strategic management, market situations, cost accounting and financial analysis have become “must-attend” events for floral industry members.

Marvin Miller, Ph.D., of Ball Horticultural Company, a fellow ag economist and a past recipient of the award, introduced Charlie.

“Say the name ‘Dr. Charlie Hall,’ and experienced industry members know what to expect,” he said. “Deeply researched information on floral industry crops and trends in production and marketing. Thoughtful analysis of wide-ranging economic data. Humor, high energy—and a notable dash of passion for a subject, the green industry, Hall has spent his life improving.”

Charlie serves as chief economist for AmericanHort and is an honorary lifetime member of the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association. In addition, he has received TNLA’s Award for Outstanding Service to the Nursery Industry. He is also an honorary lifetime member of the Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association and a member of the organization’s Hall of Fame. **GT**