

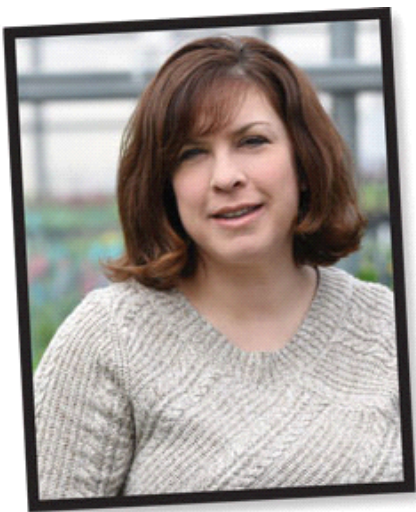
GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

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Math Evasion

Jennifer Zurko



JENNIFER ZURKO

I had to laugh when I read my boss' column for this issue. The story about his dad asking him to calculate the mileage during a family road trip harkened back to my own traumatic math-related memory.

When I was in elementary school, I traveled with a friend and her family to Wisconsin Dells. Her oldest brother insisted on asking us to figure out how many miles we had driven and how many we had to go based on the mile markers. I eventually feigned sleep to escape the horrors of having to think about numbers. I'm not above playing dead to avoid doing math.

If I had to run a business, I'd have to hire someone to handle the books. And it's because I'm horrible at math. Ergo, I'm horrible at budgeting.

If I had to calculate inputs, expected shrink percentages and merchandising costs, I'd be in trouble. Good thing I don't have a greenhouse operation. I'd end up on the cover of this fine publication with

a headline like: "Greenhouse Operation Goes Out of Business After One Year—Owner Blames Math."

But if I DID own a greenhouse, I'd be thankful for industry experts like Dr. Charlie Hall, who helps us crunch the numbers and provides us with all the latest economic info.

This month, Charlie wrote our cover story about the best way to price your products. The focus is on the pay-by-scan system, but every wholesaler and retailer can use his tips and examples to figure out what their "true costs" are. Everyone who runs a business in this industry should read his article.

If you're into numbers and Charlie's piece wasn't enough to satisfy your mathematical fix, Paul Fisher and his team calculated the ROI on using LEDs.

As in every June issue, we have the essays from our three Young Grower Award finalists. Make sure you join us in Columbus at the Unplugged event during Cultivate to see who wins.

We also have the latest on cutting sticker machines and what killed the retractable-roof greenhouse. Hint: For once, math wasn't the culprit.

As I always tell my 10-year-old daughter, we all have our strengths; you just need to realize what they are and embrace them. Mine was reading and writing, which I was pretty sure I was good at in fourth grade, but it was official

when I got my ACT scores back during junior year of high school. I got a 27 overall on it—which is great; the national average is a 21. Scoring in the low 30s in the Reading and English sections helped, but then when my mom saw I scored a 16 in the Math section, she looked at me and said, “Well ... at least we know you won’t be a math major.”

And I’ve been avoiding math ever since. **GT**