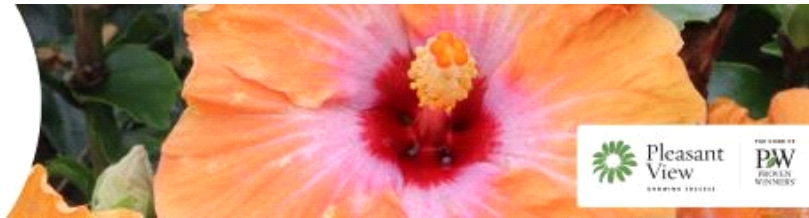


# Back from Cultivate with plants, products and IGC ideas

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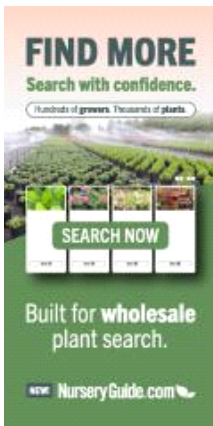
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## Green Profit's buzz!

Retail news from inside and outside the green industry

### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- Back From Columbus
- Retailers' Choice Plant Picks
- Aquatics!
- Tropical Picks
- Figs!
- News from Griffin
- Three Ideas from Bremecs
- Condolences ...



## Back From Columbus

We at Ball Publishing are rested and recovered after four to five days of traveling, touring, talking, walking and learning during Cultivate'18 in Columbus, Ohio. It's too soon to have official numbers of attendees, but I'd say it was on par with last year or maybe a little more. The energy was good overall, and the folks I spoke to—vendors and shoppers alike—mentioned they had a good show. Traffic on Tuesday was a bit slow but maybe everyone was getting out of Dodge before that line of severe storms hit the East Coast. (Yes, I was delayed yet again ...)

But enough chitchat. Let's get on with what you're really interested in: which amazing under-35 garden retailer won the Dümmer Orange/Green Profit Young Retailer Award, which we announced at Cultivate's Unplugged event on Monday evening. And the winner is ...





... Amanda Bruce! Amanda is the general manager of Cedar Rim Nursery out in Langley, British Columbia. You'll get to know all about her and her family's business in the September issue of *Green Profit*. The judges had great things to say about Amanda and what's she's accomplished at Cedar Rim.

And they also had great things to say about our other two finalists, Brian Stankevich (Homewood Nursery & Garden Center, right) and Matt Webster (Dambly's Garden Center, left). In fact, judge and *Green Profit* columnist Bill McCurry enthusiastically encouraged them to apply for next year's YRA.

What about the competition on the grower end of things? Good question! The winner of the Young Grower Award is Evan Barrington (middle), head grower/pest control and irrigation manager of May Nursery in Havana, Florida. He bested Abby Bruce of Costa Farms (left) and Rajvir Prasher of DeVry Greenhouses (right). Again, a superb group of talented young folks. Congrats to them all.



Get your thinking caps on for whom you'll nominate next year. It's never too early to start campaigning on their behalf!



## Retailers' Choice Plant Picks

It's become Cultivate tradition to gather on Monday afternoon with a group of retailers and the vendors who receive their top nods for the Retailers' Choice Awards. After walking the show floor myself, it's helpful to see what I missed and what cool things they spotted. Thanks for making my job easier, folks!

There were 15 or so awards given, but I'll mention the plant winners this week and save the hardgoods for next.

We've mentioned Ball Ingenuity's Canary Wings begonia here in our Spring Trials coverage. The Retailers' Choice judges loved it, too. Think Dragon Wing but with a chartreuse leaf, a slightly smaller stature and for full shade (no sun). Brightens up a dark corner, for sure.



Hort Couture wasn't at Spring Trials so this was the first the industry got to see of their new items for 2019. And the retailer judges liked what they saw, giving Hort Couture three awards for their new Under the Sea coleus additions (five new this year); for the Edibliss kale line, which is both pretty enough for ornamental use but cooks up fabulously, too (HC actually added more than 30 edibles this year); and for Glamouflage Pink Lemonade petunia, a hot-pink flower with that variegated leaf (not pictured).





Monrovia's Sunbelievable sunflower is an excellent choice for Retailers' Choice. It's vegetative, so it doesn't produce seed, resulting in non-stop flowering. They say one plant produces 1,000 flowers over the season! They also received an award for Seaside Serenade Fire Island. It's one of their new tetraploid *H. macrophylla*, which gives it incredibly sturdy stems.



Here's Sunbelievable with Seaside Serenade Fire Island in the back to the right.

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## Aquatics!

Continuing with the Retailers' Choice Awards, Netherland Bulb Co. has come out with aquatics pre-potted in floating containers. Talk about making pond planting easy! The floating containers can be "islands" within a larger in-ground pond or could be plunked down into water-filled porch containers for use in smaller applications. What I liked was the idea of having a pre-planted mixed container of aquatic plants all set to go.



We've talked about Proven Winners' Amazel Basil during Spring Trials. Not only is it downy mildew resistant (they claim, and I haven't seen BDM on my sample yet) but it's also slow to flower, allowing the plant and all that good flavor to last longer through the season.



We had the pleasure of hearing from John Gray, the Australian breeder behind Suntory's new line of fragrant roses, during the Retailers Choice presentation. "Roses for noses," John called them. This man loves breeding roses and it shows in his varieties. On top of breeding, John also runs a garden center.



The last two are from SynRG, the collaboration of the growers Overdevest Nurseries, Prides Corner Farms, Saunders Brothers, Inc. and Willoway Nurseries. Both are sterile barberries out of UConn called WorryFree Crimson Cutie and Lemon Glow. Sterile barberries—that's a big deal since they are labeled as invasive in, what? 19 states (feel free to correct me!)? Having sterile options will bring a popular shrub option back to those states.



## Tropical Picks

I went to a couple of educational sessions during Cultivate, one of them being "2019 Plant Trends" by Dan Johnston of Tri-State Foliage, a Cincinnati-based wholesale supplier of tropical foliage for the interiorscape industry. He was a wealth of information! His wasn't a short list of what's hot, either. I wanted to share with you garden center folks three of Dan's plant picks that I think might be right for retail. Keep in mind, Dan's overall message was "what's old is new," so you may recognize some of these plants.

**Cinnamon Tree.** This is one of those oldies that is making a comeback (but it's not really a cinnamon tree, I think we concluded). It's a good alternative for ficus and grows 6-8 inches per year. There's not a lot of production but there should be.



***Ficus lyrata* Little Fiddle.** It's the smaller, bush form of the ever-popular fiddle leaf fig. And I believe it's more available, too.



**Sansevieria Sayuri.** With the whitish gray-green leaves, it's not your typical sansevieria and could be a nice item for houseplant fans looking for something different.



And one I don't have a good photo of is *Ficus benghalensis* Audrey: broader leaves, a bit lighter in color, less glossy and with an "any which way" growth habit. I Googled it to check the name and found it to be on *Architectural Digest's* list of top houseplants for 2018. Dan's right—it's popular!

## Figs!

A few weeks ago in my *Tropical Topics* e-newsletter, I mentioned that figs have become the latest culinary trend, one that tropical and even houseplant growers could take advantage of. I'm happy to say I found proof of this at Cultivate! And in aisles, not at Martini across the street.

Little Miss Figgy is a dwarf fig in the Southern Living Plant Collection. They say it's a bit more cold tolerant than similar figs but is just as prolific. Even a plant this size has quite a few fruits. And gosh, it's pretty, too.



I then saw Ty Strode of Agri-Starts, the tissue culture facility down in Apopka, Florida. They've cleaned up and are offering 16 different varieties of figs that are hardy from south Florida to the Olympian Washington area. What's cool about them is they give you a good-quality early crop (called the Breba crop). Ty says it gives northern growers (Zone 6) of these figs a fighting chance for a good crop rather than depending on the main fall crop, which for southern climes is excellent quality and of larger fruit size.

See? Figs *and* fig trees are in!

## News from Griffin

I ran into Tracey Gorrell of Griffin Greenhouse Supplies. She said she and the rest of the company are really excited that the company, which is headquartered in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, is stretching itself and its distribution clear across the country. They'll open their new facility in Salem, Oregon, in September.

This, their sixteenth facility, will stock hard goods for growers and nurseries, along with select retail products for distribution. They are on track for September, but Tracey says since their fifteenth facility in Aurora, Colorado, opened ahead of schedule in early 2017, this one may, too. They've had reps out on the West Coast and so won't be jumping into the market without some customers already interested. So if you're out in the Pacific Northwest, you will have one more option.

## Three Ideas from Bremecs

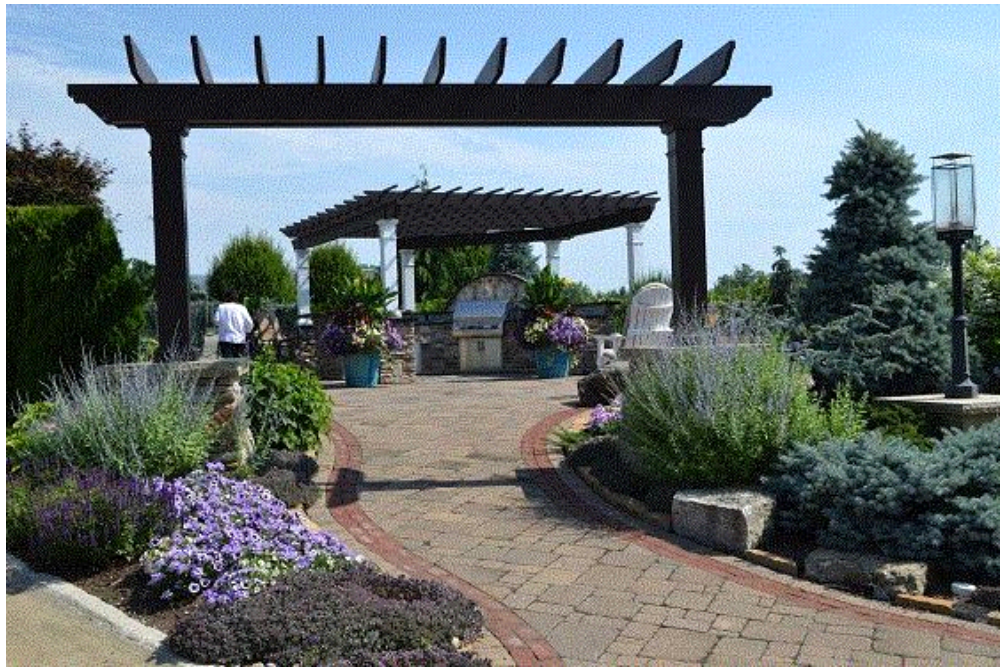
*Colleague Jen Polanz was on this year's Cultivate'18 retail tour and provides a few details below.*

On this year's Cultivate'18 retail tour, I had the pleasure of being a bus co-captain, which I immediately abused in order to teach my out-of-town guests our OH-IO chant. We had a long ride up to three Bremecs locations in the Cleveland area, all of which proved to be very different stops: one rural, one suburban and one urban. An unusual mix for one company. These three photos are all from the Chesterland location, not because the other two didn't have great ideas to share, only because space constrains us to a few highlights.

**Selfie Station:** Bremecs runs a Gambler's Sale every year where customers shop then spin a wheel to win a discount between 20 to 50% off their entire purchase (some exclusions apply). But they go the extra mile to do it up during this sale with selfie stations like this one and pictures and a celebration when someone hits the hard-to-spin 50% off.



**Show It Off:** Bremecs now has two display areas at the Chesterland store to show off what the landscape design build segment can do, as well as to highlight mature plants and shrubs in the landscape. It goes a long way for creating inspiration and showing what truly can be done.



**Make It Easy:** Bremecs is challenged with a tough grade at the larger location, and they combat that by door-to-door service. They have perennials, trees and shrubs in the main shopping area by the parking lot, but if someone would like to see more they are happy to take them in a golf cart down a slope to more selection. They will shop with you and help you find the best product to load onto the golf cart and return to the registers (I know this personally—thanks, Kent!).



Tune in to future issues of *Green Profit* to see more ideas from all three Bremecs locations!

## Condolences

We received word that Maggie Geraldine (better known as Jerri) Coleman Pike passed away on

July 18 following a brief illness. She was 86. Jerri and her husband William "Pete" Pike founded the Atlanta, Georgia-based Pike Nurseries in 1958. She was "the pillar of the family," her [obituary](#) says, doing what she could to ensure the success of the family business while also raising four kids. Along with all of the good work, donations and religious activities she and her husband participated in, the obituary also says one of the things she'll be remembered for is her "dry sense of humor." You don't see that written much in a remembrance. I would have liked her, for sure.



The family will receive friends on Saturday, July 21, 3:00-5:00 p.m. at Tom M. Wages Snellville Chapel, Snellville, Georgia. The Celebration of Life Service will be held on Sunday, July 22, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. at Smoke Rise Baptist Church, Stone Mountain, Georgia.

Have any comments, questions or suggestions? Email me at [ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen".

Ellen Wells  
Editor-at-Large  
[Green Profit](#)

**This week's BuZZ! was sent to 21,191 loyal readers!**

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A promotional banner for the FarWest Portland 2025 industry trade show. The background is purple. On the left, the text reads "The **BIGGEST** and **GREENEST** industry trade show in the West." in white and green. In the center is a stylized green leaf graphic. On the right, the text "FARWEST PORTLAND 2025" is in white. At the bottom, a green bar contains the text "AUGUST 26-28 REGISTER NOW ▶" in white.