

All Things Poinsettia, Including a Bad Movie



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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- A day of Wisconsin poinsettias
 - K&W Greenery
 - Felly's Greenhouse
 - Klein's Floral
 - Christmas Greens on Display
- Two green thumbs down
Poinsettias and ...
... anthuriums
Finally ...



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Consider this my annual Poinsettia Edition of *Acres Online*, where I wax poetic over my love of painted poinsettias (I know, I know, heresy, but stick with me) and talk about some other holiday trends and ideas I've seen lately. Such as some really pretty greens and a really bad TV movie featuring the owner of a "poinsettia farm." If there's any general news to report, I'll do that, too—this IS, after all, allegedly, a *newsletter*.

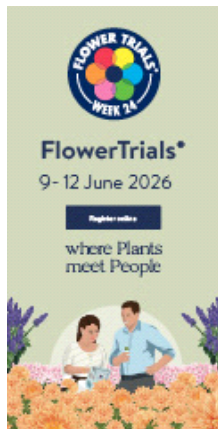
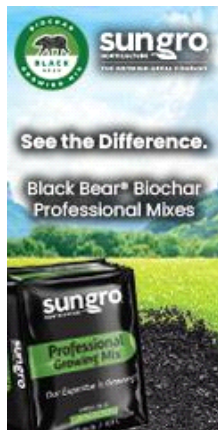
A day of Wisconsin poinsettias

Laurie and I decided to drive north a week or so ago to visit some retailers in Wisconsin, in part because I wanted to hit my favorite poinsettia painter, K&W Greenery in Janesville, where co-owner Chris Williams always does a gallery-worthy job, and because it's a good excuse for Sunday breakfast at Cracker Barrel.

Chris wasn't on hand when we stopped in at his family's place, but that's okay; customers were, and they were oohing and ahing up a storm? In the first few minutes, I encountered two clusters of female shoppers, both of whom said of the confetti-speckled poinsettia specimen, "How do they do that?" (Naturally, I took the time to explain.)



"How do they do that?" everyone asks. These ladies bought one.





There was none of this “that’s just wrong!” business I so often hear from horticultural purists. They think painted poinsettias are cool ... and at least one blue one went out the door while I was there. As I’ve always said about painted poinsettias: Love ‘em or hate ‘em, they get folks talking about poinsettias, and that can’t be a bad thing.

As for prices: \$26.99 for painted 6 in. vs \$17.99 for regular 6 in.



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What I liked most about K&W, however, was the overall feel of the Christmas display, with various vignettes set up to make you slow down and enjoy the flowers—which included white hydrangeas amongst the red poinsettias. A vintage sleigh was set up for Christmas photos (being made use of, above).



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Felly's Greenhouse, Madison

North an hour in Madison, we dropped in on Felly's Greenhouse, which is as old-school as it gets. Which I like! It reminds me of the businesses I used to shop in and sell to during my days as a poinsettia grower. Felly's won't win any modern design prizes from *Architectural Digest*, but they have loads of good quality flowers and foliage in their greenhouse to satisfy the gift-giver and the plant geek.



The poinsettia crop was “out through the garage” according to the signage. There we found florist-quality plants and florist-quality prices: \$29.95 for a 7 1/2 in. two-plant and \$44.95 for an 8 1/2 in. triple. The main red variety was Prestige, according to the grower who was on duty.



Klein's Floral, Greenhouse & Gifts, Madison



I was told by my friend Jeff Warschauer of Nexus that Klein's had a brand new facility, so we checked it out. Impressive! The big Nexus greenhouse has a sunken floor, so it doesn't seem as tall from the outside as it does from the inside. It's attached to a modern new sales building.

They just moved in, so there's plenty of space left to fill and merchandise, but the greenhouse was full of poinsettias and green plants.

In poinsettias, I was impressed by the eclectic selection. On one table (below), we saw Holly Point, Winter Rose Red and White, Golden Glo, and Princettia Hot Pink. Price for a 6 1/2 in., including pot cover and bow, was \$19.99.



Klein's also had a big display of painted poinsettias (\$24.99) and also some Golden Glo in Green Bay Packers pots. Klein's offered a giant tree of red poinsettias with a bench at the base as a photo spot.



Speaking of which, I think of these holiday photo stations as Christmas card photo opportunities. But in this day and age, maybe we should think of them as Instagram spots, too, and provide the appropriate signage—to show our hipness level.



Christmas greens on display

Laurie works for Clesen Brothers, and they sell a ton of fresh greens, so she's always got spruce tops and garlands and wreaths on her mind. She also creates some holiday planters for customers and is always on the lookout for creative combinations of greens and accents. We spotted these very nice examples on our trip:



A pair of beautiful urns in green and silver grace the entry to Klein's new store.



These smaller pots at Klein's pack in a lot of style for \$100.

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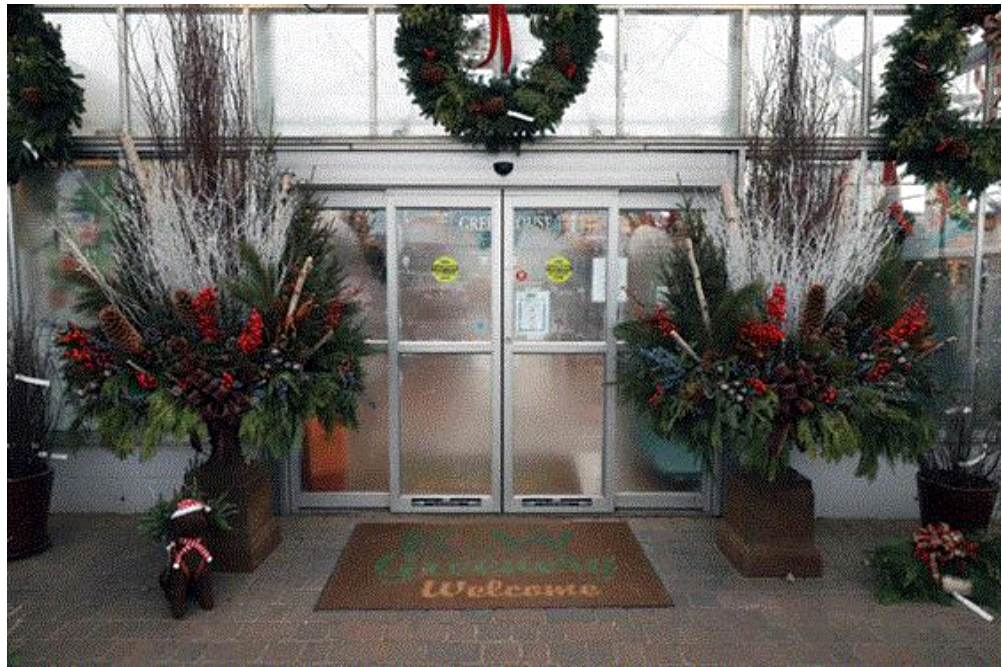
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Greenery at K&W Greenery



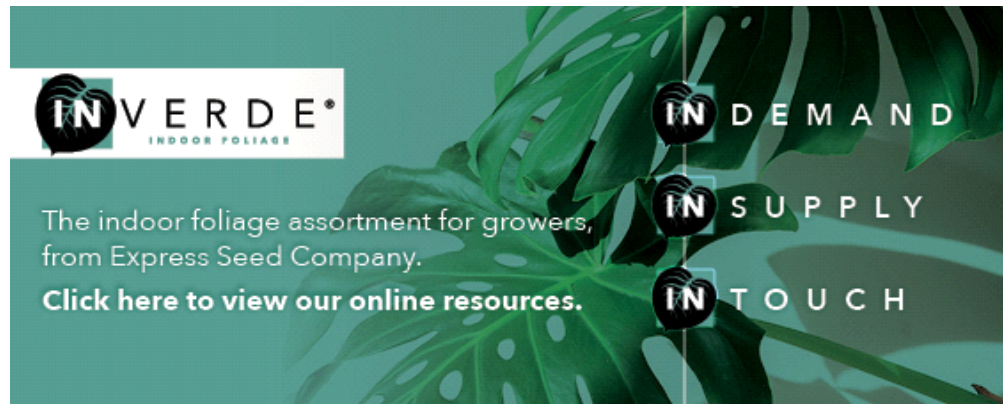
The entrance to K&W Greenery lives up to the store's name.



Now these are some impressive urns!



Another nice combination at K&W. Retail price is \$160.



Movie review: "Poinsettias for Christmas"

I like "Dukes of Hazzard" star John Schneider (he was impressive on "Dancing with the Stars"), but apparently he's useless as a poinsettia "farmer," which is what he is in the made-for-television movie "Poinsettias for Christmas." I stumbled across this on, I think, the Lifetime network, and of course had to check it out.

Boy, was I sorry I did.

Here's the summary from the website IMDb:

It's just weeks before Christmas when Ellie gets a call to return home to help her father on the family's poinsettia farm. The family business is on the line to deliver tens of thousands of plants for the town's annual parade. The problem is the poinsettias have yet to turn red. As Ellie searches for the solution, she is reminded of where her heart truly lies as she falls in love with her roots and the local botanist.

First: Nobody calls it a "poinsettia farm."

Second: If you saw the ugly plastic plants the production company sourced to fill their small greenhouse, you'd vomit. I get that it would have been challenging to have actual live poinsettias on the set, but these were so obviously plastic, it ruined the movie for me right from the get-go.

Third: This guy supposedly is growing tens of thousands of plants ... but in the one Quonset they featured in the show, there were so few plants, on such a wide spacing, they'll never make any money. (Then the daughter used a bunch of planks to change the plant spacing and screwed up whatever aisles they had.)

Fourth: If John Schneider truly is an experienced poinsettia farmer, he'd know how to get a poinsettia into flower: photoperiod. It wouldn't be a mysterious problem that only his daughter and the town "botanist" could figure out. (What, the town horticulturist wasn't available?)

Fifth: Per the above, a secret fertilizer mix isn't gonna make them bloom, either. Dad and the botanist should have known that.

Sixth: Once they did get around to "blackclothing" the crop (laying some fabric right on the plants to keep them warm), the plants magically turned fully red overnight. Hurray! Such drama! The business is saved! But we all know it takes three or four weeks from the first sign of color to full color.

Seventh: They didn't sleeve the plants for shipping, and they brought them out of the greenhouse into cold, snowy conditions ... including for the town's parade. We all know what happens to a poinsettia at below 50F.

If you want to see this holiday gem for yourself (or avoid it), you're in luck! It's airing on Lifetime December 19, 20, 23 and 25.



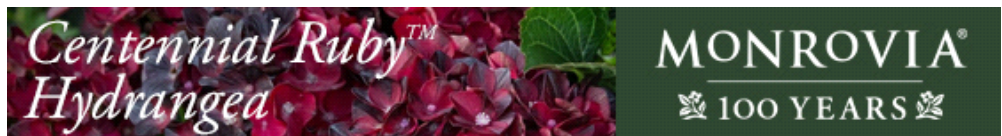
Poinsettias and ...

I like when growers get creative and prove that there's more to Christmas than just poinsettias (sorry P III). I've spotted several good examples in my local grocery stores, such as this "Enchanted Tree Centerpiece" for \$25, and these "Frosty Ferns" (selaginella) for the bargain price of \$4.99 (I brought one home).





But my favorite has to be the “Whoo-Ville Tree,” a cleverly disguised cupressus marketed by Coastal Nursery (I featured them in my TPIE 2018 video [HERE](#)).



... anthuriums

Reader Paul VanAdrichem of Westland Greenhouses in Grand Bend, Ontario, sent me the following note:

You said you wanted to write about painted poinsettias next week, but what about painted anthuriums? I've attached a few pictures of the colors we were doing this year for Christmas.



In the spring we also do a lot of painted anthuriums, but with different colors—lime green, mint yellow, orange, purple and blue, just to name a few. This way we think we can make anthuriums more appealing to a wider audience, which is exactly what this crop needs.

Pretty, Paul! How can anyone not like these, especially for holiday celebrations?

(I should add that Paul opened his email with "It's a pleasure to read your *Acres Online* articles every week." With honeyed words like those, how could I NOT run a photo of his beautiful anthuriums?)

Finally ...

Guess I ran out of time for hard news! No worries, next time I'll have plenty of industry insights. Oh, and there's still the River Ridge Holiday Greens Report to look forward to before the end of the year.

See you next time,

Chi

Chris Beytes

Editor

GrowerTalks and *Green Profit*

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