

# Optimism increases, two display ideas and people winning things



THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2022

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## COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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## Optimism on the Increase

Inflation, recession, politics and poxes are all on the minds of U.S. consumers these days. However, U.S. small businesses are actually feeling a bit more upbeat. This is according to the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), which said its **Small Business Optimism Index** rose four-tenths of a point last month. Now at 89.9, this is the first monthly increase since December.

Now, this 89.9 number is still below the 48-year average of 98. But we'll take some good news when we can get it. Some other numbers revealed by this NFIB survey include:

- 37% of business owners said inflation was their most important problem.
- 49% of owners had job openings they could not fill last month, down a point from June.
- 21% ranked quality of labor as their top business problem.
- The survey's uncertainty index rose to its highest level since April (this report didn't give it a number, maybe that was the uncertainty!).

I'm doing an informal survey myself. What are your business's top concerns at the moment? And are you optimistic about its economic future? Drop me a note with your thoughts on the topics at [ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com).



## Speaking of Optimism

Bailey Nurseries is optimistic about their nursery grower network partners, so much so that the company recently honored four who work with the Endless Summer Hydrangeas, First Editions Shrubs and Trees and Easy Elegance brands with some awards. Bailey Nurseries presents these awards to their partners who demonstrate superior brand representation, exceptional product quality and excellence in working as partners.

The four recognized nurseries are:

- Dewar Nurseries Inc. as Trial Grower of the Year for the company's instrumental grower trialing feedback.
- Greenleaf Nursery Company as the Endless Summer Network Grower of the Year for Greenleaf's tireless promotion of the brand to their customers and steady increasing of the brand's sales each year.
- Clinton Nurseries as the First Editions Network Grower of the Year for continuing to add varieties and having honest discussions about the brand as it grows.
- Midwest Groundcovers LLC as the Easy Elegance Network Grower of the Year, for the company's use of social media and on-site trial garden to promote the brand and educate others about it.



And if any of these four are suppliers of yours, be sure to say congratulations on a job well done.



## Cultivate On-Demand Ed

I'm pretty sure I've covered all the items I had in my notes from my trip to AmericanHort's Cultivate'22. However, the Cultivate'22 experience continues! If you were an All-Access pass holder, you can purchase an On-Demand Education Pass for just \$99. This will give you access to more than 35 Cultivate sessions.



Among the sessions you have access to with the On-Demand pass are some of the most popular sessions at Cultivate, including the 2023 Trends Report, Influencing Plant Choices Through Social Media and Fundamentals of Common Nursery Diseases—wow, what a range, right? In addition to the sessions you may have missed at Cultivate'22 are some special bonus sessions that are available as On-Demand only. These include classes such as Social Media Crash Course, Pricing for Success and How to Prevent Employee Burnout.

Head on over to [HERE](#) to gain access and catch up on these topics and more at your own pace.

Education is the key to your business, so get some of this can't-miss education.



## Two More AmericanHort Items

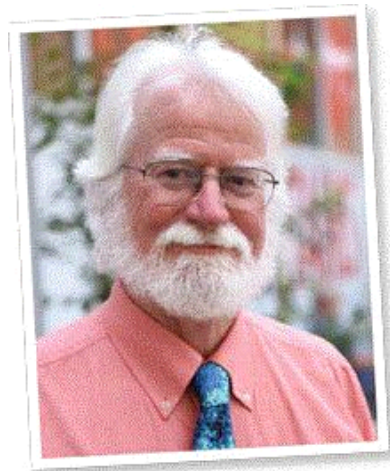
First, you'll want to get on a webinar next Wednesday, August 17, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern. The topic is "Creating Positive Cashflow with an 'Open to Buy.'" Your expert for the session is Tom Shay of Profits Plus Solutions. Essentially the issue is this: You need inventory, but you also need money to pay for those goods. Rather than conjuring up cash out of thin air or waiting for a big lottery win, Tom will teach you the calculations needed to perform the math for how much inventory you need, when you need to order it and when you need to get rid of it. It's not magic, it's math! Register for the webinar [HERE](#).



Secondly, AmericanHort needs your feedback on the industry's workforce. They partnered with the University of California-Davis and Arizona State University to develop the Nursery and Greenhouse Employment Survey. The purpose of the survey is to collect information about how growers are adapting to ongoing labor challenges. The information you contribute will be used to talk with policymakers about how workforce challenges are affecting industry operations throughout the country. Be heard! Take the survey [HERE](#). It takes just about 10 minutes.

## Congrats, John!

Not everyone can write well, let alone well enough to actually engage readers and pass along vital information. John Friel, long-time columnist for *Green Profit* and marketing manager for Emerald Coast Growers, is one of those writers. And now he's been recognized for his promotional prose! John was awarded the Garden Media Promoter Award at the recent Perennial Plant Association's National Symposium. Said the PPA of the purpose of the award, "This award distinguishes a nominee whose educational and promotional efforts result in heightened public awareness of the work done by the perennial plant industry."



John Friel

I'd say! John is one of the best writers out there, and we're lucky to have him interested in plants and not, well, tires or plumbing supplies. But if he were, he'd really get folks grooving over those products, too. I mean, after reading ECG's [Coastal Current](#), I'm ready to buy a dozen of everything he mentions, aren't you?

And if you haven't read John's column in *Green Profit* lately, you should. Pick **ONE**, they're all superb!

## Congrats, Bill!

Actually, congratulations go out to Ball Publishing's own Bill Calkins *and* the entire team behind [Ball Tech on Demand](#) for winning the Outstanding Educational Materials Award from the folks at American Society for Horticultural Science. That's a *big* deal—these award givers have PhDs, after all!



The tech team and content creators behind Ball Tech on Demand provide resources to help growers produce their best crops possible. If you're not familiar with the resources they are creating, here are a few examples:

- **Tech On Demand E-Newsletter** reaching more than 25,000 readers weekly
- **Tech On Demand Podcast**, brought to you by [GrowerTalks Magazine](#)
- **Tech On Demand "In The Break Room" Training Videos**
- **Greenhouse Tech Team Facebook Group**, a peer-to-peer social community of +4,000 greenhouse professionals

Impressive! And it takes impressive people to understand what problems growers face, gather the

solutions and provide them in a multitude of formats. If you want to congratulate them directly—or have a problem you need solving or a topic you'd like to have them cover—connect with them at [www.ballseed.com/techsupport](http://www.ballseed.com/techsupport).

## Shorts for Short-Video Sharing

Someone asked me yesterday what it is I write about, and I said I write about all the things *you* as a retailer need to know to sell *them* more stuff. For instance, you should know about YouTube Shorts, a short-video sharing platform, and its gaining popularity with marketers.



“Ack, I’m already on TikTok!” you’re saying, “I don’t need to be there, as well.” But let’s consider what the differences are, according to a recent *Wall Street Journal* article:

- YouTube already has a built-in audience
- YouTube Shorts can be previews of longer-format content on a company’s YouTube channel
- YouTube Shorts are more of a way to spread brand awareness as opposed to prompting a sale
- Success on Shorts can help build confidence to commit to bigger productions on YouTube proper

The [ARTICLE](#) explains how brands such as Food52 and Glossier are using YouTube Shorts for building awareness as well as experimenting with sales. Already using Shorts? I want to know about your experience! Drop me a note about it at [ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com).

## The Band Got Back Together

Guess who I met up with last week?



Are we debating how to indicate a right turn?

You know that guy as Bossman Chris Beytes, and behind the scenes but always front and center is the wondrous Jen Zurko. We took a short trip to New Hampshire (well, short for me here in Massachusetts) for two open houses happening in Loudon. As usual, we saw flowers, made some video, ate good food and had more than our fair share of laughs. More on the flowers and such at another time, but for now I wanted to share a few retail display ideas we saw at Pleasant View Gardens.

Chris spotted this:



These are some sort of cement block—bigger than a typical cement block and without the center cement support bridge. Stack 'em to create height, but they are a nice height used singly. Coordinate the colors with whatever you're planting to really make the display pop. And it doesn't have to be monotone! Planting with a speckled petunia? Speckle your block, too, why don't you?

Since Chris and Jen hadn't been to a Pleasant View Gardens open house before, they hadn't

seen the genius idea of creating samples of common gardening “sticky situations.” That is, areas of a yard that call for some creative ideas when it comes to planting. Like this mailbox, for instance.



A sign diagrams how to plant this area, with what, with how many and how much it'll cost.



They had several other situational planting suggestions, such as a gazing ball, a picket fence, a shed and a few others. It's not a new idea, but it's one I'd like to see more often when I go to a garden center.

Oh, hey! I just got word from the Bossman himself that a video of our tour through the new Proven Winners varieties has just gone up on our YouTube page. Maybe it'll explain what we're doing in that photo above. Check it out [HERE](#).

## Speaking of Proven Winners

Or rather, of one of the three partners. I just got word that the ever-popular Proven Winners Roadshow events are up and running once again! And just in time for you growers and retailers (and grower-retailers) to get some ideas on how to grow your business for 2023. The events are scheduled for Wednesday, September 28, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Thursday, October 20, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

These day-long educational events are hosted by Proven Winners' team of plant and retail experts and feature some must-see speakers. You'll hear from Anne Obarski of Merchandising Concepts during the Lancaster event and Dr. Bridget Behe of Michigan State University at the Minneapolis event. And a special bonus—Judy Sharpton of Growing Places Marketing will be hosting a panel at both events! All three guests are engaging and chock full of ideas. You'll come away with a tip or technique you will set into motion at your store the next day.

The two Roadshows are free events but you must register no later than 10 days before the event. And you get breakfast and lunch, too. Where do you sign up? Over at [www.provenwinners.com/roadshow-2022](http://www.provenwinners.com/roadshow-2022).

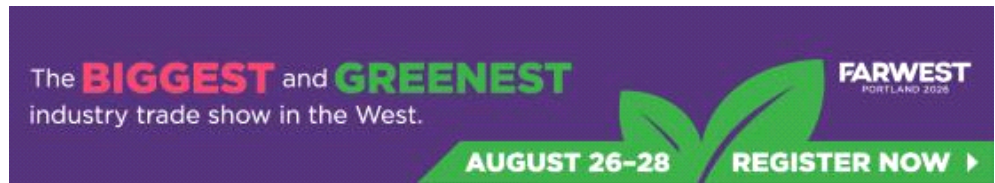
Questions, comments, suggestions? Drop me a line if you'd like at [ewells@ballpublishing.com](mailto:ewells@ballpublishing.com).



Ellen Wells  
Senior Editor  
Green Profit

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