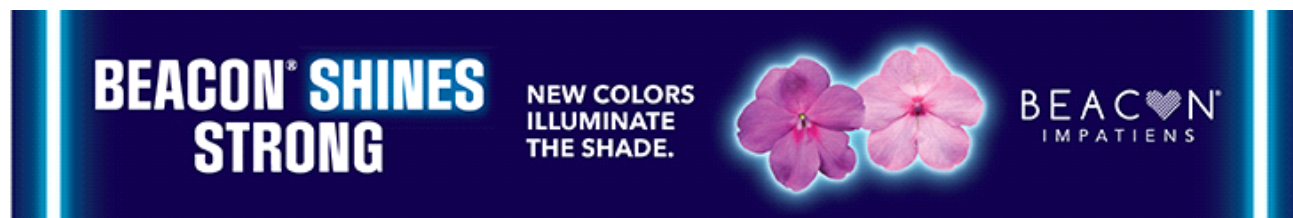


Gen-Z's Shopping Habits; the Father's Day Score; RIP Richard Hollander



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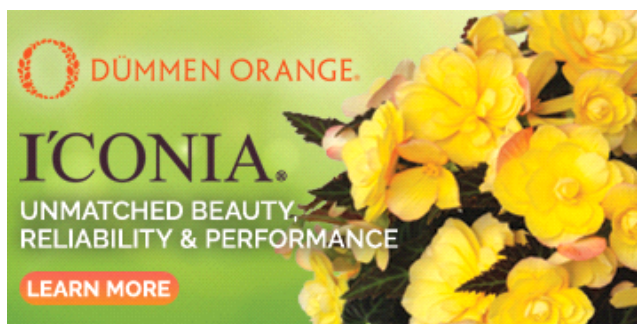


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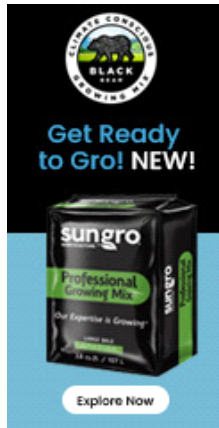
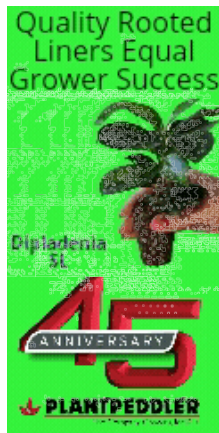
News and Commentary from GrowerTalks Magazine

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- How does Gen-Z shop?
- Father's Day rocked!
- Regionally ...
- More comments
- RIP Richard Hollander
- Lake Placid's Caladium Fest
- How's the crop?
- Darwin Days via video

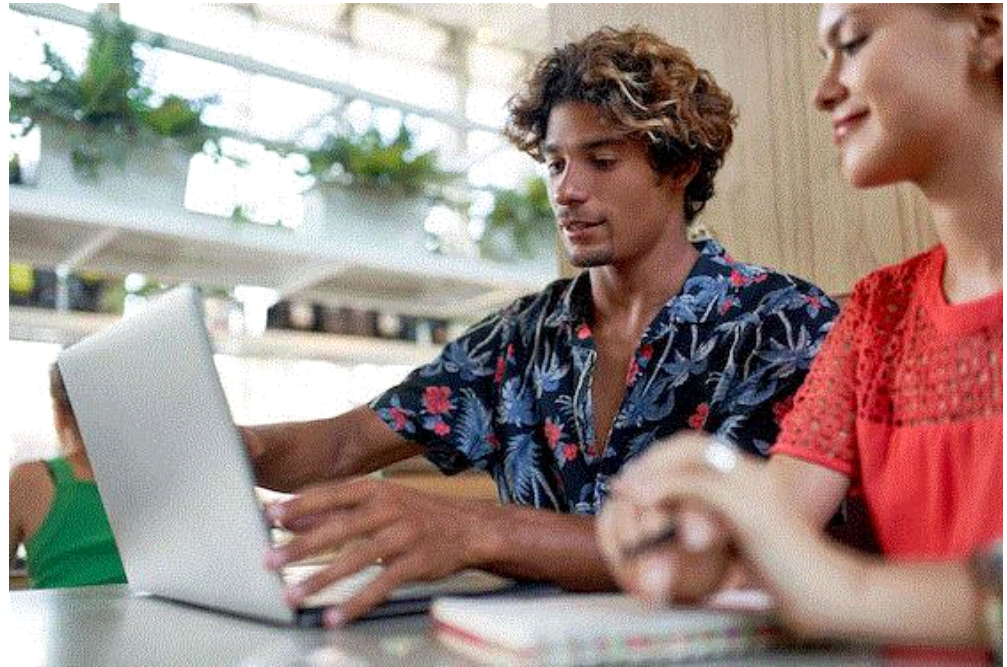


How do Gen-Z shoppers shop?



Are Generation-Z (those aged 11 to 26) shoppers as different as we've been led to believe? Or do they hold the same sort of values as other, more mature (age-wise, anyway) shoppers? Results in a recent survey of 500 16- to 26-year-olds by Snipp, a promotional and loyalty program provider, published in *Furniture Today*, say we all have some things in common ... but also some big differences.

For instance, a majority of Gen-Z shoppers say that high quality (56%) and reasonable prices (55.6%) are "significantly" more important than fun style (15.2%) or locally produced (7.4%). I suspect that's the same for older demographics, as well.



You'd think fun and local would be more important with the younger set, but apparently not. The survey doesn't mention if that changes at all with age; my guess is, like anything, priorities adjust as time goes by, and perhaps fun gives way to quality and value.

As for where young consumers learn about products, that's where they probably take their own road. According to the survey, brand discovery comes not from in-store visits or via retailer websites, but from social media like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and digital ads.

More than half of female correspondents (56.1%) go to TikTok first, then Instagram (37.6%) to discover new products. For males, YouTube is first (44.6%), followed by good old-fashioned



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advertising—whether on websites, social media or television. The number of Gen-Z consumers doing product research and product searches in-store is small—5.6% females, 8.9% males.

As for deciding which product to actually purchase? Online reviews and ratings are the top research source, at 67.4%. Less important are friends (34.4%), influencers (18.2%) and salespeople (11%).

Lastly, if you want to offer them a deal, emails (51.6%) and texts (38.2%) are the best way to reach them.

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How was Father's Day?

Another rock-solid weekend to help round out Spring 2023! The scores for June 17-18, AKA Father's Day Weekend: **U.S. 7.9, Canada 7.1**. Fully 20% of you rated it a perfect 10. Powerful good for the third weekend of June!

I'm not sure how we scored so high—the second highest third-weekend-in-June on record. And it was only beaten by a tenth of a point by 2020, the record-holder since I started keeping track in 2012. We were a full point above the 10-year average of 6.9.

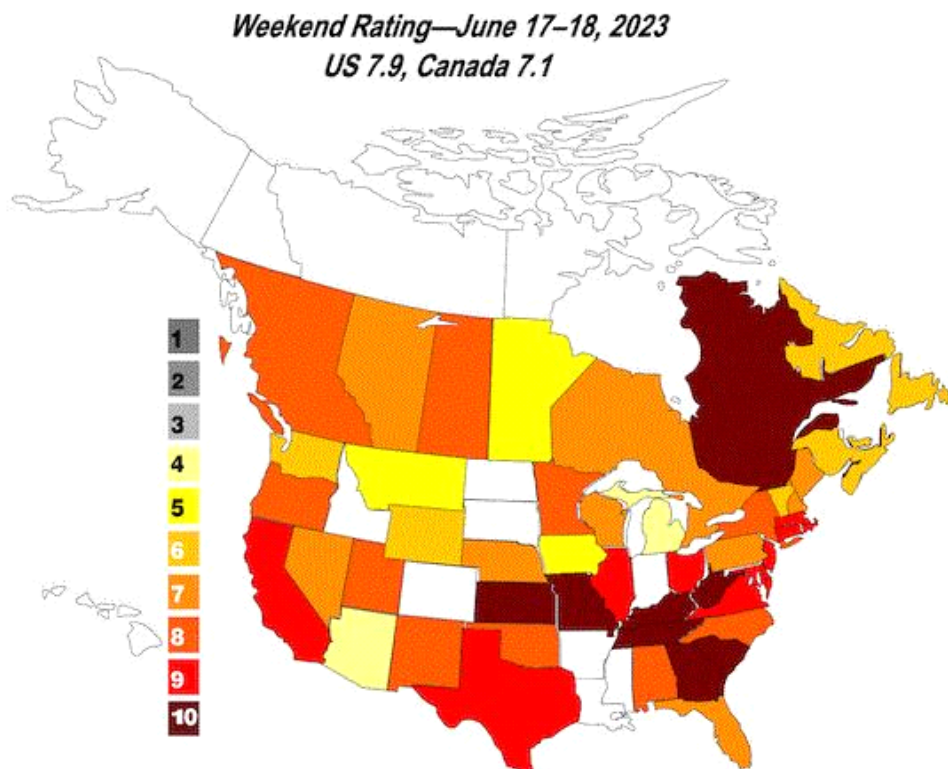
I say I'm not sure how we scored so high because I felt like I was constantly typing 6s and 7s and even 4s and 5s into my Excel spreadsheet. And reading comments like, "Really slowed down," "Spring now in rearview mirror with kids out of school" and "Decent sales for Father's Day Weekend. Nothing to jump up and down about, but we will take it." It just didn't feel like a record-setter.

Also, when I read that last quote was when I first remembered it had been Father's Day. When I asked for your scores, I didn't ask for Father's Day, I asked for June 17-18. I guess we don't think of Father's Day as a gardening holiday. If anything, dad gets a break from gardening. Or does he? Does Junior mow the lawn for him? Or hire a service? I don't know—I don't have kids and when I was a kid, I liked mowing the lawn. I started doing it when I was about 9 or 10.

And what about Canada?! At 7.1, not as good, but still close to the 10-year average of 7.3. In fact, if we drop that outlier 9.3 score from 2020, the average is 7.0 and you best it by a tad. In other words, the weekend was right about where we'd expect it to be.



Here's the map:



That's based on 87 scores from 40 states and eight provinces. Twenty percent of you scored it a 10! Another 17% scored it a 9, meaning about a third of you classified this third weekend of June excellent! Even the fantastic pandemic season of 2020, with 16% 10s, didn't beat it.

And here's the historic data:

	U.S.	CAN
2023	7.9	7.1
2022	6.8	7.0
2021	7.1	6.9
2020	8.0	9.3
2019	7.4	8.2
2018	7.1	6.9
2017	6.8	7.2
2016	7.1	6/8
2015	6.4	6.7
2014	6.3	7.1
2013	*	*
2012	6.0	6.8
**AVG	6.9	7.3

* Didn't keep score this late this year

** Not counting 2023



Regionally, who excelled and who took a hit?

Once again the South tops the country! How is it possible to score 8.9 in latish June? It should be 90F with 90% humidity! And yet Georgia scored a pair of perfect 10s, as did Kentucky. Alabama scored a 10 (along with a 7 and a 6). West Virginia scored 10 and 9. Texas scored 10 and 8. The East wasn't far behind at 8.6, with Virginia scoring 9.0 (10, 9, 9, 9 and 8) and New Jersey doing the same (9, 9, 9).

South	8.9
East	8.6
Midwest	7.7
New England	7.7
Plains	7.2
West	7.0
Northwest	6.8
Mountain	6.5

The Mountains, Pacific Northwest and parts of Canada suffered unseasonably cold, wet weather. Wrote Ed Blatter of Cornell Farms in Oregon, "A rainy, cold Sunday took away the fun," although he scored it a 7 and the state averaged 8.0. Ed Hebbe IV of Circle H Growers in Montana reported, "Mostly cloudy, dreary and wet." He scored his week/weekend a 5.

But this is also the time of year you see big differences in scores in the same state or province. Some growers and retailers have simply shut down. Others have held special events that boosted late-season sales. Like Jesse Ray Shelton of Shelton's Greenhouses in Kentucky, who scored it a 10, writing apologetically, "Have to take the score with a grain of salt. Had a Saturday-only Collectors' Succulents and Cacti Event that exceeded any and all expectations ... huge traffic flow made the last-minute baskets, planters, veggies and potted plants exceeded last year similar date five times. What would it have been without the special event? No clue."

Lastly, some notes from Metrolina's Abe VanWingerden, who says they've enjoyed their "biggest June ever." Abe reports on box store sales in 17 states across the South, East and Midwest, and does so quite mathematically, basing his rating on comps from last year. Abe gave out twelve 10s, three 9s and two 7s (Pennsylvania and New York). He explained:

"The great last surge of business in the South and Mid-Atlantic continues. Our biggest June ever (even beating 2020 and 2021) and we were up 31% in the last seven days.

"Weather has been in our favor; last year was good in June (so it is not a low base), and most importantly, continued consumer engagement in our category at high levels since Mother's Day is driving the sales.

"The only holdback was the smoke from the Canadian Wildfires that definitely had an impact ... That is cleared out through the weekend and now we move on.

"As I have said all season, I feel good the consumer continues to engage in our category at a

high level (and higher than pre-COVID for sure as our numbers are more like 2021 than they are 2019). And when the weather is there, the consumer is getting out on their patio, in their yard and in the garden centers to engage.”



More comments

California (9++). “Cool weather is helping drive sales—no 90+F days yet.”—*Tom Courtright, Orchard Nursery*

New Jersey (9). “Weather was beautiful this past week and sales were good. Not outstanding, but good. Summer slowdown is moving in, just like the warmer weather.”—*Bill Swanekamp, Kube-Pak*

Kansas (9). “Sales were better than last week and for mid-June are holding okay. We will probably stop sales after this week, as it’s time to get cleaned up and start spacing the fall crops!”—*Kathy Miller, Sedan Floral*

Illinois (9). “Slow start of the week with needed rain Monday and Tuesday, but after that sales picked up really fast. Great weekend with lots of traffic on Saturday. Sunday started great, but after 3:00 p.m. it started to slow down, probably because of the focus on Father’s Day celebrations. We still have a great selection and are trying to highlight and discount some items we are long on. Rearranging the garden center makes customers note items they didn’t before and they start selling, which is great to see.”—*JP, Countryside Flower Shop, Nursery & Garden Center*

Virginia (9). “A spectacular spring season continues! Here’s to hoping strong sales continue into summer!”—*Gary Garner III, Gary’s Garden Center*

Oklahoma (8). “Most shoppers out with husbands/dads to buy Father’s Day gifts (nice!), but also can tell things are starting to slow down.”—*Tami Adams, Calvert’s Plant Interiors*

Virginia (8). “It is still spring here in Virginia, weather has been mild and beautiful, and this is allowing good planting to continue. First time in a long we have experienced a true spring.”—*Mark Landa, Boulevard Flower Gardens*

Washington (6). “This was Garden Tour weekend, and usually if not the busiest, it is the second -busiest weekend of the year. Only once, besides this year, has it not broken records. And I guess we broke a record this year, too ... the wrong direction, but a record nevertheless. Saturday was just a plain mean February day. Wind, rain by the bucketfull, miserable. Sunday was better, until the thunderstorms showed up. The skies opened up and we were flooding in minutes. Called it a day. Better luck next time.”—*Kathy Wheaton, Kathy’s Corner*

North Carolina (5). “Another nice day. Sales are declining, but are still good for this time of the year. We are planting more perennials, as sales have been through the roof on them. It has been a cooler-than-normal spring, with temps all over the place and barely into 80s most days, with some 60s and 70s. The question is, are these late-season sales here to stay and do I plan for more late sales for next year? Or plan for a normal year? We sold out of calibrachoa, geraniums and other container plants early. Last year we had a small surplus.”—*Judy Mitchell, Mitchell’s Nursery & Greenhouse*

Montana (5). “Mostly cloudy, dreary and wet.”—*Ed Hebbe IV, Circle H Growers*

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In memoriam: Richard Hollander

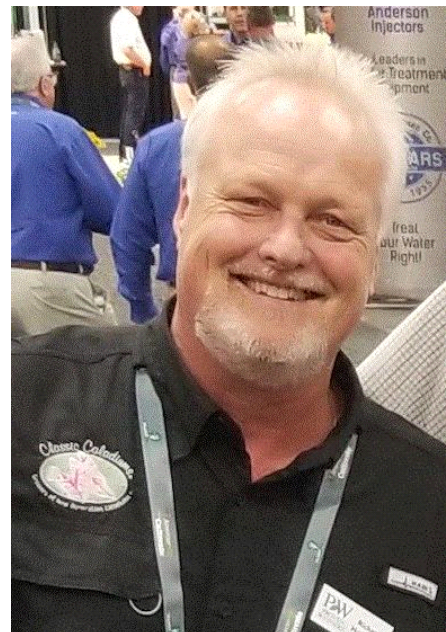
If you've bought plant material from **Abbott-IPCO** in Texas, then you most likely recognize the name above. Richard was co-owner, with his brother, Marvin, of Abbott-IPCO, the company founded by his late father, Harry. Richard passed away on June 19 after a battle with cancer. He was just 58.

Born in Holland, Richard came to the United States at 6 months old when his Dutch parents immigrated from Holland. Early on, Richard expressed his competitive nature, first through soccer and later in the horticulture business. As a graduate of Texas Tech University, Richard excelled in sales and joined his father at Abbott-IPCO in 1990.

Though Abbott-IPCO had sold bulbs for decades, Harry and business partner Bob Hartman started their own Florida caladium nursery, Classic Caladiums, in 2000, specifically to develop new genetics for the industry. Since its inception, Richard worked with the Classic team in developing more than 90 patented caladium varieties. Richard was proud that he named many popular varieties.

In 2014, Harry retired and handed the management reins to his sons (Harry passed in 2017). Most recently, the third generation of Hollanders, Richard's son, Ryan, and Marvin's son, Jake, have joined the company.

I never traveled with Richard or visited him in Texas, but I saw him often at trade shows, most usually TPIE in Florida in January, and I always enjoyed our time together. I could tell he was a good-natured-but-serious supporter of our industry and its growers.



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The Caladium Festival returns to Lake Placid in July

Speaking of caladiums, the 32nd Lake Placid Caladium Festival will be taking place July 28-29. Lake Placid, Florida, is known as the Caladium Capital of the World because about 90% of the world's supply of caladium bulbs originate in the region's fertile soil.

"The caladium festival is the highlight of our grower's year," said Jennifer Bush, Executive Director of the Greater Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce. "While Hurricane Ian may have hurt the caladium industry last September, we are thankful our growers have come together, allowing visitors to celebrate with us. There will be plenty of caladiums to view and bulbs to purchase,

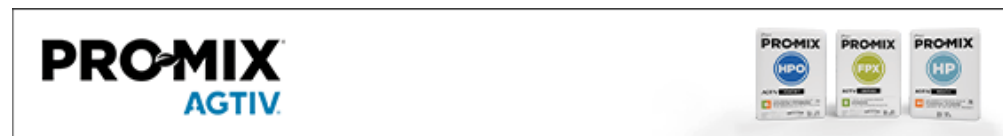
along with a variety of other plants, as well.”



While caladiums are at the heart of the festival, it's also a summer celebration with a car and bike show, live entertainment, an arts and floral arrangement competition, vendor booths, and more. This year will also see the special addition of the “Caladium Flyer” from Sugar Express, Florida’s only historic steam-powered passenger train. One-hour train trips will depart Lake Placid on Friday and Saturday at 10:00 a.m., noon and 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$25 (the festival is free).

The best time to see Lake Placid’s famous caladium fields are late July, August and September. At the end of October, caladium tubers are harvested and shipped for sale all over the United States and internationally.

For more information on the Caladium Festival, visit www.caladiumfestival.org.



How’s the caladium crop shaping up?

BuZZ! newsletter editor Ellen Wells was also thinking caladiums, and she reached out to Terri Bates of Bates Sons & Daughters in Lake Placid, which has been growing the crop since Terri’s grandfather planted a bucket of mixed bulbs in 1944, to find out how the current crop is shaping up—especially important to know after [Hurricane Ian flooded and wind-whipped the crop](#) last summer.

Reports Terri, “The Lake Placid caladium crops look great ... We were able to plant back 100%, but some growers couldn’t, so the industry acreage is down—maybe 25%? The rainfall has been plentiful. We had been in a significant drought for over a year. Our company installed all new irrigation, and I am not disappointed that we don’t need it yet. It was a rough spring but hopefully we will only have a one-year hit [due to Ian].”

I emailed another caladium grower, Bob Hartman, president of Classic Caladiums, to get his take on things. Replied Bob:

“Regarding the caladium crop, at this time, it is looking good. We were fortunate to get our June rains, which resulted in good sprouting and initial growth. Most growers had to reduce their plantings, having in some cases not even harvested their seed back from their 2022 crop.”

Bob reminded me the way the industry works: Caladium growers save aside a percentage of their crop to cut up and replant at so many bushels per acre. Because some growers lost 80 to 90% of their crop due to Hurricane Ian, they are able to plant much less. And adds Bob, “the variety mix is upset because of last year’s [smaller] harvest.”

“Classic, because of our growing practices, suffered a 15% overall loss due to hurricane Ian. We therefore were able to fill our 2023 orders at a high percent as well as retain sufficient seed to plant our 2023 crop, which included an increase of 10-plus percent.”

Bob added a note in his email about Richard Hollander’s passing, as they were partners in Classic Caladiums. “We all knew he was sick and fighting cancer, but his passing at this time was a shock ... He will be dearly missed. Among other things, he loved playing a lead role in naming my new caladium varieties, which I always appreciated.”

Thinking on her feet, Ellen also asked Terri about Florida’s big pest problem, pepper thrips, and if they are an issue in caladiums. Thankfully, the answer seems to be no.

“I have never had a thrips problem in caladium production,” replied Terri. “We don’t even apply pesticides because very few insects feed on caladiums. In greenhouse production, aphids and fungus gnats can sometimes be a problem. I don’t know if the pepper thrips would infest caladiums in greenhouses, but we have zero population in the caladium fields.”

Thanks, Terri and Bob! And thanks, Ellen!



Visit Darwin Perennials Day via video



Darwin Perennials Days was just held at Ball HQ last Wednesday and it was packed with the

promised perennials, viewed by some 450 guests to The Gardens at Ball. I was there, of course (it's mere yards from my office), accompanied by videographers extraordinaire Osvaldo Cuevas and Jen Zurko, who captured me talking with Darwin GM Karl Batschke, Sales & Marketing Manager Seth Reed, perennial technical genius Chris Fifo, and Darwin Colombia GM Christina Brusco. You can check out the resulting video tour of the day [HERE](#).



Feel free to email me at beytes@growertalks.com if you have ideas, comments or questions.

See you next time,



Chris Beytes

Editor

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