



Interiorscape Hall of Fame



Jennifer Madruga 1998 Posthumous Inductee

Jennifer Madruga was born in Los Angeles on July 19, 1939. From an early age, she loved nature and the great outdoors. She spent 10 years of her childhood in Michigan before her family moved back to Huntington Beach in the mid-50's. In the 60's she went into cattle ranching in a big way before deciding that interior foliage was really where her heart lay. However, she felt that if she wanted to penetrate the nursery industry, which at the time was a particularly male-dominated industry, she better get prepared. Accordingly, she went back to school and graduated from Cal State Fullerton with a degree in Entomology. She then went in search of a job that would provide fulfillment and in 1979 was hired by the late Jack Edy of Keeline-Wilcox, which, at the time, was still in Irvine.

As Jennifer became more and more involved in selling to the interiorscape industry, she began to sense that a lot had to change for the average interiorscaper to make a good living and be professional. As she listened to her customers, who became her friends, they discussed their frustrations and dreams. From these conversations she started to explore how she could help and concluded that an association, supported by interiorscapers and allied trades would be a great tool for everyone.

Broaching the idea to a number of Southern California interiorscapers, she invited everyone to a meeting, on February 14, 1985. From this gathering it was agreed to form an Ad Hoc committee to study the possibilities of creating a regional association. Over the course of the following months momentum grew and Jennifer proposed that Keeline-Wilcox would sponsor a kick-off event of seminars and food to be held on Saturday, May 11, 1985. At this first meeting, over 250 participants came from all over California. Over the course of the following 60 days, the ad hoc committee continued to meet creating structure and brainstorming how the association would operate. Unfortunately it was decided at that time not to allow allied trades to serve on the board. This decision really hurt Jennifer who had originated the idea of an association and had been central to its formation. The following month, the Professional Interior Plantscape Association (PIPA) was formed, followed by other regional associations, including the San Diego Interior Plantscape Association, and the Sacramento Interior Plantscape Association. Jennifer left Keeline-Wilcox in 1986, when they decided to relocate to Oxnard. After that from 1987 to 1991, she worked at Plants, Etc., a company that specialized in serving interiorscapers. She loved to work with Horticulture Technicians, helping them find solutions to their problems. After retiring in 1992, she kept busy helping interiorscapers with special needs, such as serving the accounts of a small interiorscaper three days a week while she underwent cancer treatment.

In October, 1995, she was involved in a tragic car accident when another driver ran a red light. She received serious injuries and, after a lingering in a coma for eight days, passed away. Jennifer was only 56 at the time and her death was a great loss to all who knew and loved her.

