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## NEWS RELEASE

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## **Robert Hendrickson Set to Tap 40-Year Career in IGC Retailing to Lead GCA Summer Tour as Head Tour Director**

MILWAUKEE, WI – **IGC Retail Expert Robert Hendrickson will drive home the most important takeaways for independent garden centers as he leads the GCA Summer Tour, June 21-24, in exploring 18 exciting destinations in and around Milwaukee.** As the Head Tour Director, Hendrickson will draw upon his 40-year career, which includes 15 years in the retail trenches, a decade consulting with garden centers on operational issues, then another 15 years building The Garden Center Group, an alliance of more than 100 garden centers, consultants, service providers and preferred vendors.

“Robert is a big part of this tour,” says GCA Executive Director Jeff Morey. “He was instrumental in shaping the tour itinerary early on, personally visiting each of the tour stops to assure its value in bringing fresh ideas to the table for attendees. Now, he’s excited to lead the tour groups in discovering for themselves what makes each of the destinations spotlighted this summer so special.”

In addition to focusing on key retail visual cues like merchandising, signage and store layout, Hendrickson will contribute a broad view of the retail operation, analyzing in detail the operational issues impacting the success of each store. “Robert really gets IGC retail,” says GCA Executive Vice President Cheryl Morey. “He tells it like it is.”

He won't hold back in discussing what he thinks works at each stop – and what doesn't. It's a learning experience for everyone, including the retailers featured on the tour. We're appreciative of everyone's openness to considering new ways of doing things to the benefit of the entire industry."

Hendrickson, who founded The Garden Center Group, currently serves as Business Story Developer for Next New Planet and as Marketing Service Provider for The Garden Center Group. He created The Group's Business Development Program, which assists IGC retailers with marketing, site development, financial analysis and benchmarking, human resources standards, media placement and business strategies. He is an every-issue columnist in *IGC Magazine*.

To register for GCA Summer Tour Milwaukee, visit [www.GardenCentersofAmerica.com](http://www.GardenCentersofAmerica.com). Register by May 31 and save \$50 on each registration - no quantity limits! Attendance on the GCA Summer Tour is not restricted to GCA members and is open to all IGC retailers.

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