



THE COURIER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE FORT MYERS - LEE COUNTY GARDEN COUNCIL, INC.
2166 VIRGINIA AVENUE, FORT MYERS, FL 33901
FMLCGARDENCOUNCIL.COM

SAVE THE DATE !

We will hold our annual **Open House** on Sat. Nov. 22nd at Garden Council HQ from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm.

We invite all our member garden clubs and plant societies to bring their membership information and any things they would like to sell to participate.

This is a great time to reach out to the community and look for new members. The Garden Market is also on at the Edison Estates - so come spend the day.

Questions ... - see *Paula Novander* - Membership Chair.

**SEE YOU
THERE !**

P r e s i d e n t ' s M e s s a g e

Welcome back ! The summer was very busy. Even though it is time for our first Member's meeting the board kept the wheels of the Fort Myers - Lee County Garden Council steady and rolling along; the month of July was our only time off.

First of all, I would like to encourage all club Presidents to begin their year by choosing a member to be nominated for the Berne Davis Honorary Service Award. It comes around fast; the date this year is Friday April 10th and will be at the Lexington Country Club. In addition, we have many events to look forward to and to participate in. October 10th at Page Field will be a celebration to install a Blue Star Marker. Although it took an entire year to orchestrate, our Treasurer - Mae Jean Nothstine has done a beautiful job. Moving along, Saturday November 22nd will be our annual Open House. Keep your yearbook and COURIER handy so you don't miss out on the fun. My most treasured event will be my Flower Show. It is like a dream come true for me, flowers are my favorite, especially Roses.

The summer was a lot of work for my Flower Show chairman, Sandy Kavouras who gave it her all. Also for Kay Holloway, who was able to secure the Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center for the venue. Janice Miller didn't get the summer off either, she wrote the show schedule. Now for the *Save the Date*...

The Flower show will be held during Art Walk on Friday March 6th. The members of Council had this dream of a Flower Show during Art Walk, now it will be a reality. I would like to thank everyone in advance for making this dream come true, so many have helped. This year promises to be a blooming good time for all to enjoy the many other flower shows that will be staged by clubs of the Council (and District 9). Enjoy all the educational programs and the joy of gardening !

Yours in roses,

Debbie Wyatt-Stotter President



F M L C G C General Meeting - Call to order 9:30 am

Inspirational Message - Judy McCluskey
Pledge of Allegiance
Reading of the Minutes - Suzy Valentine, Recording Secretary
Corresponding Secretary - Kay Holloway
Financial Report - Mae Jean Nothstine, Treasurer
President's Report - Debbie Wyatt-Stotter
1st Vice President's Report - Paula Novander

2nd Vice President's Report - Sandy Kavouras
Reports of Committee Chairs (as needed)

Old Business / New Business / Announcements
PROGRAM: *Butterfly Estates* - Fort Myers
Adjournment
Ways & Means - 50/50 drawing

Please join us at 9:00 am for refreshments provided by: **Royal Palm Garden Club**

Garden Council Meetings Dates

BOARD MEETINGS

(Officers, Directors, Committee Chairs)

- FRIDAY Sept. 5, 2014
 - FRIDAY Oct. 3, 2014
- MEETINGS FROM 9:30 am TO 11:30 am

Garden Council Headquarters
2166 Virginia Ave. Fort Myers
Phone: 332-4942

GENERAL MEETINGS

All are Welcome

- FRIDAY Sept. 12, 2014
- Hostess - **Royal Palm GC**
- Program - Butterfly Estates
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- **Next Meeting Nov 14, 2014**

GENERAL MEETINGSMEETINGS ARE HELD THE 2ND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH **EVERY OTHER MONTH**

SEPTEMBER TO MAY

RIVERSIDE Community Center
 3061 E. Riverside Drive FM 33916

HOSPITALITY: 9:00 am to 9:30 am

MEETING: 9:30 am to 11:30 am

NOTE: November - NFM Community

Please plan to attend:
Blue Star Memorial Marker
Dedication Ceremony
Friday October 10th at 10:00 am
just in time for Veterans Day.

Page Field, Fort Myers

Thank-you to all the hard work
by our Treasurer - Mae Jean Nothstine
to get this coordinated

Join us for refreshments after the event.

Our excellent Parliamentarian Sharron Thompson of Poinciana Garden Club is presented with the Perennial award by Debbie, as part of the Berne Davis Honorary Service Awards. Sharron wants to remind everyone of the important bylaws vote taking place at the September General meeting.



Don't forget to bring your Box Tops for Education and Campbell Soup Labels.

This summer I sent in 274 Labels and 265 Box Tops for Education in support of FFGC's youth Camp Wekiva. Paula Novander

www.labelsforeducation.com/How-to-Earn/Participating-Products

**Bok Tower Gardens**

1151 Tower Blvd, Lake Wales, FL 33853

PLEASE NOTE

Our November 14th meeting will be held at the North Fort Myers Community Center on US Business 41 (old 41); just north of Pine Island Road/Bayshore Ave. Same time - refreshments at 9:00 am - meeting will begin at 9:30 am. Address is 2021 N Tamiami Trail, North Fort Myers, 33903.

The program will be designer extraordinaire Janice Hamlin presenting "Designing with Humor". Please join us for refreshments provided by the Garden Club of Cape Coral and this great program.

GARDENS open beginning in October .

Just a reminder that we are asking each club and society to take a turn hosting the gardens on Virginia Avenue one Tuesday during season from 10 am to 1 pm. Opening the gardens to the public enables us to maintain our Botanical Garden status. Hostesses are required to open the gates and be available for visitors to answer questions. It's good to have at least two people there. It is also a great time to enjoy the gardens.

If your club has a particular date they would like to host - please sign-up at the September meeting. Otherwise we will notify you of your date.

THANKS And see you in the garden...

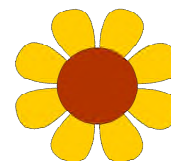
Oct. 7 - C. Drotos-Swales & P. Novander

Oct. 14 - Mae Jean Nothstine & Peg Andrews - Royal Palm GC

Oct. 21 - Ena McGrattan & Fiddlesticks GC

Oct. 28 - Kay Holloway & Periwinkle GC

Please let me know who will be representing your club on the date designated by calling 239-561-1846

or emailing cdrotosswales@yahoo.com.Thank you for helping us share the gardens with our neighbors and visitors. *Carolee Drotos-Swales* FMLCGC Garden Committee

Now is the time to start planning your garden.... we're almost ready to start planting....

Nationwide, Urban Gardening is the latest rage, back to our roots, literally. Southwest Florida, now is the time when we need to think about our fall gardening! Do we really want to commit to all that labor intensive work? How much and what would make it worthwhile?

We have several stages---1-the planning stage---2-implementing it-- 3-weeding and feeding---4-harvesting. Right now we need to (as Pooh says slapping his head) think, think, think. What to do - what to plant. August is the time to set up your growing area, whether it is a big plot or a pot, or a box.

I do believe the planning stage is the most fun, except for eating the finished product. The anticipation, the reading of catalogues, sometimes causes us to bite off more than we can chew. Know your limitations. The 5 w's—who, what when, where and why, fits here. Why, is because I want fresh healthy foods, --Where, is it in the empty garden lot next door, a raised bed in the backyard, pots and containers, hydroponics or aquaponics, or tucked in here and there in the landscaping, or raised beds, or vertically in pallets or hanging baskets, whatever fits the space available. They need 6 to 8 hours of sun, drainage and to be near a water supply—When, of course, is now, in order to have space and plants ready for September and October planting, (seedlings take 6 weeks) —What, is where the fun begins, picking seed packets, studying the back for the information on best planting time, how long until they harvest, how deep to plant the seeds, how far apart, heirloom or new varieties. Who, of course is you, unless you have a spouse or gardener ready and willing; willing being a key word.

Implementing it involves solarization of available soil, covering with clear plastic for a month to 6 weeks to kill all weeds, viruses and bacteria present. If starting with new soil, use humus/compost, (regular yard soil is full of diseases and chemicals used in the scraped up soil from its previous use, (patch grassy areas with this soil), or use vermiculite in the hydroponics or prepare the set-up for PVC pipes filled with pumped circulating fertilizer water for Aquaponics. One of my dearest friends has "Gro-boxes" along her driveway, my son has a long row of hydroponic pots on poles, other friends do their gardening in pots; just don't forget to keep them watered. Whatever you feel up to doing, be ready to pop in your seedlings. Go to ECHO for unique ideas. Have a friend to share the seeds with you, getting a bigger variety. You'll never eat all you plant if you have the space to plant all the seedlings in a packet. Besides, that entails a lot of time and work. Be adventurous, try new colors, new varieties, new flavors and new to you vegetables.

After you have put in the garden, comes the tedious difficult part. I call it the weed-n-feed time. Be forewarned and prepared for the inconveniences of growing your own food, but so worth it. Do it in the cool of the morning, wearing a hat for shade from the sun, sun lotion on, and gloves to protect your hands and nails. Hate dirty nails, although, working in the soil with bare hands is soul satisfying. It's easier to maneuver plants. A tip is to dig your nails into a bar of soap first, getting it under your nails, making it easier to clean them afterwards. Definitely stay hydrated. Check daily on watering needs, our rainy season is a blessing, but it isn't consistent. Weeds can get ahead of you, if the rain is growing tall plants, it also grows tall and thick weeds. Chemical warfare defeats healthy vegetables. Don't use chemical pesticides around anything you will eat. Mulching at least 3-6 inches deep keeps down the weeds and retains the moisture. Fertilize with an evenly balanced dry fertilizer and think about vermiculture (worm castings). Spraying a liquid fertilizer in the morning is good, but wetting your plants around noon leads to transpiration and futility and in the evening leads to fungus and mold overnight.

Now we come to the harvesting. It is not as simple as picking when you want, but staying on top of it and picking when ripe. Young and tender are the key words here. Don't try to see how big a vegetable you can grow, they get tough and stringy. And if you don't, the plant says to itself, I'm done, enough already and it stops producing. Pick vegetables to keep it going, to reach maximum production. Vegetables have a short span of ripeness, then, they deteriorate, start to spoil. It becomes a daily chore. Learn how best to store your harvest and sharing is a privilege. I saw this on Facebook—Give a man a fish, he eats for a day; teach a man to garden and the whole neighborhood gets tomatoes.

Thank a tree.



Joyce Comingore: Master Gardener; Hibiscus enthusiast;

member of the Garden Club of Cape Coral



New to the area or just looking for good horticultural information - the County Extension Service has it !

Homepage for Lee County Extension <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Lawn, Garden and Landscape - Publications A-Z, Brown's Plant file, PowerPoint presentations, You Tube videos, News-Press Q&A articles, Butterfly information, etc.

A wealth of information for *OUR* area.

University of Florida - Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences <http://ifas.ufl.edu/>

Florida Friendly Landscaping <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html>





Ena McGrattan - of Eclectic Designers, Royal Palm and Fiddlesticks GC is pictured with a HUGE floor design she created for the World Assoc. of Floral Arrangers convention held this year in Dublin, Ireland. "A Floral Odyssey" was the theme of the show and designers from around the world submitted work to be considered for the honor of designing. For loads more photos check out the website wafaireland.com. Just amazing, Ena !

Help Wanted:

Are you a self-motivated person who would love to communicate with all 1,400 members of the Fort Myers - Lee County Garden Council ? I am retiring as Editor of the **COURIER** newsletter after many years. I recently qualified as a Master Gardener with the Lee County IFAS Extension and want to spend more time pursuing my passion for native plants and Florida-Friendly landscaping. Please contact Paula Novander and I can share my computer files. From then on it is yours ,

Calendar of Events

Avon Park Correctional Lunch available for \$ 5 at 11:00 am	Sat Sept. 27	9 - 2 pm	FFGC Therapy through Plants - plant sale Contact Pat Shira at 863 853 8299 for directions and lunch reservations
Fall and Halloween Festival Scarecrows in the Park, pumpkin patch, hayrides, the Halloween Express train and other activities.	Oct. 17 - 31		Lakes Park
FFGC District IX meeting Flower Show	Oct. 22nd Oct. 23rd	9:00 am 1 - 4:00 pm	Embassy Suites, Estero 10450 Corkscrew Commons Blvd. 33928
Edison & Ford Winter Estates Saturday Garden Talks	Oct. 11 Nov. 8	10:00 am 10:00 am	Butterfly Gardening and Wildflowers Edible Gardening
SW FL Orchid Society Faith United Methodist Church	Oct. 14	6:30 pm	Society annual orchid auction 15690 McGregor Blvd.
2014 Butterfly Conference	Nov. 15		Presented by the Lee County Master Gardeners Edison & Ford Winter Estates

FOR THE LATEST INFO CHECK OUR WEBSITE FMLCGARDENCOUNCIL.COM

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