

# THE COURIER



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

## President's Message

Hi Everyone!

What a different place our world is since our last Courier went out! I hope this finds all our members safe and sound. I know – it hasn't been easy. We're healthy, well provisioned, have plenty of outdoor space to ourselves, but after these weeks, It's getting to me! I know some of our members have had much greater challenges and we need to remember to reach out to each other. We will get through this together! Getting a newsletter out with no news to report has been a bit daunting, so I apologize for its tardiness. We have put together a couple of articles that some members might find helpful and relevant during these unique times. Check out the FFGC Awards notice and see which one of our member clubs is a Rock Star!!! I've been hearing about creative ways that some of our member clubs have continued to meet, interact and share. Let us know if you know of something interesting or have something scheduled that other members might join in. I have to tell you that our Garden looks beautiful! It is still the most peaceful place in town. I am enclosing some pictures to remind you. Carolee Drotos-Swales has been working with our gardener Nick Gallant, to landscape the walkway to Larchmont. It looks fantastic! The plants are small now, but very colorful and should be just right by Fall.

I certainly hope that we will be able to reopen in the Fall with some semblance of normality. Right now, it is the time of year that we normally close down the Garden for the summer and most clubs suspend their activities. The Fall is many months away and as we all know, so much changes so quickly, that we will all need to wait to see where we are at that time. When we do ramp up, however, things will be busy! There were several classes and events that were postponed that we are hoping to reschedule for September/October, plus our normal Fall schedule.

I wish you all a good Summer wherever you are. I hope you can find enjoyment, happiness, peace and fulfillment and certainly good health.

Reach out to each other and hold on tight – We Can Do This!!!

Learning, Growing, Sharing!

Sincerely,

Judy Francino, President



## Garden Council Meeting Dates

### UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

(Officers, Directors, Committee Chairs)

- Date: Sept. 4, 2021
- Date: Oct. 2, 2021

MEETINGS FROM 9:30 am - 11:30 am

Garden Council Headquarters  
2166 Virginia Ave.  
Fort Myers, FL

### GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

*For All Society and Club Members.*

*Please invite a spouse or friend .*

*ALL are Welcome !*

Friday, September 11, 2021

Hostess:

TBD

### GENERAL MEETINGS

MEETINGS ARE THE 2ND FRIDAY  
OF EVERY OTHER MONTH  
SEPTEMBER THROUGH MAY

Location :

Garden Council Headquarters  
2166 Virginia Ave.

HOSPITALITY: 9:00 am to 9:30 am

MEETING: 9:30 am to 11:30 am



## NEXT FMLCGC GENERAL MEETING

Friday September 11, 2021

Tony Mauriello, Master Gardener-Naturalist  
Plant Propagation Techniques

## *Edison - Ford Winter Estates*

2350 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers FL 33901

Web: [EdisonFordWinterEstates.org](http://EdisonFordWinterEstates.org)

## EDISON AND FORD WINTER ESTATES CLOSED

Because our top priority is the health and well being of our visitors, volunteers and staff, our site is closed to the public until further notice. Please check our website as we will post updates when they become available.

*Try our Facebook page for interesting video content!*

## Reminders from Lakes Park

1st Saturday Bird Walks year round. 8am-10am.  
Meet at shelter A7

Park is open 7am to dusk 7 days a week.

For more information call 239 533-7575



## **Hear Ye! Hear Ye!**

### ***Awards***

Despite the cancellation of the FFGC and Deep South conventions this year, the Awards for 2019 – 2020 were just announced. It is a great pleasure to announce that the Garden Club of Cape Coral came away with FOUR FFGC Awards and THREE Deep South Awards! Congratulations!!! Job well done! Your Garden Council family is so proud of all you have accomplished and so glad that you received the recognition that you so deserve.

The Awards are as follows:

#### **FFGC:**

- 11-6: Yearbook Award**
- 14-4: DePalma / Sillik Website Award**
- 36-4: Community Service Award**
- 51-4: Environmental Education Involving Youth Award**

#### **Deep South:**

- 5 A iv: Public Relations Award**
- 15 A iv: Environmental Education Award**
- 33 A-6: Yearbooks (100 – 299 members)**



#### **For District IX:**

##### **FFGC:**

In addition to the Garden Club of Cape Coral awards, the following club was recognized:

- 32-2: Park / City Planting Award**
- Garden Club of Winter Haven**

##### **At Deep South:**

In addition to the Garden Club of Cape Coral awards, the following club was recognized:

- 19 A ii: Community Action Award**
- Garden Club of Winter Haven**

***Congratulations to all!***

## Pick Your Own!

Recently, many of us have tried to minimize our trips to the large grocery stores, but still keep a current and fresh supply of fruits and veggies on hand. We are also hearing in the news how farmers have surplus crops. One of the great resources we have found are the “Pick your own” locations in Lee County. Since I’m not one to typically go out in to the fields, I have found that most of these also have an area with produce already picked and ready for purchase in smaller quantities. I recommend that you call ahead to check their hours and what produce is still available either for picking or purchase. The produce we have purchased at Biggars, Oakes Farms or Mike’s has been delicious! It was also a fun outing and a pretty ride to get there.

**Biggar Farms**  
8751 Gladiolus Drive., Fort Myers 33908  
239 482-5010

**Farmer Mike’s U Pick**  
26049 Morton Ave., Bonita Springs 34135  
239 498-4576

**31 Produce**  
18500 State Rd. 31, Alva 33920  
239 313-8213

**Buckingham Farms**  
12931 Orange River Blvd, Fort Myers 33905  
239 206-2303

**U Pick Citrus**  
18971 Misty Morning Lane, Immokalee  
239 657-4996



Another avenue to consider is the Local Roots Online Farmers Market which is more than 40 local farmers market vendors selling their products, including fresh produce, cheese, breads, pastries, prepared meals, seafood, meats, seasonings, pastas, guacamole, salsas, pressed juices, soaps, hand sanitizer, crafts, BBQ and more. Local Roots online program offers home delivery and no-contract curbside pick-up two days a week (Wednesday & Saturday). Orders must be placed in advance. There are several curbside pickup locations, and home delivery is available for most residents in Lee County.

Check out the website for more details. I haven’t tried this one out myself, but the information is from Wink News. Let us know if you try it out and what you think!

**([www.LocalRootsOnlineFarmersMarket.com](http://www.LocalRootsOnlineFarmersMarket.com))**

## Your Board Members

### President-

Judy Francino 248 425-8713  
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### First Vice-President-

Susan Lawson 239 282-2328  
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### Second Vice-President

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### Recording Secretary-

Bonnie McClure 847 630-3218  
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### Corresponding Secretary-

Sylvia Lightbody 561-5704  
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### Treasurer-

Charlene Anderson 978 828-6696  
Email: [beadie1@gmail.com](mailto:beadie1@gmail.com)

### Assistant Treasurer-

Diane Schmidt 607 351-2005  
Email: [DianeGCGC18@aol.com](mailto:DianeGCGC18@aol.com)

## PLANTING YOUR OWN FLORIDA VEGETABLE GARDEN



Vegetable gardening in Florida is quite different from what you might have experienced “Up North”. In fact, you really don’t garden much here in the Summer, but prepare the soil and get ready to plant in the Fall. A veggie garden can be as large or small as you want. Keep it in scale to what you can manage. You can even use containers! Attached are steps for planning a garden, along with a Vegetable Gardening Guide that gives recommended varieties and planting dates, yields and harvesting times. It is also from the University of Florida IFAS Extension office. This is the official site to which we Master Gardeners refer. Keep it as a link to good sources of information for any of your gardening needs.

Also attached is printout of how to prepare a Mound Garden. I received it back in my Master Gardener training and I know that Debbie Hughes at Edison & Ford Winter Estates uses it as well. It was developed by Kaye Cude. It is also often referred to as a “Lasagna Garden”. Florida soil usually needs amending or enhancement to support a flourishing garden. You also need to protect your plants against microscopic critters like nematodes that live in the soil and will attach the roots of your plants. By creating a bed such as this, you both enhance the growing medium and imbed some barriers between the organisms and your plants.

Happy Gardening!

Guide to Florida Vegetable Gardening from IAFS is available in PDF.



## Canning! It's new again!

People are renewing an interest in canning or “putting up” their own fruit or vegetables. This can be a handy way to ensure that you will always have a supply on hand and be able to control what is in your canned food. It's also a great way to do something positive during these long days at home! For those interested, please check out the University of Florida website for a great tutorial & specifics about how to can various veggies and fruits.

[www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu](http://www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu) .

In the Search bar, enter Canning and there will be several articles to choose from, including instructions in the “How To” section.



**Don't forget about jams and preserves too!**



BERNE DAVIS GARDEN PHOTOS

