

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

President's Message

Berne Davis Botanical Garden

**Open to the Public
 Tuesdays 10am - 1 pm**

**Each Club & Society takes
 a turn providing docents.**

**Each club is responsible for
 finding 2 members to work or
 finding another club to
 trade dates with.**

Tuesdays Docent Schedule
May 03- Dist IX Judges Council
May 10- Board Members
May 17- Board Members
May 24- Self Guided only
May 31-

**Questions?
 Contact Susan Lawson
 slawson921@gmail.com**

Well, here it is May already! It's been a busy year and now we're getting ready for the summer.

Usually we'd be preparing to close up the Berne Davis Gardens at the end of May, but this year we're going to try something new and be open on Tuesdays, 10am-1pm. Our Master Gardener team will serve as docents and continue to work in the Gardens to keep them in tip-top shape. Last summer, Carole Kerns, one of our talented garden managers, kept telling me that we've got some wonderful summer-blooming plants, so we're hoping to share them with visitors.

We've also been approached by some of our plant societies who'd like to do some sprucing up and/or make additions to their areas, so I can't wait to see how the garden changes over the next few months! Please stop by and tell your friends to come see us.

Something I'm happy to announce is a new procedure to allow you to borrow books from our library. You can find more specifics on the new process in the Courier along with articles from our horticulturist Wendy Sprague and an article explaining how we prepared the Berne Davis Gardens for a Florida Yards and Neighborhoods visit, where we were awarded the Gold Award!!

Some housekeeping reminders! If your club has items in the refrigerator or freezer, please remove them, or clearly mark them with your club name if you don't want it removed. We'll be tossing items that are unmarked because we don't want to worry about having items go bad in case we lose electricity during a summer storm. The plan is to do a summer cleaning and organization of our cabinets.

I also wanted to take a minute to say Thank You So Very Much for honoring me with the 2022 Berne Davis Honorary Service Award. I was so surprised at the luncheon that I don't think I told everyone thank you, so I'd like to do it here and now. And congratulations to our other award winners!

To those members who head north for the summer months, I hope you have a wonderful summer, and we'll look forward to seeing you at Council events upon your return. Your Board will be busy planning for an eventful next season, so please stay tuned.

Stay safe and healthy,
 Susan Lawson
 President



The Garden Tourist's Florida
 Guide Book by Jana Milbocker!

We still have books available
 for sale. They make great gifts.

Get your copies before they are
 gone!

Garden Council Meeting Dates

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

(Officers, Directors, Committee Chairs)

- **Date:** May 6th, 2022

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, May 13th, 2022

Hostess: Poinciana Garden Club

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



May 13, 2022

“Everglades Conservation & Restoration”

by

Dr. Bill Mitsch, Director, Everglades Wetland Research Park

SAVE THE DATE!

The Fall District IX meeting is coming up!

Hosted by FFGC and the Garden Club of Cape Coral.

Date: October 18, 2022.

Location: Estero Island Embassy Suites

Address: 10450 Corkscrew Commons Dr, Estero, FL 33928

Edison - Ford Winter Estates

2350 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers FL 33901

Web: EdisonFord.org

Monthly Garden Talks

Saturdays 10am

May 14th, 2022—Bulbarama

Learn about the different bulbs that can be grown here in Southwest Florida and how to add them to your garden. Talks typically last about 1.5 hours. Guests should wear comfortable shoes, sunscreen, and a hat, and bring drinking water.

\$10 for EF Members \$15 for Non-Members
Participants get a 20% off Garden Shoppe coupon

Continued Monthly Garden Talks

Saturdays 10am

June 11th, 2022 – Bromeliads

July 9th, 2022 – Edison's Bamboo

(Check Website for location & fees; registration required)

THE FLORIDA FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING PROGRAM

Free classes continue to be offered to learn the nine principles of Florida Friendly Landscaping in Lee County. Each principle is covered, so you can apply what you learn to your own garden. Among the topics of discussion are:

- Plant selection and placement
- Attracting wildlife
- Pest management
- Efficient irrigation
- Yard waste and recycling
- Mulching and Fertilization
- Protecting the water supply and waterfront



Hybrid classes (in person or online) will be held at Rotary Park, 5505 Rose Garden Rd., Cape Coral, FL. The schedule is as follows: Fri., 5/6/22 from 1:00 - 3:00pm=Sat., 6/18/22 from 10:00am - Noon=Fri., 7/22/22 from 6:00 ó 8:00 pm=Sat., 9/24/22 from 10 am ó Noon=Thurs, 10/27/22 from 1:00 ó 3:00 pm=Sat., 11/19/22 from 10:00 am ó Noon.

A class in Spanish will be offered on Friday, 6/3/22 from 3:00 ó 5:00 pm online via Zoom.

Additionally, a Rain Barrel Workshop on Saturday, 7/16/22 from 10am-11am at Rotary Park, Cape Coral.

To register call Rotary Park at 239-549-4606. Participants are asked to pay via credit card.

New Book Lending Procedure

All books are available to be checked out with the exception of the Bonsai Reference books and the books located on the Berne Davis Historical Botanical Library shelves. We've also marked those books with a dot on the inside cover.

Books can be kept for four weeks. To check out the books, you'll need to fill out the Circulation form, which will be available on a clipboard. It asks for information (book title, borrower's name and garden club, date of check out, date of check in).

Future editions of the Courier will feature some of the wonderful books we have available, so stay tuned. We hope you will take advantage of what our library has to offer.

ART IN BLOOM 2022



Art in Bloom Art Show

Held on Sunday, March 6, 2022

On March 6 Edison and Ford Winter Estates hosted the annual Art in Bloom art show in partnership with the Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council. This unique one-day art show featured floral designs paired with works of art from the Sustainable Conceptions exhibit.

This year, 15 floral designs and other works of art were displayed in the Edison Caretaker's House, an original "Cracker House" and one of the oldest standing structures in Lee County. Prior to the show, participating Garden Council members were paired with a piece of artwork and each worked to create a floral display based on their interpretation of the art -- using the same colors and design feel. Visitors voted for their favorite floral design at the end of the show.

FROM FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS

Some great thoughts on how to beef up your club's membership and be more visible in your community .

1. Create and wear a Club t-shirt when out and about. Of course on the front is the NAME of your Club, Your name, and perhaps on the back something catchy like "Ask me about my environmental Garden Club!"
2. At every meeting, (yes, even if you meet in restaurants or other public areas), have signs directing folks to your meetingí .make them colorful, always with your Club's name and a phone number, and always with "Today's fabulous program is FREE and open to the public, so come on in!"
3. Each Member should always have with them a Club brochure and/or invitation to attend a FREE program (next meeting)!

BERNE DAVIS GARDEN UPDATE

We have had a glorious gardening season at Berne Davis Garden and thank all of you for your support. The Master Gardeners have worked tirelessly to produce a beautiful presentation of healthy plantings. We have also developed listings and categories of our planting while we develop a Master Plan. We wish to maintain an organized record that continues to reflect this lovely garden.

As part of this season's work, we received the **Gold Standard from the University of Florida** for meeting the principles of Florida Friendly Landscape. Thus, we will continue to maintain our garden at this high level for future years. This work could not have been accomplished without our team of Master Gardeners Carole Kerns, Audrey Heneage, Nora Pearson, Cindy Sinn, Beth Meehan, and James Lewin. These wonderful gardeners came with their own set of talents and knowledge, as well as a willingness to work hard. Our team not only works well together but has been incredibly compatible. In other words, we are having a lot of fun.

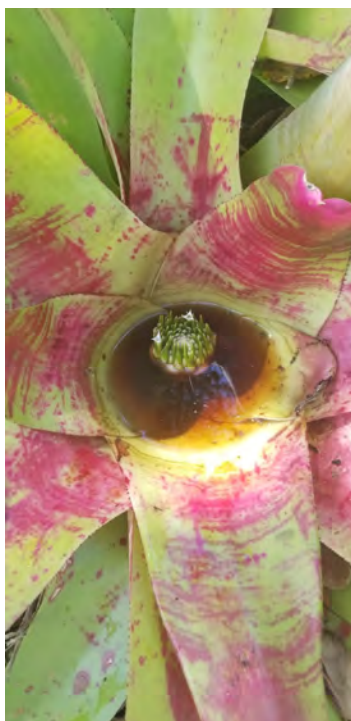
Carole Kerns, Summer Manager writes for the New Press and frequently mentions our garden in her publications. Audrey Heneage, retired librarian continues to develop plans with Susan Lawson to facilitate a lending library at our Mina Edison Library when she is not working with pollinator planting. Nora Pearson excels in Orchids and is very knowledgeable about many areas of the garden, Cindy Sinn has expertise in rare fruits, ferns, and Florida plants, and Beth is our hibiscus expert. James provides excellent photographs and all the team help with greeting visitors.

I have to say the 2021-2022 season has been wonderful for me personally and I believe we can continue to impress our visitors. I wish to express Special Thanks to Susan Lawson and the board for all of their work at making this garden a welcoming place to be.

Margaret Walker, Berne Davis Garden Manager



Confederate Jasmine



Bromeliad



Blue Pea Vine

CLUB HAPPENINGS!**NEWS from GARDEN CLUB OF CAPE CORAL**

March was a busy month for the GCCC! Our planned "March in the Park" fundraiser on March 12th was a huge success with Sylvia Swartz and Cathy Dunn chairing our Ways and Means Committee and the entire Club participating! We raise most of our income to fund our activities through this all-important fundraiser. March 18th was our FUN WITH FLOWERS which funds our program of flower arranging at assisted living facilities.

April 13th is our general meeting honoring the recipients of our Scholarship Merit Awards. April 22nd is our FUN WITH FLOWERS fundraiser. April 23rd there will be a club visit to the Bailey Shell Museum in Sanibel followed by lunch at Doc Ford's. April 29th-30th, is our biennial Standard Flower Show "The Golden Years of Cape Coral - a Retrospective". We are honoring our great city, Cape Coral, which has celebrated its 50th year!

May 14th is the Garden Club of Cape Coral's 25th Anniversary Party at Palmetto Pines Country Club. 1997 was the beginning of our beloved Club with founder Marty Ward. Her energy level was astonishing and her powers of persuasion beyond words. Her favorite thing was "getting involved and doing something!"

Our Summer months will bring Social Get Togethers. These are tentatively planned as of this writing. This entire year has been full of friendship, education and FUN.

NEWS from POINCIANA GARDEN CLUB

In June of 2022, The Poinciana Garden Club will celebrate their 60 year anniversary! Poinciana was organized on June 13, 1962 and Federated on May 11, 1964. We want to thank all of our wonderful members for participating in club projects, Plant and Treasure Sale fund raisers, flower shows, field trips, hostessing meetings and volunteering as officers, committee chairs/members and project chairs/members.

In 2017, we entered into social media technology age with our Facebook page which not only won the 2018 National Garden Club Social Media Award but now has over 900 followers. In 2022 we began scanning photos from our historical scrapbook and incorporating them into our Facebook page Albums.

This past year members have enthusiastically participated in two new community service projects: "Cups of Cheer" and "Trash Off Trails (walking the Lee County Conservation 20/20 park trails)". We are especially thankful to the Fort Myers Lee County Garden Council for their great support and use of the Headquarters building in the beautiful Berne Davis Gardens.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend our last meeting and luncheon on May 10th. Lynn our President will be sending out details about the restaurant location and time. Bring a friend.

Some of us will continue walking picking up Trash Off Trails thru the summer. We walk at 8 am. If you want to join us let Sandy Troy-Pennington know. She will put you on the special mailing list. Invite a friend too.!

Sandy Troy-Pennington contact info is: 239-994-8147 or email to: story_penn@msn.com



NEWS from ALVA GARDEN CLUB

The Alva Garden Club held its monthly meeting at the Berne Davis gardens on April 19th. Club members very much enjoyed the garden tour graciously hosted by Carole Kerns.

After the tour, Susan Lawson gave an interesting talk about the history and organization of the Garden Council. Thank you to all who made our visit a pleasure!

NEWS from FLORIDA FEDERATION of GARDEN CLUBS

The 95th Annual Convention & State Flower Show was held on April 12-14 in Kissimmee, Florida, with a theme of Worlds of Wonder.

Congratulations to Royal Palm Garden Club co-President Vicki Williamson who was a blue prize winner in Botanical Arts at the state flower show for her lovely hat titled "Hello Dolly". She also won the sectional award for Artistic Crafts.

Also pictured is our District IX Director and Gulf Coast Garden Club member Dale DeFeo giving her District IX report. The next FFGC convention will be April 18-20, 2023 in Kissimmee.



HORTICULTURE

A Tale of two Cherries

I have two Cherry trees in my yard. The Barbados Cherry (*Malpighia glabra*) is a beautiful little tree, about 10 feet tall and 15 feet wide. Even in this drought period with my haphazard hand-watering system it has produced beautiful pink flowers and a few struggling cherries. It is a pretty little tree and produces 10 red cherries with 3 seeds from spring to fall. The cherries are a little tart and best picked at their darkest hue, but still delicious and high in Vitamin C. Birds and wildlife enjoy the cherries (as do I). Germination rates are low as I haven't found any sprouted seeds underneath the tree. I have read that they can be grown from seed from the totally ripe fruit. When I have a bumper crop (not this year, not yet anyway) I like to boil them in water with a little sugar and use the juice in smoothies or make ice cubes to flavor drinks. Mostly I enjoy eating them fresh off the tree!



The second cherry tree is more of a bush. Surinam cherry (*Eugenia uniflora*) was introduced to Florida in 1931 but is now considered invasive. It makes an excellent screen or hedge and the birds enjoy the berries. Fallen seeds propagate readily, making it highly invasive. The pretty cream-colored flowers produce pumpkin shaped fruit that turn from green to red. Only when they are at their darkest are they edible and even then they have a weird, rather resinous taste. The fruit is ripe and ready to eat when you touch it and it falls into your hand. Far tastier is a variety with a deeper black cherry color that is grafted. My 0Black0 Surinam Cherry has produced a bumper crop of fruit despite the drought and haphazard watering. The seeds of the fruit may be planted but may or may not produce the darker fruit of the parent plant. My tree is from seed and I was lucky enough to produce the darker variety. With either variety, you can use a hoe to get rid of unwanted seedlings and be sure to plant it in an area where they can be easily contained, maybe keep it in a pot. I have read that they can be very tasty when pitted, chilled, and sprinkled with a bit of sugar, even substituted for strawberries in recipes that is something I will have to try!



Submitted by:
Wendy Sprague

2022 Berne Davis Service Award Recipients



Busy Bee Award: Sue Fero
Rainbow Award: Margaret Walker and Carole Kerns
Perennial Award: Dale and Linda Leger
Tree of Life: Susan Lawson

A very special ðthank youö to Mitzi Marckesano for organizing such a wonderful event, to Fiddlesticks GC for being our gracious host and to Debbie Burnside for creating the fabulous enchanted garden!

FMLCGC Calendar - Dates to Remember

- Apr. 29-30, 2022** **Fri. & Saturday** Garden Club of Cape Coral Flower Show Fri. 3-4:30pm & Sat. 9am-3pm at SW Cape Library in Cape Coral
- Apr. 30, 2022** **Saturday** American Hibiscus Society's 69th Annual Show & Sale 1-4pm @ First Assembly of God 4701 Summerlin Rd., Fort Myers, FL
- Jun 6-11th, 2022** **Monday-Saturday** *National Garden Week*
- Oct. 7-9, 2022** **Friday-Sunday** Redland International Orchid Festival at Fruit & Spice Park, 24801 SW 187th Ave Homestead, FL
- Nov. 17-18, 2022** **Thursday-Friday** 2nd Environmental Studies class, via ZOOM. \$55 for the session.

Your Board Members

President-

Susan Lawson 941-979-0615
slawson921@gmail.com

First Vice-President-

Mae Jean Nothstine 314-374-7633
maejeanoth@gmail.com

Second Vice-President-

Sylvia Swartz 239-339-3778
Email: tamargal2@aol.com

Recording Secretary-

Charlene Anderson 978-828-6696
Email: beadie1@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary-

Sylvia Lightbody 239-561-5704
Email: slightbody@comcast.net

Treasurer-

Hamilton Agnew 239-707-1000
Email: hamagnew@gmail.com

Assistant Treasurer-

Fran McIntyre 860-967-9681
Email: tances2185@sbcglobal.net