



THE COURIER

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

Berne Davis Botanical Garden

Open to the Public
Tuesdays 10 AM - 1 PM

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

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

Docent Schedule

May - Volunteer Board Members

**Full Docent Schedule can be
found in your Yearbook on pg.54**

Questions?
Contact Susan Lawson
slawson921@gmail.com

SUMMER HOURS

The gardens will be open
From 8 AM to 12 PM on
Tuesdays June-August.

2023-24 Dues to FMLCGC

**Invoices have been sent to
all Clubs and Societies for
next season along with the
information forms we need for
next season's Yearbook.**

**Please be sure to send us
this form as soon as possible!**

**Dues need to be received by
June 1st!**

President-Elect Message

As one term of office comes to an end and another begins, as President-Elect I want to assure you all that I will strive to follow the excellent example that has been set by our former Presidents – you have been very well served and I hope to continue in that same vein.

Someone once asked me – what brought you to gardening? I was a little flummoxed because I thought the answer was obvious – “I’m English”. That’s not to say that every English person gardens but a large proportion does. I come from an entire family of gardeners. My grandmother could put a walking stick in the dirt, and it would grow. I haven’t quite inherited that green thumb, but I am never happier than in the garden and I look forward to contributing to the beauty and longevity of our beautiful Berne Davis Gardens. It’s a source of great pleasure to me that we have such a great team of Master Gardeners led by Margaret Walker, our Garden Manager, and Carol Kern, Assistant Manager. The Master Gardeners have and continue to work wonders in the garden, constantly looking for new ways to improve and beautify them.

We, your new Board of Officers, and Advisors, are honored to serve you and are looking forward to continuing to move the Garden Council forward in its mission to educate our community, beautify our surroundings and to encourage conservation of our vital natural resources.

In closing, I could not do so without expressing a heartfelt thank you to Susan Lawson, outgoing President, who during her entire Presidency showed herself to be a stalwart proponent of the Council and its work. You’ll truly be a hard act to follow – thank you Susan!

I look forward to getting to know all of you - I am a good listener and always on the lookout for new ideas of how to spread the word about the Council, its gardens, and its mission., so talk to me!

Happy gardening,
Sylvia



For The Latest Info Check Our Website
WWW.FMLCGARDENCOUNCIL.COM

Garden Council Meeting Dates

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

(Officers, Directors, Committee Chairs)

- Date: May 9th, 2023
- Date: June 2nd, 2023

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 12th, 2023

Garden Council Headquarters

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 May 12, 2023

“Wild Edibles of Florida”

by David Outerbridge-Director Lee County UF/IFAS

THE GARDEN COUNCIL APRIL SOCIAL!

The April Social held on Wednesday, April 14th was a huge success! All who participated in the craft took home a lovely necklace. Everyone enjoyed their time creating the necklaces, sharing the food and their time spent making new friendships. Thanks to all who came!

We are pleased to announce the Socials will be continuing next season as well. Be sure to plan to attend.



Edison - Ford Winter Estates

2350 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers FL 33901

Web: EdisonFord.org

Monthly Garden Talks Saturdays 10 AM

May 13th,- Growing Garden Treasurers & Curiosities

Plants that are curiosities or treasures have unique characteristics and will be highlighted in this Garden Talk

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

Pre-Mother's Day Floral Workshop Sunday, May 7th, 10 AM

Participants will learn how to create a decorative basket or vase filled with flowers, which can be purchased as a gift.

Class is taught by floral designer, Anita Singh. All flowers, tools, vessels and supplies will be provided.

Registration is required at EdisonFord.org.

Cost: Edison Ford members \$75; non-members \$85

Cut Flower Sale for Mother's Day! May 13 & 14, 9AM to 4PM

CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Gulf Coast Garden Club....

Angela Lamontagne, Community Coordinator, Lee County Solid Waste will be speaking to Gulf Coast Garden Club and the community, May 8 at 10 AM at the Unity Church of Bonita Springs, 28285 Imperial Parkway, Bonita Springs, 34135. Feel free to come, learn and ask questions about Lee County's Waste Management system. Hospitality at 9 AM. RSVP 313-207-7711 or aninabach@aol.com

Alva Garden Club presents a lovely mobile sculpture as a gift to FMLCGC and the Berne Davis Gardens...

Thank you Alva Garden Club!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Poinciana Garden Club for winning four FFGC awards this year!

- Yearbook
- Facebook Page
- Community Service
- Blue Star or Gold Star Families Memorial Marker

And congratulations on winning two Deep South Awards!

- Yearbook under 20 members
- Litter Control



BERNE DAVIS HONORARY SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS



Elizabeth Meska-
Kelly Green and Royal Palm GC
Perennial Award
←

Mary King-
Gulf Coast Garden Club
Rainbow Award and
BDHSA-Tree of Life
→



Charlene Anderson-
Cape Coral Garden Club
BDHSA Nominee
→



Lynn Marshall-
Poinciana Garden Club
Busy Bee Award
←

Margaret Walker
Master Gardener and
Berne Davis Garden Mgr.
2022-23 Hurricane HERO
→

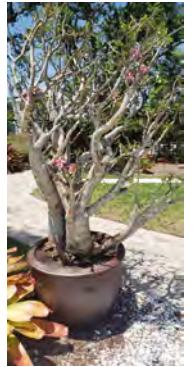


BERNE DAVIS GARDEN UPDATE

On April 25th, the Master Gardener Volunteers of The Berne Davis Botanical Garden held a potluck lunch to celebrate another successful season of improvements in the Garden and to honor Margaret Walker MGV and Garden Manager. We were joined by FMLCGC Board members: Susan Lawson, Sylvia Lightbody, Gail Shaw and Charlene Anderson. The MGVs introduced themselves to the Board members and highlighted their specific interests and projects in the Garden.

The garden will be open through the summer (weather permitting) on Tuesdays from 9AM to 12PM. There will not be docents, but the Master Gardener Volunteers will be available to answer questions while they work on their plants!

Please come and see all the changes to the garden, including the new cacti and succulent area, a kinetic sculpture, a massive Desert Rose, a bird house fence, additions to the Bonsai area, and the newest blooms in Orchid Splendor!! There is a lot of color in the Garden this spring, please come and enjoy it.



2023 Strolling Flower Show Update

The 2023 Strolling Flower Show is a wrap!! Many Thanks and kudos to the Designers and their teams and all the other people who helped make this a wonderful event.

The participating Clubs and groups were: Garden Club of Cape Coral, Periwinkle GC, Poinciana GC, Royal Palm GC, Potpourri Design Group (two entries) and the Edison Ford Winter Estates.

The winner of the **People's Choice Award** was the **Poinciana Garden Club**.

On April 27th, an Appreciation Luncheon was held at the Council Building to honor the participants. After a wonderful lunch, the attendees discussed ideas to improve the experience for SFS for the designers and the public. The general consensus is that a single venue (perhaps indoors) might make the event more popular and accessible. We are open to any ideas and will begin organizing the 2024 SFS in August, so start thinking!!! We will need members of FMLCGC to help form a committee to pick a new venue, work on publicity, sponsorships and general organizing as well as designers. There is a place for you, please consider this opportunity to help and maybe make some new friends. I want to extend my deep gratitude to Susan Lawson for all of her support and guidance this year. I truly could not have done it without her.

Sue Davies Fero,
Chairperson SFS



HORTICULTURE by Wendy Sprague

Two reliable bloomers...

One of my favorite flowers is **Spiderwort**. I am a big fan of purple flowers, and the blue purple blooms of *Tradescantia ohiensis* with their three petals won my heart. Spiderwort is in the Dayflower family, and the flowers are ephemeral, meaning they will only stay open one day. This doesn't deter bees from frequenting them! There are actually four species of Spiderwort native to Florida, with *T. ohiensis* being the most common.



This perennial has green grass like leaves and will bloom almost year-round in some parts of Florida. You can cut them back in late summer and they will bounce back in the fall. My research indicated that Spiderwort can spread easily, sometimes becoming a nuisance, but despite my entreaties, my little clump has not spread visibly. They can be propagated by seed or division, so perhaps a little attention is necessary. They thrive in dry to moderately moist, well drained soils. As an added bonus, the decorative flowers are edible, and stems and leaves can be eaten raw or cooked. The mucilaginous juice from the leaves can be used to soothe insect bites...yes, this makes me love it even more!



Another plant blooming right now is the **Peace Lily** (*Spathiphyllum* spp). I found these planted outside my house when I bought it, although they are often used as a house plant. These unusual plants require no direct sun so they are great for shade. They like regular moisture with good drainage, and may be slightly drought tolerant. They like our tropical temperatures and humidity and can be damaged by cold temperatures or a freeze. Here in South Florida(Zones 9B-10), they can form a lush clump in bright shade. Most varieties will stay small, 2-3' high with a spread of about 3'. Keep them sheltered from strong winds (which can shred the leaves), cold temperatures, harsh sunlight, and moderately watered, and you should have blooms, called spathes (they are actually bracts) pretty much year-round. You can fertilize it once or twice a year, but it does not need much, and frankly, mine has never been fertilized and has spread a little bit over the years!

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR "AD TEAM"!

Each month an ad is created and sent to this group to post online in order to increase visitors to the Berne Davis Garden and help increase attendance at garden club and plant society events that are open to the public. They post on Nextdoor and their neighborhood Facebook (FB) sites, their Developments FB site, Neighborhood FB Site, personal FB page, Club and Society FB Sites, and distribute as they feel appropriate. This has been very helpful and we really appreciate all they do! Thank you ladies!!

-Sandy Troy -Pennington-Anina Bachrach -Elizabeth Ingram -Sue Fero -Cathy Dunn
-Julie Stein -Cindy Carson and Kathy Everson



All That Glitters



Friday, March 31st and Saturday, April 1st, 2023

A sincere thank-you to the Garden Council *Village* that made this show happen. First and foremost our sparkling President - Susan Lawson who contributed so much to the show besides three prize winning designs. She organized the Societies to participate in the Gazebo, found the little butterfly boxes for treats, and just spread smiles among us all. Thanks to Co-Chair Nancy Colgan who worked so hard in signing up the Floral Designers and creating our sparkly lady mannequin. Could not have done it without Janice Miller - our Judges Chairman and Sylvia Swartz who fed us all. Lorna O'Hara who served as Classification chair - a tough job to keep all the Designers in line, AND Sue Fero - Horticulture Placement who probably moved every piece of Horticulture on the tables at least twice. BUT the Judges immediately noticed how well spaced the exhibits were. A big hug to Linda and Dale Leger for wrestling the canopy in place and to our Speakers - Wendy Sprague; Master Gardener and Herb Society members and John Hampton of the Orchid Society. You always learn something new listening to these passionate speakers. I know I am forgetting some of those faces who also contributed but know I love you all. THANKS a million.

Paula Novander - Co-Chair of "All That Glitters".



Kay Holloway - Desert Rose
Grower's Choice-Horticulture Excellence
and People's Choice Horticulture



Ena McGrattan
Blue ribbon Fascinator

Mercy Abrams - Illuminary
People's Choice Design



FMLCGC Calendar - Dates to Remember

May 09, 2023 **Gulf Coast Garden Club** is hosting a program "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" 10 AM at Unity Church, 28285 Imperial Pkwy, Bonita Springs by Angela Lamontagne, Community Coordinator Lee County Solid Waste

Apr. 9-12, 2024 **FFGC 97th Annual Convention** - Celebrating 100 Years! @ Southbank Hotel, Jacksonville, FL
Registration coming in January 2024 at FFGC.org

PRESIDENT'S FAREWELL MESSAGE

Dear and Wonderful Friends –

It's been my privilege to be the President of the Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council (FMLCGC) the past two years. I've learned so much about our member clubs and made many friends along the way. I've had the honor of presiding over Art in Bloom, two Flower Shows, and two Berne Davis Honorary Service Award luncheons where we were able to celebrate several club members who have selflessly served FMLCGC. I've also enjoyed our Socials – especially the Christmas ones with cookie exchanges! And we're finally connecting with some youngsters to form a junior garden club.

I've also watched our Berne Davis Gardens grow in many ways despite Hurricane Ian's efforts to knock us down. Our outstanding team of Master Gardeners with help from members and clubs have installed a new orchid area, a cactus and succulent garden, an expanded bonsai area, and have begun a food forest. We've also seen a beautiful piece of kinetic artwork installed by the Alva Garden Club. And we're hoping to install a new silk floss tree soon.

I'm confidently handing the reins over to a very competent leader and Board, but I also know I'm not leaving. I'll still be able to see my many friends at future meetings and events. And that makes my heart happy!



Your New Board Members

President-

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

First Vice-President-

Sue Fero 518-496-2133
Email: sdf40@aol.com

Second Vice-President-

Wendy Sprague 239-728-6543
Email: ibseafax@aol.com

Recording Secretary-

Paula Smith
Email:
pacmss2023@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary-

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

Treasurer-

Gail Shaw 239 464-4235
Email: gail17410@comcast.net

Assistant Treasurer-

Ria Benton
Email: tances2185@sbcglobal.net