

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 and Thursdays
10AM - 1 PM

Each Club and Society takes
turn providing docents.
Each club is responsible for finding
two members to staff the Visitors'
Table, or finding another club with
which to
trade dates.

Docent Schedule

March 5	Estero Island GC
March 12	Crown Colony GC
March 19	Carissa GC
March 26	Caloosahatchee BS
April 2	Bonsai Soc SW FL
April 9	American Hibiscus
April 16	Alva GC
April 23	Master Gardeners
April 30	Shell Island GC
May	Volunteer Board Members

Full Docent Schedule can be found in
your Yearbook on pg.53. Questions?
Contact Sue Fero 518-496-2133

ATTENTION

Membership invoices are
being emailed this month by
Treasurer Gail Shaw. Dues are
\$40 Members, and \$150
Affiliates.

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

After a very cold January, and February, nature is taking her time to recover.

There's lots of news in this edition of *The Courier*—check out all the events being hosted by some of our members, including two flower shows; an all-day fund raiser *March in the Park* by Garden Club of Cape Coral; the *Strawberry Shortcake and Plant Sale* that Alva Garden Club is hosting; and Punta Gorda's *Getting Crafty Workshop*. It's great to see our members staging such wonderful events.

The Council's ***Strolling Flower Show*** organized by First VP Susan Fero and her team on Feb. 13 at the Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center, was a great success—see pictures on p. 4. Thank you, Sue Fero, Sue Lawson, Kay Holloway, Anina Bachrach, Sandy Gove, Kathy Woodlock, Sandy Troy Pennington and Jody Van Cooney for all your hard work. Kudos to Anina for the great Opp. Drg. Prizes. Thanks also to the very talented designers who participated—the designs were magnificent and perfectly complemented Heidi Love Larraz's fantastic art exhibition — *-Where the Desert meets the Sea*.

Don't forget—your nominations for the Berne Davis Honorary Service Award are due by March 29. We will celebrate Berne at our annual Awards Presentation luncheon at Fiddlesticks Country Club, 15391 Cannongate Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33912 on Tuesday, April 23.

Our Arbor Day celebration was a great success. We thank Poinciana Garden Club for the Dahoon Holly now gracing our Orchid Splendor Garden. The Garden Council planted a Pigeon Plum in the Pollinator Pathway to provide some much needed shade. The event was made triumphant by the wonderful SW Florida Fiddlers who played so magnificently at the beginning of our ceremony. See photos on p. 5.

Sylvia

Sylvia Swartz, President



For the latest info, check our website
WWW.FMLCGARDENCOUNCIL.COM

Garden Council Meeting Dates

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

(Officers, Directors, Committee Chairs)

- Date: March 5 2024
- Date: April 5, 224

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 10th, 2024

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 March 8th, 2023

The Importance of Bees – Dennis & Virginia Riggs
SW FL Beekeepers Association

SAVE THE DATE— OUR LAST SOCIAL OF THE 2023-2024 SEASON!

Friday, April 19 - Spring Fling – 1:00 PM at FMLCGC

Berne Davis Service Award 2024



The Berne Davis Service Award is the most prestigious gift the Garden Council can make. It is awarded to a member of one of the Garden Clubs or Plant Societies within the Garden Council membership, who has given not only sterling service to the Council but goes above and beyond to further the aims and mission of their own organization. Nomination criteria and how to apply can be found on our website:

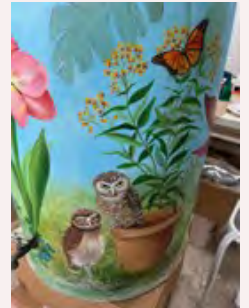
fmlcgardencouncil.com/about-the-council/activities-events/

MEMBER EVENTS

ALVA GARDEN CLUB—Visit their annual Strawberry Shortcake and Plant Sale Fest on Saturday, March 9 at Alva Methodist Church, 21440 Pearl Street, Alva, Florida 33920. A variety of Florida-grown plants from club members will be sold, in addition to beautiful specimens donated from local nurseries. Homemade strawberry shortcake baked by garden club members will be available, along with a large variety of baked goods to take home. In addition, visitors can browse a large collection of gently used books and a variety of craft and food vendors. On-site parking will be available. Proceeds from this event allow the club to continue providing civic contributions in the community.



GARDEN CLUB OF CAPE CORAL— It's all systems go for **March in the Park 2024** at Jaycee Park, (at the end of Beach Pkwy off Del Prado Blvd S. in the Cape), 9 AM—3 PM. Lots of vendors ranging from plant nurseries to many forms of garden art plus food vendors. There's a free Kids Booth offering face painting and simple crafts for your kids/grandkids as you shop. Plus, of course, the Club's plant booth selling lots of healthy plants raised by members—so you know they grow in this area. First prize in the Opp. Drg. is this gorgeous handpainted rain barrel plus many other very valuable prizes.



The Garden Club of Cape Coral Club is also presenting its biennial NGC Standard Flower Show—**The Wonderful World of Books**—at the SW Cape Library, 921 SW 39th Terrace, Cape Coral, on Friday and Saturday, April 26 and 27. Show is open to the public on Friday, April 26, 2:15 to 4:45 PM, and on Saturday, April 27, 9 AM—3 PM. Horticulture entries are welcome and encouraged from any garden club member—schedule is available from Sylvia Swartz, tamargal2@aol.com or 239-339-3778.



THE JAMES E HENDRY CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN HIBISCUS SOCIETY—successfully conducted their first ever January sale of 400 Hybrid Tropical Hibiscus plants on January 20. The sale was held at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Fort . The Chapter will hold their **71st Annual Show and Sale** on April 6, at the same location, with 400 plants available for sale!

MEMBER EVENTS—continued

PUNTA GORDA GARDEN CLUB—Ever wanted to know how to make the gorgeous natural Holiday decorations that Punta Gorda displays at its annual Holly Days event? The club is offering their **Getting Crafty with Nature** workshop on Friday, March 1, 10 AM –3PM at Buttonwood Village Community Center, 701 Aquí Esta Dr., Punta Gorda, 33950 . Registration is \$40—mail check with your name, address, phone and email details to Punta Gorda Garden Club, PO Box 511167, Punta Gorda, FL 33931 or go to their website PGGC.WRITING.IO .

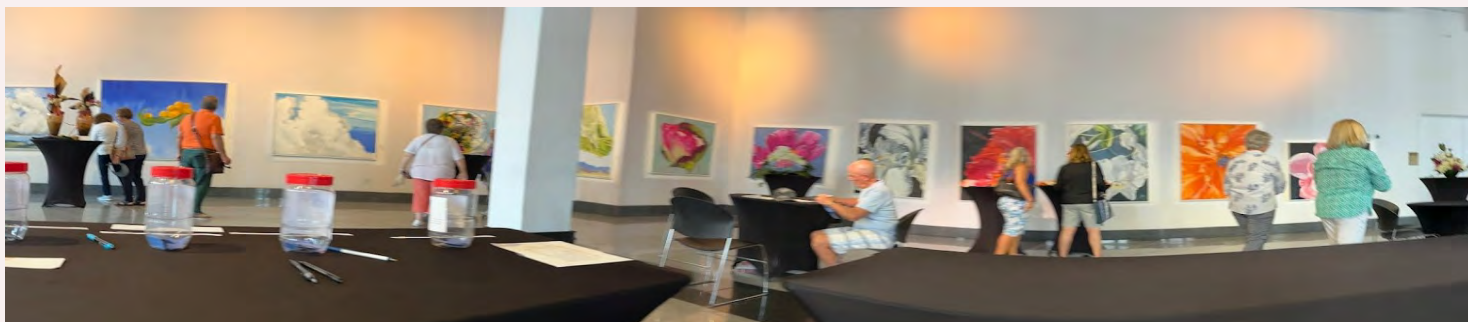


PUNTA GORDA GARDEN CLUB—will present a Standard NGC Flower Show at the Isles Yacht Club, 1780 W. Marion Ave, Punta Gorda on March 26, 2024, 1 to 3 PM. Titled **“Name That Tune,”** the show is free and open to the public in appreciation of ongoing community support for the Club’s projects and programs. More information at the Club’s website pggc.writing.io or its Facebook page.

SHELL ISLAND GARDEN CLUB—Plan to attend the upcoming Shell Islands Garden Club’s **Art in Bloom** event at the Sanibel Public Library on March 18, 19 and 20. Sixteen artists from the Sanibel-Captiva Art League are collaborating with 16 floral designer/arrangers from the garden club to present an exciting gallery of floral artistry. The exhibit begins at 12 noon on March 18 and ends at 2:00 PM, March 20. While the garden club lost many of its *Art in Bloom* accessories in the surging waters of Hurricane Ian, the library has come to the rescue with new furnishings and backdrops for the exhibit. *Art in Bloom* is free to the public and will be held on the library’s second level, 770 Dunlop Road, Sanibel Island. To learn more, go to www.san.lib.org.

AWESOME BLOSSOMS—OUR STROLLING FLOWER SHOW 2024

Sue Fero, 1st VP, and her hard working committee, staged our fabulous **“Awesome Blossoms”** 2024 Strolling Flower Show at the Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center in Downtown Fort Myers on the 13th February. The show was spectacular and all the participating designers are to be congratulated on their beautiful arrangements. The show was well attended—many of the attendees appreciating the fabulous opportunity drawing prizes garnered by Anina Bachrach.



HAPPENINGS

ARBOR DAY, FRIDAY JAN. 19 2024

As part of the 100th Anniversary celebrations of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, the Federation encouraged all federated garden clubs to plant a tree on Arbor Day 2024. Several clubs within the Garden Council, including the Garden, Garden Club of Cape Coral, Royal Palm Garden Club, and The Poinciana Garden Club responded to the Call.

After much deliberation and in conjunction with the advice of the team of UF/IFAS Master Gardeners who maintain the Berne Davis gardens, The Poinciana Garden Club's facilitator, Margot Elmore, decided that they would donate a Dahoon Holly tree to be planted in the BD Orchid Splendor area to provide much needed shade to the orchid collection. Margot collaborated with FFGC to obtain the Duke Energy grant of \$100 toward the purchase of their tree—a Dahoon Holly. Simultaneously, the Garden Council made its choice of a Pigeon Plum tree to be planted alongside the Pollinator Garden pathway from the Larchmont entrance to the gardens. Nick Gallant, the Council's Garden contractor, dug the holes notwithstanding some of the heaviest rains we have had all season.

On January 19, Florida Arbor Day, the Council's two guests of honor, Councilman Liston D. Bochette III, and District IX Director, Susan Lawson, and three former Presidents of the Council, gathered in the meeting room for a short ceremony. Prior to the ceremony, the SW FL Fiddlers played a short music program. Here are some photos of the event:



Garden Club of Cape Coral planted Sweet Magnolia Trees trees in each of two separate Cape Coral Parks—Sirenica and Cultural Park.



Gulf Coast Garden Club planted an Orange Geiger tree near its Blue Star Marker in the Bonita Springs Riverside Park.

Royal Palm Garden Club planted a Dahoon Holly tree at Lakes Park to mark FL Arbor Day. This tree was also in memory of long-time member Winnie Stone who passed away late last year at the age of 101. .



Edison - Ford Winter Estates

2350 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers FL 33901

Web: EdisonFord.org

Monthly Garden Talks

Saturdays 10am

Mar. 9th-Hibiscus

May 11th-Gardenias

\$10 for EF Members; \$15 for Non-Members

Participants get a 20% off Garden Shoppe coupon

Gardening Classes

The Power of Native Plants in your Landscape
March 19 and March 23

April 11—Pioneering Women in Horticulture

April 23 and April 27—The Fragrant Garden

(Check Website for location & fees — registration required)

MORE HAPPENINGS

GARDEN COUNCIL PRESENTS 2024 SCHOLARSHIP CHECK



Florida Gulf Coast University 2023 Scholarship recipient Kara Fischer attended the January meeting of the Garden Council and reported how helpful the scholarship had been to her in juggling her research work and her job. She was accompanied by Lisa Osorio, Leadership Giving Director. Lisa is pictured receiving the 2024 scholarship donation from Council President, Sylvia Swartz.

POINCIANA MAKES AND DELIVERS CUPS OF CHEER!

The Poinciana Garden Club members created and delivered 40 Cups of Cheer on Feb. 13, to Hope Hospice and Senior Day Care Center in Lehigh Acres. Publix donated the flowers and the greens and other floral materials came from members. Launched in 2021, this community service project is one of Poinciana's favorite programs.



NEW FFGC DISTRICT IX DIRECTOR



We bid a warm welcome to former President of the Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council, Sue Lawson as the new Florida Federation of Garden Clubs District IX Director. Sue is taking over mid term from Claudia Chopp, who had to resign for health reasons. Sue will be our District IX Director for the remainder of this current term, which ends in May 2025, and will then continue for the term 2025-2027. Congratulations Sue—we are so proud of you and look forward to working with you.

BERNE DAVIS GARDEN UPDATE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BERNE DAVIS BOTANICAL GARDEN

Margaret Walker, MG 2020 Garden Manager

Spring will be coming soon. Our cypress trees in the Bonsai and Rain Garden are showing small green branches. Many of our plantings are showing spring growth especially in our Pollinator Pathway. Please come and see this section as we now have National Garden Cub, Inc. Certified Pollinator Garden status—see next paragraph.



Audrey Heneage, Master Gardener 2020 (and Garden Council Librarian) has been instrumental in the Pollinator plantings to assure quality plant choices that meet the Florida Friendly Landscape principles. She also lovingly tends this area for optimal viewing for our visitors. When you visit the Berne Davis Botanical Garden please take a moment to speak to Audrey to learn more about the value of pollinators.

In addition to the Larchmont Street entrance, Audrey has assisted with other sections of the main garden. The high population of butterflies, bees, birds, and insects are a joy to watch and provide educational opportunities for young and old. Information about our plants can be found in the signage of individual plants and section QR codes accessible with your smart phone.

The garden is beautiful and ready for you to bring your friends and family soon.



REMINDER

Does your Club or Plant Society have special events, news or accolades they would like included in the next *Courier*? Great! Please email your information and/or photos to fmlcgardencouncil@gmail.com at least two weeks before the publication of the newsletter which is published in September, November, January, March and May. Please mark your subject in the email as "*Courier News*". Thank you!

HORTICULTURE by Wendy Sprague

While working in my garden I frequently hear birds singing but do not know what they are. This has always bothered me as I have always felt the need to identify the things I hear and see in nature. This year I downloaded a free app for my phone called "Merlin Bird ID". This app lets you record a song and identifies the bird! I recently identified a *Carolina Wren*, and when I googled it for more information, I was pleasantly surprised to see that they are insectivores that eat near or on the ground.



They eat spiders, beetles, grasshoppers, crickets, stick bugs, snails, ants, and bees! Apart from the bees, which I wish they would leave alone, I am delighted to have these garden helpers munching on pests! A pretty song to go with the hard-working pest control!



I also noticed another hard working pest control helper in my garden...an Assassin Bug (*Zelus longipes*) nymph! These bright orange insects set a sticky trap for their prey and will use a sharp beak to feed on insects such as flies and aphids. Be sure to identify insects in your garden as friend or foe before taking action! Remember that most insects look differently as they progress from juvenile to adult...making their identification that much more challenging to identify insects in your garden as friend or foe before taking action! Remember that most insects look differently as they progress from juvenile to adult...making their identification that much more challenging.

FMLCGC Calendar - Dates to Remember

March 8th—Council Meeting

April 19th—Spring Fling—our final social of the season, FMLCGC Meeting room. Sign up at the Council Meeting March 8

April 23—Berne Davis Service Award Luncheon, Fiddlesticks Country Club. Nominations due by March 29—see criteria and nomination procedure at <https://fmlcgardencouncil.com/about-the-council/programs/berne-davis-honorary-service-award/>

May 10—Final Council meeting of the season, FMLCGC meeting room

Your Board Members

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