



THE HIBISCUS LEAFLET

Coral Gables Garden Club, Coral Gables, Florida ~ Celebrating our 95th Year

November 2020

Let's count our blessings and still move forward on Zoom

My thoughts are with you all as we approach Thanksgiving with no end to the pandemic in sight. I understand how difficult and scary it must be for some and also how endless it seems. We also know that "this too shall pass", but until it does, we must make the best of it.

Which brings me to my plea. . .

The Garden Club is here for you if you will only reach out to us. Participation in our Zoom meetings has been disappointingly minimal at best, but I know you would be pleasantly surprised if you took the leap and joined in. Our first two programs, by Georgia Tasker and Victor Lazzari, were wonderful! Seeing your fellow members, even if only in little squares, reminds you that we are in this together. And realizing they can join in from wherever they are - Colorado, South Carolina, almost anywhere! - makes you realize this new technology is pretty amazing. I will look forward to seeing more of you at our next meeting on November 23rd.

Aside from meetings, the club is also busy with community projects. Evelyn Budde has worked with the City's landscape department to plant beautiful flowers at the Blue Star Memorial Marker in front of the Youth Center, and Sandy Milledge will be creating a wreath to place there on Veteran's Day, November 11th.

Susan Thomas and her "Spade Brigade" planted herbs at the Merrick House Heritage Garden on October 30th. It was fun to dig in the dirt with old and new friends, while keeping a safe distance, of course.

We are investigating a little project the city is doing in partnership with the Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association. A newly purchased vacant lot will become a park with a lovely unmowed patch of pollinator plants in the center. We may be able to help with this project in some way. Read Linda Waldron's article and stay tuned!

Project Canopy is becoming a reality with four of five public schools accepting our offer of planting three shade or flowering trees on their properties. We expect to install them at two schools next week and Steve Pearson, of Tremendous Miami, has offered to donate and plant five smaller trees by hand at a third school that has no access for large equipment. Join us for a photo-op on planting day and consider donating to this exciting project!

Remember to visit our new website - coralgablesgardenclub.org - to see the new articles posted by our "Hothouse" bloggers, all professionals from different fields. And check out the creative Fall arrangements by our members, or better yet, submit a photo of your own arrangement to Susan Rodriguez to be eligible for a prize!

Take heart, ladies. We will meet again in person when it is safe to do so, but until then stay well, stay safe, try Zooming . . .and have a Happy Thanksgiving!

~ With love from the garden, Judy



Time for gardening in South Florida...How does your garden grow?

On October 30th, five members of the CGCC, Evelyn Budde; France Ingraham; Sherri Puerto; Judy Mangasarian and Susan Thomas along with four able helpers from the city led by Valeria Quintanilla, enjoyed planting the Heritage Garden at the Merrick House.

The city of Coral Gables graciously donated the plants which were herbs. We now have Basil, Parsley, and Mint in addition to the existing Italian and Cuban varieties of Oregano. It was a lovely morning and a terrific opportunity to get better acquainted, dig in the dirt, learn something new about plants and enjoy the fresh air

~ Susan Thomas, Heritage Gardens



Even while sheltering, our club is making progress...

We now have created a donor page on our website to recognize all of our wonderful donors who have contributed to our Project Canopy project. Thank you all for your donations.

Check out the videos we are posting on the members' side of the website. The Petal Pushers, Sharon, Lucy and Ruth are doing such a great job planning our virtual workshops. Don't miss Lucy Reinhardt's Kokedama video. She is showing us how to make plant spheres that you can display in a bowl or hang.

Next Lucy will create a beautiful "Pot-et-Fleur" arrangement using lovely plants and flowers in the colors of greens, purple, magenta, and pink. It will be posted on the members side of our website under videos.

Even though Zeta has made its way through the gulf coast states, I am crossing my fingers that Hurricane season is almost behind us and we can look forward to planting our first two schools with shade and flowering trees.

Many of you have expressed an interest in buying a whole tree, which would include installation and delivery. Designating a particular school was also of interest, so we now have included a whole tree option and you may choose a school if you desire or choose all schools on our donation page.

Ponce De Leon Middle School and the Henry S. West Laboratory School are excited to receive their new trees. Ponce will be receiving (3) 14' Live Oak trees, *Quercus Virginiana*. They will be planted in a row by the basketball court. The Southern live oak is not a true ever-green tree as it sheds its leaves when new growth appears in the Spring. (I love the brown, burnt sienna and ochre colors of their leaves as I use those leaves as mulch.) These trees are slow growers, can grow up to 80 ft tall, and down the road they will provide much needed shade for the kids as well as support an abundant habitat for birds and butterflies.

Henry S. West Laboratory School has chosen (3) 14' Cassia Bakeriana trees for the north side of their school, which will have a spectacular display of color in the spring. The Cassia Bakeriana, commonly called pink shower tree, is a small flowering tree that typically matures to 20-30' tall and as wide. It is a fast-growing tree and a great choice for homeowners as well.

G.W. Carver Middle school has opted for (5) 5 ft. trees that need to be hand dug as they have no access to their recess area for heavy equipment. Steve Pearson is donating his time and trees to this school.

If you would like to attend the installations of these trees at the above mentioned schools, in November, please contact Susan Rodriguez at susan56athome@gmail.com. This will be a great picture taking opportunity for the club and a chance to get together for something worthwhile. Don't forget to wear your masks.

~ Susan Rodriguez, First Vice President



NOVEMBER MEETING SPEAKER

The Program for the **General Membership meeting on November 23rd, 2020 at 10:00am** promises to be educational and informative.

Rachel Silverstein Ph.D. joined Miami Waterkeeper as Executive Director & Waterkeeper in June of 2014. Prior to joining MWK, Rachel was a Knauss Sea Grant Fellow and Professional Staff for the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard in Washington, DC. She got SCUBA certified at 14 and has been a diver ever since. Please join us for our program at our general meeting, to listen to Rachel's lecture on "Nutrient pollution and Biscayne Bay."

The Metamorphosis of Coral Gables Experimental Pollinator Site

Dennis Olle, President of The Miami Blue Chapter (MBC) of the North American Butterfly Association, and Linda Waldron of the Coral Gables Garden Club, in cooperation with the City of Coral Gables, have proposed that an experimental pollinator site be created at the City's recently-acquired property located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Bird Road and Toledo Street. A sign to this effect is posted at the site, and it refers to the MBC website which includes a butterfly checklist showing recent sightings at the location (currently we're up to 17 species).

You will note that the creation of this pollinator friendly site only required the cessation of routine mowing, but we plan to do more.

We believe that not only is this the beginning of a "beautiful relationship" between the City and pollinators, but that this site will also offer educational opportunities for children and adults. In the future, if there is sufficient interest, we hope to conduct butterfly walks at the site.

Many thanks to Dennis Olle for setting this up.

~ Linda Waldron



Dear Garden Club Ladies,

Saturday, March 20th, 2021, is the first day of Spring and the date we have chosen for our Garden Tour.

So far we have two wonderful gardens, Montgomery Botanical Center and the garden of John and Suzuyo Fox. We are looking for two more in the South Gables area and we need your help to locate those.

If public health permits and we have the Tour, we will be limiting our guests to 300 attendees, so we can feel safe and practice social distancing. Masks will also be part of the attire for the day.

Tickets to the Tour will be purchased online through the Garden Club Website, ONLY. Members will not be given tickets to sell this year.

~ Alexis Ehrenhaft and Marie Vacca, Spring Garden Tour Co-Chairs

