



THE HIBISCUS LEAFLET

Coral Gables Garden Club Coral Gables, Florida ~ Celebrating our 97th Year

A proud member of the National Garden Club, Inc. and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs

February 2022

President's Message: Hello Miami winter!



Queens Wreath Vine (*Petrea volubilis*)

It's such a wonderful time of year to be outside in Coral Gables. Everywhere I look, I see a potential composition for a canvas or a lovely photograph. There is considerable eye candy in my backyard alone, with Cattleya and Vanda orchids finally blooming and my Queens Wreath Vine (*Petrea volubilis*) pleasantly surprising me this week with its stunning display of purple flowers beloved by bees and butterflies.

This gorgeous weather has motivated me to walk into town, discovering new businesses and restaurants that are hopping with a new generation of patrons. People of all ages are out walking their dogs and enjoying the urban life the city has to offer. I hope you will take advantage of this time and get out and take photographs for our upcoming photography competition. We always include the category "Everything Coral Gables." An example of an image submission could be a landscape, a flower, a building or architectural element. A scene that depicts urban life, night life, activities...you name it; if you recorded the image in Coral Gables, it qualifies to be submitted in the Coral Gables Category.

Select winning images will be featured in the Coral Gables Magazine this summer. Our speaker of the month, Kirsten Hines, is an amazing nature photographer and one of the judges for our contest, so be sure to come to our February 28th evening meeting at the Biltmore to see her presentation.

On February 26th, we will be at the Farmers Market, selling caladium bulbs and promoting our luncheon and photography contest. I need volunteers to sign up for this day, so please contact me at susan56athome@gmail.com for a shift. Shifts are 8:00 AM-10:00 AM, 10:00 AM-12:00PM and 12:00 PM-2:00 PM.

Fast approaching is our Florals and Fashions luncheon, March 18th, which is our biggest fundraiser this year. Chaired by Barbara Reese and her co-chair Jo Wanda Peterson, this will be a beautiful event filled with gorgeous arrangements by our designing divas, showcasing the talents of the garden club. An exciting kickoff has been planned for March 4 — read all about it on Page 2, and remember, our club gets 10% of sales during the kickoff event!

A big shout out to Betsy Tilghman for writing our horticulture article this month. I'm grateful for her contribution and for everyone else who has contributed to the newsletter.

With sadness, I must report the death of member Mary Whitcomb, who passed away on January 18th. Mary was our treasurer for years, also our auditor for many years following her term on the executive board. Please see Page 4 for Sharon Trbovich's moving tribute to her friend and fellow club member.

Finally, Valentine's day is coming up on the 14th. You may not be my significant other, but you certainly are significant to this club, and for that I send you lots of love.

Happy Valentine's Day

Susan Rodriguez, President

February 28th Program News — **Evening**

by Teresa Zohn

Where: Biltmore Hotel Danielson Gallery / Garden House for Workshop

When:

5:15 PM - **Workshop** (signup & \$20 fee required by Feb 21)

5:45 PM - **Social time** with food, drinks

6:30 PM - **Program** "Reflecting Nature, A Photographic Journey"

The **February 28th** General Membership Meeting will be held in person starting at 5:45 PM for social time. Our program speaker is photographer Kirsten Hines presenting: "Reflecting Nature, A Photographic Journey."

The workshop at 5:15 PM will feature Leticia Gunn, District XII Director. She will present a hands-on flower design workshop in the garden house. The cost is \$20 each and will include your supplies. You must make a reservation at Teresa.zohn@gmail.com or 305-773-0262 by February 21, a week before the workshop. Please join us for this great learning event.



Spade Brigade – Merrick House Feb 5th

Please join our next heritage garden workday at Merrick House on Saturday, Feb 5 at 9:30 AM. Bring gloves, hats and tools, and prepare to have a great morning of gardening. Thanks in advance, and see you there!

—Paula Biehler

Field Trip – Homestead Feb 16th

Greetings, Adventurous Ladies of the Garden Club!! We are organizing a field trip down to Homestead to visit **Casey's Corner Nursery, on Wednesday, February 16th at 10:00 AM**. Nursery owner Susan R. Casey specializes in "Plants for Birds and Butterflies, Natives, Fruit Trees, Palms, and Much More." She will give us a fascinating presentation and then a tour of her nursery. If you wish to buy anything, please bring cash or a check per the owner's request.

Afterwards, we will lunch at my favorite taco joint (La Quebradita) and/or perhaps enjoy strawberry milkshakes and cinnamon buns at Knaus Berry Farm (also cash only).

Please RSVP to me (305-461-6076 or jmango15@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining us for this delightful day in the country. I will give you directions to the site or let you know who else is coming so carpools can be arranged. For more information and location details, please check out their website: <https://www.plantrealflorida.org/professionals/detail/16> Hope to see you then! —Judy Mangasarian

*Casey's
Corner*



Fashion Fundraiser Kickoff Party – Lilly Pulitzer March 4th

To fully appreciate the excitement of our kickoff party to celebrate the big spring fundraiser, we need to step back in time and relish the history of resort fashion maven, Lilly Pulitzer.

An heiress in her own right, and by 1959 a settled Palm Beach socialite, Lilly Pulitzer was a restless young wife and mother with a head for business. Seven years into marriage with equally fabled Peter Pulitzer (grandson of Josef Pulitzer, of Pulitzer Prize fame), Lilly was high society through and through, having been school friends with Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy and other notables. But Lilly liked to follow her own path, from throwing casual house parties to keeping a pet monkey. Since her husband had invested in central Florida citrus groves that offered an unlimited supply of fruit, Lilly decided it would be interesting to open a juice bar on a Palm Beach high street. But making juice drinks made a mess of her clothes, so she commissioned some simple shift dresses in colorful cotton prints of her own design—swirling, free-form shapes of pink, yellow, green and orange to disguise future citrus stains.

As it turned out, Lilly's customers and friends adored her new look, and soon her juice bar was selling dresses that quickly outpaced sales of juice. Additional shops followed, and Lilly Pulitzer became a fashion sensation and definer of a unique American resort wear look. Today, the collection has expanded and includes sophisticated styles and sizes for all figures.

The Lilly Pulitzer store in the Coral Gables Village of Merrick Park has been a supportive partner in collaborating with the Coral Gables Garden Club to create a special **Floral and Fashion** event as our main fundraiser this year, to be held on **March 18th at the Biltmore**.



Peter Pulitzer and his first wife, Lilly, in 1955. Photo by Slim Aarons/Getty Images

Please join us for an exciting kickoff event, **March 4th from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM** at the **Lilly Pulitzer store in Merrick Park**. You can lift a glass of Prosecco in Lilly's honor as you browse the latest fashions. Enter your name in a raffle for a chance to win a beautiful Lilly Pulitzer gift. Most importantly, come out to support our club —CCGC receives 10% of your purchases—and invite your friends to do the same. Here's looking at you, Lilly!!



Butterfly of the Month: Florida Leafwing

by Linda Waldron

The Florida Leafwing Butterfly (*Anaea florisalis*) is a native. Its natural habitat is pine rocklands, which once covered 185,000 acres in Miami Dade County. With loss of habitat, pesticide use and invasion of exotic plant species, the Florida Leafwing now is seen only in Everglades National Park. It is considered an endangered species and is federally protected.



National Park Service Photo by
Jimi Sadle



Flashy red or orange wings make it easy to spot in flight, but the underside of its wings—which show when it is at rest—make it look a bit like a dead leaf. This is why it is called a “leafwing.”

Caterpillars of the Leafwing only feed on pineland croton, a shrub that grows in the understory of a pine rockland habitat. This makes a good reason to join Fairchild’s “Connect to Protect” program, which seeks to increase the number of pine rockland plants in residents’ yards to provide a “bridge” for wildlife between the fragments of pine rockland that remain in Miami Dade. Sign up and help our endangered Leafwing!

Everglades National Park Photo by David L Lysinger

Calling all Photographers

The As I See It photography contest needs you!! This is a major fundraiser for our Garden Club, and we urge all members to participate—not only by entering your photos, but also in sharing the contest information with family, friends and colleagues near and far, and on social media.

Multiple categories provide many chances at cash prizes, and the excitement of taking pictures and submitting your work before respected photography judges cannot be measured.

Please consider every possible way you can participate in order to support our club. Funds raised through this month-long event will assist much of what we do all year, including an array of community service projects. For all the contest details, visit the dedicated page on the club website: AS I SEE IT photography competition <https://www.coralgablesgardenclub.org/photocontest/>

—Susan Rodriguez



THE CORAL GABLES GARDEN CLUB
PRESENTS THE 2ND ANNUAL
AS I SEE IT
Photography Competition 2022

A Juried Nature and Wildlife Photo Competition
Learn about the details by scanning the QR code.
or visit coralgablesgardenclub.org/photocontest





Over \$4000 in Cash Prizes
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Photography Tips

- Avoid taking pictures outdoors in the middle of the day for a more pleasing light.
- Use your hands to frame an imaginary picture for better composition.
- Use rule of thirds for better landscape composition
- Shoot eye level with your subject for a more intimate portrait.
- Place your shadow towards the subject for even illumination.
- Have a clear subject
- Use colors to compose

Above: A selection of prize-winning photos by Bonnie Masdeu

Remembering Mary Whitcomb



The Coral Gables Garden Club and I lost a great friend on January 18th. Mary loved the Garden Club and supported us in many ways. She was our Treasurer for many years—famous for requiring an 'RFP' properly filled out, or there would be no check!! Mary loved "Fun With Flowers" and attended all our workshops. Her favorite was the one that Sandy Milledge gave for decorating bird houses.

Mary was a whiz at financial matters. When Mary came for dinner, she and my husband Bob would talk stocks, what should she buy or sell. She took great pride in her property. The front yard had a very precise trimming of lawn, shrubs, etc.; however, the back was unruly in a lovely tropical way, with orchids and bromeliads sprouting from the trees. Having a gin and tonic on her screened back porch was lovely.

Mary loved animals, especially her cats. She left a window open in her garage just in case they were caught outside in inclement weather. Sometimes, Mary would find the odd opossum and the occasional fox snuggled down in the garage. She had a favorite cardinal that would come by and serenade her.

Mary Whitcomb

Mary took great pride in her appearance and in physical fitness. She introduced us to 'mall walking'. Before we could get our bearings at the mall, she was already on her way! One fond memory of Mary was pulling into her drive, looking up and seeing her on the garage roof, trimming overhanging branches!!

A red cardinal appeared in my garden the morning I learned of her passing and sang his favorite tune. They say if a cardinal appears when you are sad, they are there to let you know all is well...so I took it as a good sign. This much I know for certain: Mary will be missed.

—Sharon Trbovich

Announcements

Tour of Kitchens date will happen on **March 5th**. Betsy Tilghman is our new Chair for the Tour of Kitchens plant sale. We will be set up at the lovely home of Marlin Ebbert. If you are available to help set up the day before and/or sell plants and orchids the day of, send an email to betsytilghman@yahoo.com. We need a set-up shift, Friday March 4th from 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM. For March 5th, we need 3 shifts: 9:00 AM -11:00 AM, 11:00 AM -1:00 PM, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM.

Membership deadline—A reminder that the deadline for new membership applications is March 1, 2022. Please send to: morris.sally@comcast.net under the header Membership Application.

Fun With Flowers — March 26th “March Madness”

For all our members who love flowers, here comes Fun with Flowers again! We have moved our next session to Saturday, March 26 from the previously announced Feb. 26 date to avoid conflict with February's planned workshop. We are hoping that by March 26 we will be able to meet in person, so stay tuned for location updates as we get closer to the date.

Moving Fun with Flowers to March made us think of "March Madness", and our interpretation of that is to demonstrate a couple of "mad" ideas that depart from traditional flower arranging themes. As always, we will be offering tips and ideas throughout the demonstration. Count on laughs and learning as you create your floral designs.

The deadline to sign up for March Madness is Saturday, March 19, and you can sign up any time between now and then. Cost of the session is \$10 to cover the cost of flowers and containers, and payment is due when you sign up. To sign up, contact either Sharon Trbovich, 305-443-1498, skyeterriers1@gmail.com or Kitty Winkler, 786-536-2110, kittywink1@gmail.com.

Green Tip: Cool Water and Full Loads of Laundry

by Marlin Ebbert

The water heater is a large user of energy in most homes—about 90% of the energy used to wash clothes is from heating the water, so switching to cold water makes a BIG difference! Try to wash only full loads of laundry to further conserve.



Repotting Orchids

by Betsy Tilghman

After being asked to submit a small tutorial on orchid repotting I peered into my orchid house, knowing I would find plenty of orchids in desperate need of being my subjects. Shameful! If the pandemic has taught me one thing, it is that the lament of "I just don't have the time" is often a lie we tell ourselves. The truth is more akin to "I just don't want to." And when lovely Phalaenopsis can now be bought on the side of the road for under \$20, it makes that repotting pull a little less urgent.

Nonetheless, here are my thoughts and recommendations from years of repotting—both successes and lessons learned from the occasional neglect of my collection. It should be noted that every orchid fancier has their own method. These are mine, and I hope you find them useful.

Phalaenopsis require one type of repotting. Cattleya, dendrobium and oncidium orchids, which all have a pseudobulb, require something a little different.

For best results, you'll want to repot after blooming. To repot a Phal, first you must choose an appropriate new pot and medium. Remember that sphagnum moss will retain more moisture than bark, and that a clay pot will dry out more quickly than a plastic one, so decide what combination is best for your growing conditions. Orchid roots don't like to be lost in the medium, so you won't want to over pot—choose a pot just a little bigger than the existing one.

Gather your chosen medium—an orchid bark mix, sphagnum moss or a mixture of the two—and soak it in a bucket of water. Next, take the plant out of its old pot and remove all the old potting material from the roots. If your Phal is really old, the stalk-like piece from which the leaves emerge should be cut back, and the roots too. Clean the roots with water straight from the hose. My mother used to shake some Captan (a broad-spectrum fungicide) on the roots and leaves, but a healthy, more earth-friendly alternative is to do the same with cinnamon, which has strong anti-fungal properties. (This step is optional, but repotting can be rather traumatic to the plant, so any help is good.) Place the Phal in the center of the new pot, with its base at the top of the medium, tilting it at a slight angle so that water will not accumulate where the leaves emerge and cause the plant to rot. Add your medium while holding the orchid where you want it.

To repot an orchid that grows by means of new pseudobulbs emerging from the side of the last pseudobulb (Cattleyas and the like), cut away the back part of the plant that has dead or dying pseudobulbs and place the orchid with the now oldest part of the plant close to one edge of the pot. This gives your orchid room to grow as it travels across the pot. Sometimes, two pseudobulbs will sprout, and, with time, you will be able to divide the plant into two orchids. The base of the plant should be at the top of the medium. To keep the orchid in place, use orchid clips. Repot after the orchid has flowered but before you see pseudobulbs emerging, as they are very fragile.

Tips:

- Use old clay shards, lightly cleaned and soaked in diluted Clorox for bottom filler in pots. Packing peanuts and wine corks also work well.
- Soak your potting medium in a large bucket with water. Lay a section of 2x4 wood over the bucket and use that as your potting bench. This way the potting material that doesn't make it into the pot falls back into the bucket for another pot.
- Sterilize your clippers after use on each plant. I alternate two clippers, which I place in a container of alcohol.
- If you need to trim away a piece of a leaf because it is sick, make a paste of cinnamon, and cover the cut with it.
- Wine corks make great fillers for vanda baskets.
- Use chopsticks to push the medium down and around the orchid roots.
- If orchid roots are clinging to the sides of a pot, soak the whole thing in a bucket for a few minutes. They will lift right off.
- Mist frequently all newly potted orchids until you see new roots.



Club Happenings and Volunteer Opportunities 2022*

2022

Feb 5 (Sat) **Spade Brigade — 9:30 AM Merrick House Heritage Garden**

Feb 16 (Wed) **Field Trip — 10:00 AM Casey's Corner Nursery & Landscaping, Homestead, FL**

Mar 4 (Fri) **Kick-off Party for Spring Fashion Event — 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM Lily Pulitzer store, Merrick Park**

Mar 5 (Sat) **Tour of Kitchens —** The Coral Gables Community Foundation's 13th annual Tour of Kitchens schedule has changed. Watch for news on our club's participation this year.

Mar (TBD) **Garden Therapy —** COVID -19 permitting

Mar 18 (Fri) **Spring Floral and Fashion Show — 11:00 AM Biltmore Hotel Alhambra Room**
A very special Floral and Fashion Show luncheon chaired by Barbara Reese and Jo Wanda Peterson, this will be our main fundraiser and open to the public. Plan now to bring your friends, as this promises to be a fabulous event! It will be held Friday, March 18th at the Biltmore Hotel, where models will walk the runway at the Alhambra Ballroom, wearing the latest Lilly Pulitzer fashions. Beautiful floral arrangements designed by the Garden Club Divas will make the theme of Fashions and Florals come alive.

Mar 26 (Sat) **Fun with Flowers — 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**, March Madness (Signup deadline is Saturday, March 19).

April 1 (Fri) **CGGC "As I See It" Photo Contest**
April 1st - April 30th, 2022—Our 2nd annual Photography Competition. Participate in this virtual fundraiser from the convenience of your home. Volunteers with web, Excel and/or social media experience are needed. We will distribute promotional materials at our Farmers Markets, so we need volunteers to participate in the setup and the day's events. Contact Susan Rodriguez at susan56athome@gmail.com. An exhibition after the results is being discussed; we would need a Chair to plan this event. Please contact Susan Rodriguez.

April 6 (Wed) **Field Trip — Miami Beach Botanical Garden, South Miami Beach**

April 23 (Sat) **Fun with Flowers — 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, Springtime Designs (Sign-up deadline Saturday, April 16)**

April (TBD) **Arbor Day To be arranged with the City of Coral Gables**

May 4th **Luncheon and Installation of CGGC Officers, Merrick House:** Contact Liz Parnes at ecparnes1@aol.com to sign up for that committee.

*2022 club happenings subject to change based on COVID Guidelines

There are many opportunities to volunteer; please review our committees on the website and in your Yearbooks, and contact the appropriate Chair to volunteer.

Website updates—Check out the latest for a full-color experience

- AS I SEE IT photography competition <https://www.coralgablesgardenclub.org/photocontest/>
- The new hothouse blog from Dalton Helsey on Citizen Science <https://www.coralgablesgardenclub.org/the-hothouse-blog/>
- Linda Waldron's latest Green Gables blog post <https://www.coralgablesgardenclub.org/green-gables/>
- The updated Pollinator Patch page <https://www.coralgablesgardenclub.org/pollinator-patches/>
- The Merrick House holiday décor and event <https://www.coralgablesgardenclub.org/merrick-house-holiday/>
- The 2022 Red mangrove project <https://www.coralgablesgardenclub.org/red-mangrove/>

