



The Hibiscus

Coral Gables Garden Club, Coral Gables, Florida ~ Celebrating our 99th Year

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

November 2023

A Spooktacular Beginning to the Fall Season

President's Message

Warm Greetings, Garden Club Members,

As we find ourselves on the cusp of our 99th holiday season, I am delighted to share the success of our recent Halloween Garden Therapy event. Thanks to the dedication of our Chair, Carmen Cason, and her team of volunteers, we created an enchanting day at Crystal Academy on October 30th. Armed with an abundance of vibrant flowers and containers, we were able to provide 44 eager children with the opportunity to craft their own floral masterpieces. It truly warms my heart to see how much joy these events bring to the children and our dedicated volunteers. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Carmen and her team for making that day special for the kids and staff. It was indeed a "Spooktacular" experience.



This year, our members are working on various projects that will fill your hearts with pride for being a part of the Coral Gables Garden Club. If you wish to contribute your time and talent to these meaningful endeavors, please do not hesitate to contact the committee chairs. They are eager to hear from you and would greatly appreciate your assistance. The list of committees can be found in your yearbook on pages 5-6.

Our next general meeting will take place after Thanksgiving, which is fast approaching. I want to take this moment to wish every one of you a joyous and Happy Holiday. As we embark on this holiday season, let us take a moment to reflect on the abundance of blessings we have in our lives and extend our thoughts and prayers to those individuals around the world who are facing adversity and hardship.

Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful holiday filled with warmth, joy, and gratitude.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Susan Rodriguez

President

November 27th Program News

By Barbara Reese

Workshop: Pot-et-Fleurs for the Holidays

Topic: Living plants combined with cut flowers give a lasting and renewable table arrangement for entertaining or gifting. Presented by Sandy Milledge

General Membership Meeting food service at 11:15 am in the Laguna Room. Meeting starts at 12:00 pm.

Program: "Designing Outdoor Spaces"

Presenter: Jennie Rogers, a landscape architect and Principal at Curtis + Rogers Design Studio will present a slide show

Hostesses: Judy Mangasarian, Sherry Jordan, Mercy Arrieta, Mabel Galloppi, Donna Box, Candy Cosmides, Marlin Ebert, Ariel Fernandez. Buffet centerpieces courtesy of Joan Wright.

Contact: Remember to RSVP to the Evite you will receive. If you bring a guest, please provide their name.

October General Meeting



Drew Mullin shared orchid growing tips including fertilization and species information.

Sandy Milledge taught our members how to make beautiful flower arrangements using flowers from the grocery store.

District XII Meeting

Sharon Trbovich



The meeting was on October 18, and a great time was had by all – judging by the laughter heard throughout the day. Our theme was “A Magical Masquerade.” I’d like to thank everyone who was involved in helping to make this meeting successful and fun! We were gathered for this meeting not only to learn about FFGC and the other clubs in our District but also to celebrate the upcoming 100th Birthday of FFGC. All in all, it was an enjoyable day...Hope to see you at the next one.

Garden Therapy

Carmen Cason

It was a Spooktacular time at Crystal Academy, spending time with the children.

For more photos, see our [Facebook group here](#).



The Monthly November Flower Show

Donna Box

This month, I will be presenting a Parallel Design. The Parallel Design is considered a Creative Design. Traditional Designs are based on a single pattern of geometric forms sphere, cylinder, or pyramid, and the plant material is placed in a naturalistic manner. Traditional patterns do not bind a Creative Design. The Parallel Design consists of three (3) or more groupings of plant material with strong parallel placement in a single container and/or base. A full description is on page 75 of the Handbook for Flower Shows.



Frame Fatales Meeting Updates

Bonnie Seipp



The Frame Fatales Photography group had a fabulous meeting on October 25th with photographer Ernesto Rodriguez, a winner of our As I See It photography contest. Ernesto gave a very informative presentation about long exposure photography and discussed how he takes his beautiful Everglades and Florida Keys landscapes.

Frame Fatales Date Changes

- November 18, 2023, meeting canceled.
- December 5, 2023, 10-1pm Frame Fatales to participate in the December 5, 2023, field trip, The Floating Classroom.
- January 24, 2024, meeting canceled.
- February 21, 2024, 11-12pm Frame Fatales to participate in the February 21, 2024, field trip, a private tour of Vizcaya.
- March 21, 2024, 7-8 pm. Garden Center. Submit and critique of 2-3 favorite photographs you have taken this year.

Field Trips

Margaret McMahon

Miami Waterkeepers “Floating Classroom”

The Miami Waterkeeper’s mission is “to ensure swimmable, drinkable, fishable water for all.” We will be learning about the Bay, while helping with sampling. For more information: miamewaterkeepers.org.

Scheduled for **Tuesday, December 5, 10am – 1pm** with time for lunch aboard the boat. Attendees are limited to a max of 30 people. **There is a charge for this trip of \$25.00 per person** to cover the boat rental.

Vizcaya Restored Rose Gardens

The Rose Garden has been restored after 100 years and features historic roses. For more information: Vizcaya.org

Scheduled for **Wednesday, February 21, 11am Garden Tour; 12pm House Tour**. Attendees are limited to a max of 21 people. **There is no charge.**

Your Assistance is Needed for our Centennial!

Tess Doheny

The Centennial Committee would like to establish a community-based project for our Centennial that will educate the public about our native pollinators. The proposed project is to create pollinator gardens in Coral Gables or beyond at qualified Elementary and Middle Schools with assistance from Dalton Goolsby. Dalton Goolsby is the Supervisor of the Urban Horticulture Program at the UF/IFAS Extension Miami-Dade County Office. He is a Florida-Friendly Landscaping Certified Professional and Educator specializing in topics such as Water Conservation, Waste Reduction, Sustainable Landscaping, and South Florida Pollinator Conservation. Schools under consideration so far are Somerset, St. Theresa, West Lab, Sunset, Cristal Academy, and Riviera Day.

Your assistance is needed to reach the decision-making administrators or PTA Presidents at each school to establish interest, a teacher who is willing to incorporate the garden into the curriculum, a maintenance plan in and out of school sessions, and a sunny location with access to water. The Garden Club will seek foundation grants to help fund this project.

Please get in contact with Tess Doheny at (786)366-2746 or ctdoheny@aol.com
Photo Credit Anne Dignum



Going for Grants

By Kitty Winkler

When you received your 2023-2024 Yearbook you might have wondered about the Grant Writing job, a new Board position. You might even have wondered what the need for grants is – don't we have enough money from our fundraisers to handle club expenses? The answer lies in the ever-growing list of projects the club undertakes to educate, beautify, and bring focus to gardening, horticulture, floral design and the environment.



You need only check pages 12-14 of your Yearbook to see the extensive list of projects. Grants from philanthropic organizations, added to our own financial resources, give us the dollar power to fund the long list of what the club does for the community.

Our first successful grant this year, for \$500, was from the Miami-Dade Office of Neighborhood Safety and Citizens for a Better South Florida. The grant title is "Safe in the 305," and its objectives align with our own focus on improving our neighborhoods and beautifying the community by establishing and nurturing working gardens that involve the local community. In this case, the projects are community pollinator and edible gardens – our club's MacFarlane Pollinator Patch and the Merrick House Heritage Garden respectively. Both gardens involve our own members as well as community members, with an emphasis on education and expansion of principles the gardens demonstrate.

Two other grants have been applied for, and if awarded, will have great impact in our community. One of the applications is for the National Garden Club's "Plant America" grant for \$1350 supplemented by \$650 of our club funds. The project is to transform a lawn that adjoins the Coral Gables Preparatory Academy into a pollinator garden that will beautify the campus and give students a first-hand education on gardening, the pollination cycle, and environmental issues. The other application is for a Florida Federation of Garden Clubs Matching Grant of \$500 (matched by \$500 of the club's funds) to continue the work to make the MacFarlane Pollinator Garden a model garden for the historic MacFarlane community.

Other Grants that we are likely to pursue this club year are sponsored by The Villagers and the Coral Gables Community Foundation. We are currently looking for additional grant opportunities that might apply to the work we do and could use the help of our members in identifying the organizations that sponsor such grants. We are also looking for club projects that meet grant criteria and might benefit from additional funding that could come from a grant. For more information or to give us ideas, contact Kitty Winkler, Grant Writing Chair, kittiwink1@gmail.com or 786-479-3599.



Sustainability Tip

Marlin Ebbert

The average American uses between 80 to 100 gallons of water each day. The average person in a developing country struggles to find 5 gallons of clean water each day. Be aware of your water consumption.

Decorating Merrick House Date Change

We will be decorating the Merrick House on November 30th at 10am. Please note the date change!

It's Almost Cuetlaxochitl Season!

By Betsy Tilghman

What? Oh, I mean poinsettia season! It's that beautiful time of year in South Florida, stretching from November through February.

The poinsettia is native to southern Mexico. It is a Euphorbia, aptly named *Euphorbia pulcherrima* - the “most beautiful.” In the wilds it is a leggy, tall shrub whose leaves begin to turn red towards the end of October, becoming scarlet hued by December. Long before Christian missionaries came to Mexico and claimed the poinsettia as La Flor de Noche Buena, the ancient Aztecs considered cuetlaxochitl to be a divine gift. Its blooming and deep coloration occur during the winter



solstice, marking the rebirth of light. Thus, it was the sacred flower of the Aztec sun god, Huitzilopochtli, whose name is derived from the native word for hummingbird. The hummingbird was celebrated for its bravery, stamina, and swiftness - those characteristics admired in warriors. The red leaves of the poinsettia came to represent the blood of Aztec warriors. And the hummingbirds, whose timely migration back to their winter grounds in Mexico, feasting on the nectar of the poinsettias yellow flowers, became the returning fallen warriors, helping to return light and renewal to earth.

Enter Dr. Joel Poinsett, American botanist and the first U.S. ambassador to Mexico from 1825-1829. Although it is often cited that he was not well received in Mexico for his unkindly attitude towards its native people, he fell in love with the cuetlaxochitl decorating the Catholic churches at Christmas time and brought the plant back to his home in Charleston, South Carolina, where he propagated it and distributed it among his colleagues and friends. The plant was named Poinsettia in 1836 in his honor. Most of the poinsettias we buy today have their roots from the Ecke Ranch in Encinitas, California, which transformed the wild poinsettia of Mexico into a compact and multi colored world phenomenon.

Several years ago, I noticed that my neighbor retained her rows of poinsettias adorning the walkway to her front door long past the holiday season. I had always considered the poinsettia much like the Christmas tree – everything goes out onto the trash pile shortly after New Years Day. But why should that be? With water and good light poinsettias beautify our outdoors well into February. So now, I enjoy them in November, December, January and into February, when I look at them in amazement and ask them guiltily if they wouldn't mind... spring is approaching and I have some other ideas...

Betsy Tilghman
Horticulture Chair