



# THE HIBISCUS LEAFLET

*Cultivate. Educate. Create. Inspire.*

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

## Welcoming Fall

### President's Message

What a busy Fall we've had! As we begin our 100th holiday season and celebrate our centennial, I am delighted to share news about our various projects and activities. Our Centennial Co-Chairs, Teresa Zohn and Kristal Meyer, have been impressively managing the multifaceted events of the coming year. For our centennial, the club approved a unique piece of public art by renowned eco-artist Xavier Cortada that will be installed in the Butterfly Garden of the Public Library in Spring 2025. The spherical orb clad in hand-carved ceramic tiles draws inspiration from pollinators and the flowers they help propagate. For more on the sculpture, please see the article Susan Rodriguez wrote for the FFGC Florida Gardener Magazine.

We're ready to host our November 16th Home & Garden Tour, the first since Covid. The tour begins at Granada Church and visits the homes of several club presidents. There will be refreshments and a fabulous POP-UP Boutique under the beautiful oak trees at Granada Church.

Under the leadership of Susan Rodriguez, we are creating a historic exhibition that will be shown at various locations around Coral Gables. We have also installed two pollinator gardens at local schools as part of our Pollinator Grant program.

Our first Sip N Snip at Lamar Louise Curry Park was a lovely event! Almost forty members gathered to sip champagne and snip herbs from the garden. Our next Sip N Snip is on November 21st, from 5:30-6:30pm. Plan to join in the fun!

You should all be very proud to be a part of this dynamic organization; I know I am! As we approach the Thanksgiving season, I am thankful for all of you and the important work our club does for our community.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Thanksgiving filled with gratitude, family and fun.

Warmest regards,  
Bonnie Seipp, President



Xavier Cortada sculpture rendering

## 11/25 Program News

**Workshop:** *Terrariums – A Lasting Indoor Garden.* Sharon Trbovich demonstrates the construction of an indoor project

**Program:** *Transforming your yard into Pollinator Paradise* by Susan Howell, Pollinator Gardener

**Location:** Danielson Gallery, day meeting.

## 12/11 Program News

**Workshop:** No Workshop

**Program:** *A Merry Holiday Luncheon* with vocalist Paula Barrera Scheer

**Location:** Coral Gables Congregational Church, day meeting.

## Xavier Cortada's Planting Pollinators

By Susan Rodriguez

As District XII Director, I am delighted to bring attention to the Coral Gables Garden Club as it embarks on its Centennial celebrations. This is a truly momentous occasion for the club, a testament to its enduring dedication to the mission of FFGC and its continuous efforts in community service, education, youth gardening, and civic beautification for a century. The story is a source of immense pride and inspiration to its 150 members, and it's truly remarkable to see how the club's mission remains as vital today as it was in 1925. I would like to recognize the co-chairs of the Centennial, Teresa Zohn and Kristal Meyer, and the new president, Bonnie Seipp, for their commitment and perseverance in managing a Centennial year brilliantly and with multi-faceted parts.

One of the most remarkable contributions planned for the Centennial since the George Merrick bronze statue in front of City Hall is a truly unique piece of public art by renowned eco-artist **Xavier Cortada**. Kudos to the club for recognizing his artistic talent and important environmental messaging and for linking his work with the mission of the Coral Gables Garden Club.

Those who attended the convention last April were honored to hear the thought-provoking and socially engaged eco-artist. He shared his passion for inspiring individuals and communities to confront the environmental challenges of our time with creativity, compassion, and collective action. It was lovely to see the warm reception he received from all the like-minded people in the room and to receive an invitation to speak at the NGC convention.

Xavier is a visionary eco-artist whose work intertwines art, science, and community engagement to raise awareness about pressing environmental issues. His unique perspective, blending creativity with a profound understanding of our planet's complex socio-environmental challenges, is truly enlightening and worthy of our appreciation.

Cortada's art has been exhibited in galleries and museums worldwide, and he has received numerous awards and honors for his innovative contributions to the intersection of art and environmental activism. He was the inaugural artist in residence of Miami-Dade County and was inducted into the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Hall of Fame. Xavier also serves as a Research Fellow for the Princeton University Center for Migration and Development.

He is creating the sculpture "Planting Pollinators," which will be installed in the club's butterfly garden at the Coral Gables Public Library, established in 2001. The sculpture is a testament to the club's commitment to civic beautification and the environment.

Xavier said, "I will draw inspiration from the pollinators being supported at the Coral Gables Library Butterfly Garden; I plan to create a spherical orb clad in hand-carved ceramic tile to represent the pollen these animals help to disperse. The tiles will be carved and arranged to depict pollinators such as **Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds (Archilochus colubris)**, **American Bumblebees (Bombus pensylvanicus)**, **Goldenrod Soldier Beetles (Chauliognathus pensylvanicus)**, and **Miami Blue Butterflies (Cyclargus thomasi)** forming the very flowers they help propagate. These flowers will be created in various colorful hues against a verdant background."

## Xavier Cortada's Planting Pollinators

By Susan Rodriguez

He continued, "This design will reflect the flourishing spirit of the Coral Gables Garden Club and add a visually captivating element to the community space. This visual aesthetic ensures that the artwork fully integrates with its surroundings, transforming the space into an immersive art experience celebrating the club's 100 years of gardening, community, and environmental stewardship." A pollinator coloring book created by member and past president Betsy Tilghman and other brochures and reading materials will also be available in the library.

The committee and Xavier endured presentations to three city boards, with several revisions, but ultimately got a unanimous vote to proceed from all. Finally, the City Commission Meeting on August 27th, at which the commission unanimously voted to accept this gift from the club and "Planting Pollinators" by Xavier Cortada will now become a permanent piece of public art that will engage children and adults for years. As one commissioner stated, this will be a place for people to come over and over again for peace and tranquility and to enjoy being immersed in art, nature, and education. Congratulations to the Coral Gables Garden Club for the vision and a job well done!

Respectfully submitted

Susan Rodriguez  
District XII Director



## Centennial House and Garden Tour

By Teresa Zohn and Kristal Meyer

Dear Members,

### TOMORROW IS THE BIG DAY!

Here are a few important reminders:

- **Pop-Up Boutique:** The Boutique at Granada Church will be open from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, offering complimentary coffee and showcasing fantastic vendors. We encourage everyone to visit, shop and support our valued vendors -- **You don't want to miss it!**
- **Centennial Ornament:** The centennial ornament has arrived, just in time for the holidays! It will be available near the check-in tables in Granada's lobby. You can purchase one if you haven't already, or pick up any pre-paid orders.
- **The Salty:** The Salty Donut has crafted a custom fall-inspired menu of sweet treats in our honor. As a special treat, 15% of all sales made during the event will go to our club. Look for their cute blue truck at the Pop-Up Boutique!

**We're thrilled to celebrate this momentous occasion with all of you!**

With heartfelt gratitude,

Teresa 305-773-0262 & Kristal 305-318-9785



## The Leafy Lowdown

### Announcements

- Saturday, the 16th is the big day! Thank you everyone for doing your part to support your Garden Club Home and Garden Tour with your contributions and service.
- The February General meeting will be on Wednesday, February 19th in the evening due to scheduling conflicts with the Biltmore. The meeting will take place in the Danielson Gallery. Please update your calendars.
- Membership Update: Candidates must attend two meetings and be a resident of Coral Gables. Applications are available on the website. Questions? Please email Jo Wanda at [jogpeterson@gmail.com](mailto:jogpeterson@gmail.com) or call 305-606-5555.



## Garden Wisdom

By *Emily de Armas*

Give your garden and floral displays a boost this holiday season with a few simple, effective tricks.

### 1. Revitalize Roses with Banana Peels

Boost your roses' blooms by burying chopped banana peels beneath the soil. The potassium helps encourage vibrant flowering and strengthens resistance against diseases—an easy way to give your roses some extra love this season.

### 2. Orchid Winter Care

Miami's cooler evenings can cause stress for orchids kept outdoors. Bring your potted orchids under shelter or indoors during temperature dips and mist them lightly in the morning to maintain humidity levels without waterlogging.

### 3. Companion Planting for Pest Control

Integrate marigolds and nasturtiums among your flower beds to deter common garden pests. Their strong scent repels insects, keeping aphids and other nuisances away from your more delicate blooms.

### 4. Coffee Grounds for Acid-Loving Plants

Used coffee grounds can be beneficial for acid-loving plants like azaleas, gardenias, and hibiscus. They help maintain soil acidity and add organic matter, promoting healthy growth.

### 5. Harden Stems Before Arranging

For flowers like poinsettias, which have milky sap that can clog stems, dip the cut ends in boiling water for 10 seconds before placing them in cool water. This helps seal the stems and keeps them drinking properly.

