

THE COURIER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FORT MYERS/LEE COUNTY GARDEN COUNCIL, INC.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Hope everyone is having a splendid 2008 so far. Congratulations to all of the entrants of the Strolling Flower show this year! The arrangements were wonderful and there were so many blue ribbons awarded. Periwinkle Garden Club did a marvelous job of producing the show again. Spring is a time of change and we have certainly seen lots of changes in the last couple of months! The Gardens and Library are coming along very nicely. We were "stumped" for awhile by a parking lot that was discovered to be in the middle of the property and had to dig out nearly two feet of base rock before we could proceed, but things are back on track and moving along nicely. You can get a shovel into the dirt like a hot knife through butter now and we have a new layer of topsoil that's black and supple. The sidewalk is cut in and has its base rock in place and many of the obstacles to planting have been removed. Next up is the irrigation system and the outside structures (arbors, shed and gazebo).

Our Library Committee has been working very hard to catalog the books that have been donated. Thank you to everyone on the committee for your hard work and dedication. The library desk and file cabinet have been graciously donated by Brenda and James Norris.



We have so many great activities coming up. Be sure to visit both of the upcoming Flower Shows in March produced by Royal Palm Garden Club and Cape Coral Garden Club. Congratulations to Royal Palm Garden Club, this is their 60th anniversary year!

Diane Raimy - President

Sylvia Lightbody has finished with the wish list and passed everything by George Fogg, so look for it to be out very soon if you haven't already gotten it. The wish list committee has done a wonderful job of investigating all the many items needed for the garden and the building. They have come up with a plan that I think you will all find reasonably priced as well as beautiful. The Garden Liaison Committee and officers met with George Fogg at the building where he oversaw the layout of the brick walkway. He was so impressed and enthusiastic about our miniature garden model and the work that we've done so far and said he sees great things in store for the Gardens in the future as a local attraction, based on what has been accomplished there.

Another change was in the second vice-president's position. Jerry Siebenaler resigned and Angela Swope has accepted the position. As many of you know Angela has been our project manager for the construction of the garden and has already been working very hard for the council for some time. Welcome Angela, and thanks for your service.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

CONGRATULATIONS TO ROYAL PALM GARDEN CLUB RECENTLY RECOGNIZED WITH AN OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD FOR 60 YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP IN FFGC


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GARDEN COUNCIL MEETING DATES

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>BOARD MEETINGS</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Officers, Directors, Committee Chairs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FRIDAY MARCH 7, 2008 • FRIDAY MAY 2, 2007 <p style="text-align: center;">MEETINGS HELD FROM 9:30 AM TO 11:30 AM Rutenberg Park Library Building</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>GENERAL MEETINGS</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">All are Welcome PROGRAMS ARE HELD ON THE 2ND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH EVERY OTHER MONTH SEPTEMBER TO MAY</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Location: 3061 E Riverside Dr Fort Myers, FL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOSPITALITY 9:00 AM TO 9:30 AM MEETINGS 9:30 AM TO 11:30 AM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ FRIDAY MARCH 14, 2008 Program: Karen Pearl—a Master Gardener from Mount Vernon VA Hosts — Gulf Coast Garden Club ◆ FRIDAY MAY 9, 2008 Program: State of the Garden Address Hosts — Poinciana Garden Club 	 <p>Lu Decker shows off a design done in dried material as part of the Jan. program "Remember ladies, there is a big difference between dried and DEAD".</p>
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STROLLING FLOWER SHOW 2008

Strolling Flower Show (2008) "70th Celebration of Mr. Edison's Innovations"

Many observers and participants would agree that the 58th Strolling Flower Show at Bell Tower Shops was among the best ever. There were so many Blue Ribbons awarded, the Committee had to give "rain checks" to three Blue Ribbon winners. The Committee concluded that this was a nice problem to have.

Blue Ribbon winners are as follows: "Bath-fantasy With Electricity" - **Lorna O'Hara**; "High Hopes" - **Winnie Stone**; "58 Years of Looking Good" - **Judith Gore**; "Serenity" - **Brenda Norris**; "Innovations Standing Tall" - **Sandy Kavouras**; "Here's the Beef, Mr. Edison" - **Lois Gressman**; "The Eyes Have It" - **Suzu Valentine**; "What Is Black and White and Red (Read) All Over? The Newspaper-A Real Innovation" - **Nancy Wheeler**; "Ideation (Thinking of New Things)" - **Angela Swope, Pat Klingman, and Jo Scheinfurth**; "Seven Tea's Standing Ovation, Mr. Edison" - **Sue Losey and Martha Lambert**; "Celebrate the Light Within" - **Janice Ainsworth, Pat Brambley, and Jackie Markham**; "Cheshire Celebrates Mr. Edison" - **Barbara Moore**; "Celebrate Mr. Edison at Johnny Rockets" - **Violet Clemson**; "Sipping Softly to a Timeless Treasure" - **Traci Cardwell**; "Let There Be Light" - **Pat Molin and Paula Novander**; "Connected to Genius" - **Jan Padgett**; "Walking with Mr. Edison Thru 70 Years" - **Dorothy Hanson**; "Mr. Edison, You Light Up Our Treasures" - **Coleen Harden and Jane Gale**; "Innovations of Light" - **Ellen Milotte**; "Illuminating Inspirations" - **Jan Clark**; "A Place in the Sun after a Lifetime of Success" - **Florene Johns**; "Salute" - **Betsy Haller**; "Seven Blossoms for Seven Decades of Innovation - Thank you, Mr. Edison" - **Janie Harman, Katie Zadrozny, and Jan Hughes**; "Mr. Edison, We Are So Glad You Came and Shared Your Innovations" - **Monica Freed**; "Light Up Your Day with a Bubble Bath" - **Julia Palmer**; "A Timeless Balance of Style and Quality. Thank You, Mr. Edison" - **Darlene Tompkins**.

Specialty Ribbons are as follows: **Gold Ribbon** (Chrysanthemums) awarded to **Ellen Milotte** for "Innovations of Light;" **Violet Ribbon** (Tropical Flowers) and **Green Ribbon** (using a majority of foliage) awarded to **Janice Ainsworth, Pat Brambley, and Jackie Markham** for "Celebrate the Light Within;" **Silver Ribbon** (Gladiolus) awarded to **Monica Freed** for "Mr. Edison, We Are So Glad You Came and Shared Your Innovations;" **Crimson Ribbon** (Roses) awarded to **Sue Losey and Martha Lambert** for "Seven Tea's Standing Ovation, Mr. Edison.

The Three Top Honors were awarded as follows: Runner-up for **DESIGNERS CHOICE AWARD** - **Jan Padgett** for "Connected to Genius" and the Winner for **DESIGNERS CHOICE AWARD** - **Sue Losey and Martha Lambert** for "Seven Tea's Standing Ovation Mr. Edison;" **Runner-up for the TRI-COLOR AWARD** - **Betsy Haller** for "Salute!" and the Winner for **TRI-COLOR AWARD** - **Darlene Tompkins** for "A Timeless Balance of Style and Quality. Thank You, Mr. Edison;" Winner for **JUDGES CATEGORY AWARD** - **Lois Gressman** for "Here's the Beef, Mr. Edison."

Periwinkle Garden Club thanks everyone hoped that the 59th Strolling Flower Show will be

Let There Be



who participated in the 58th Strolling Flower Show. It is even bigger and better.

Light

ROUGE PLANT
Rivina humilis

I first became acquainted with this lovely plant at the home of the Levers in St. James City, Pine Island. They gave me a few seeds which sprouted and produced a marvelous under story plant. Reference books list the light conditions from sun to shade, but I have found it grows best in filtered light. It seeds easily and fills in an area under trees thus producing an area filled with 18-24 inch high border plants. Very little work is needed to keep this plant looking great. A minimum of pruning might be necessary to keep it back from walkways. I don't fertilize it and the irrigation twice a week is more than adequate. It never wilts. The leaves are a dark green, oval, pointed with wavy edges. The dark green color of the leaves contrast nicely with the pale pink/white flowers and the brilliant orange or red berries. Flowering occurs most of the year. The berries are toxic to humans but as often occurs, birds find them irresistible. The plant attracts several species of birds to the garden.

When I show this plant to someone, I like to talk about the beautiful berries and how they have been used in past history. Those of you that come from Wisconsin or bordering states will remember that prior to the seventies, Wisconsinites could not buy colored margarine. A pound brick of unappetizing white oleomargarine was encased in a plastic bag with a dot of dye on the top. It required some time to finger press the dye into the margarine. That dye was from the rouge plant. Native Americans used the berries for face decorating hence its name. In Mexico, the leaves were employed to treat wounds and recent studies have found this plant to be a mild antibiotic working against E. coli, Salmonella and Staph.

Other common names are Pigeon berry or coralito. Some taxonomic references place rouge plant in the guinea hen weed family but others class it in the pokeweed family. It is native to the Southern US, Mexico, the Caribbean islands, Central and South America. In Florida, the native range is zone 9 and 10.

The only problem I have noticed is that it has a tendency to seed itself into areas where it is not wanted however, the seedlings are easy to pull.

Kathy Woodlock, Horticulture Chairman



At the December Meeting of the Greater Fort Myers Rose Society, Carroll Cala, President, presented Debbie Wyatt-Stotter, consulting rosarian and certified judge, with the American Rose Society's Bronze Medal for her dedication to promoting roses; our national flower.



Foreign Lands
Robert Louis Stevenson (1881)

<p>Up into the cherry tree Who should climb but little me I held the trunk with both my hands And looked abroad on foreign lands.</p>	<p>I saw the dimpling river pass And be the sky's blue looking glass; The dusty roads go up and down With people trampling into town.</p>	<p>To where the roads on either hand Lead onward into fairyland, Where all the children dine at five, And all the playthings come alive.</p>
<p>I saw the next-door garden lie, Adorned with flowers, before my eye, And many pleasant places more That I had never seen before.</p>	<p>If I could find a higher tree Farther and farther I should see, To where the grown up river slips Into the sea among the ships,</p>	

In Memoriam

Barbara Kaldahl 9-14-07
Royal Palm Garden Club



Barbara Jo Vermilye 10-3-07
Garden Club of Cape Coral



The Official Newsletter of the
Fort Myers/Lee County
Garden Council, Inc.

2166-2172 Virginia Avenue
Fort Myers, FL 33901



This is just a sample of the amazing miniature layout of the Virginia Avenue Garden Council Building and Botanic garden. Ena McGrattan, Mitzi Marckesano and Sylvia Lightbody completed this for the Council Meeting Jan. 31. The glue was barely dry but what a fantastic look into the future. If you have driven by the building lately it looks a little rough as the "surprise" parking lot has been removed and the grading is taking place. The fencing is in place and the brick pathway has been leveled out. So "keep the faith" and soon we will have a lovely garden to call our own.

M A R C H - A P R I L C A L E N D A R O F E V E N T S

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>PLACE</u>
SW Florida Garden & Landscape Conf. Lee County Overall Extension Advisory	Saturday March 1, 2008 9 AM to 4 PM	Florida Gulf Coast University 10510 FGCU Blvd., S Contact : Letha 461-7514
Bonsai at the Grove @ Wingert's Nursery Workshops, vendors, food & fun	Sat. March 1, Sun 3/2 www.wigertsbonsai.com	15857 Quail Trail—Bokeelia, FL
Royal Palm Garden Club Flower Show "Frogs and Friends"	Setup Tues March 11 Judging 3/12 View 3/12 5-8pm View Thur. 3/13 8am—1pm	Zion Lutheran Church 7401 Winkler Ave. Fort Myers Contact: Dorothy Carlson 239-561-0218
Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Yard Tours — Lee County For information call 461-7526 or email Master Gardener Mary Ann Parsons - mparsons@leegov.com	Sunday March 16, 2008 1 pm — 5 pm	Visit over 10 recognized Florida Friendly Yards in Fort Myers, Cape Coral and Pine Island
Standard Flower Show "March into Spring" Hosted by the Garden Club of Cape Coral	Thur. 3/27—3/29	Cape Coral Library 931 SW 39th Terrace off Mohawk Contact: Marty Ward 239-549-7516
Standard Flower Show Hosted by the Naples Garden Club	Fri. 3/28—3/29 Office 262-1272	Naples Botanical Garden 4280 Bayshore Drive
Deep South Regional Convention FFGC 82nd State Convention FFGC 32nd State Flower Show	March 30—31 April 1—3 April 1—3	Hilton Gulf Front—Pensacola Beach, FL www.PENSACOLABEACH.STAYHGI.com
Native Plant Sale	April 27	Rotary Park, south on Skyline Blvd - off Cape Coral Pkwy Cape Coral
Heliconia, Palm and Flower Show Fruit & Spice Park	April 19, 20 10 AM to 5 PM \$6 pp	Fruit & Spice Park 24801 S.W. 187th Avenue Homestead, FL (305) 247-5727

District IX Spring Meeting

May 1

Bartow, FL