



The Seedling

Volume 19 SPRING 2026

Gainesville Garden Club, Inc.

<http://ggcfl.org/ggc>

Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

<http://www.ffgc.org>

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Message from President Becky O'Brien

Spring Highlights

What a relief – it's warming up again! Hooray! I'm sure we have all been watching favorite plants in our yard and garden beds recovering from the cold. Spotting those new green leaves is always rewarding. I'm trying to learn from our gardeners who have made a real commitment to planting our north Florida native plants that fared better this winter. But, on the plus side for any plant losses is the opportunity to try some new and different plants. Head for the Master Gardener plant sale coming up in May!

Over the next months, we'll all be hearing about and reading about the concept of a Food Forest in our landscapes. We are interested in the broadest definition to mean we are promoting plants that nourish us, our critters, our birds and our insects and pollinators. In this issue, you'll read about the Fall Expo and our exciting theme of Edible by Nature.

Here's a little nudge. Some of you have noted that you don't really like to use email. Even so, I would encourage you to check in with your email and/or our GGC website, at least once a week - maybe twice? This is especially important if you have volunteered for a team or a project as information about that will usually be shared via email. A group text to folks gets too unwieldy and we rely on email and our web site for communication to our many, wonderful members. Remember, there are over 200 of us, now.

Take a peek at all our pictures in the newsletter to see both what we've done and see what's coming up. The pictures and stories tell a wonderful story of teamwork, community action, learning and friendship. One nice perk of being in GGC, is that we can all take pride in the many, many initiatives and tasks our members accomplish.

And, a final note – it's that time of year to renew your GGC membership. You'll be getting reminders from your Circle leaders and from the Board. We need each and every one of you in this organization!

Happy Spring!

Becky O'Brien
GGC President 2025-2027



Thank You GGC Volunteers for an Amazing Month of March!

GGC Grounds Workday!

What a cheerful & willing crew showed up for grounds workday. Lots of folks to thank: Steve Provost, Mona Rippe, Jill Carter, Cheryl and John Troupe, Eli Redstone, Karen Beaty, Kathy Powell, Gail Cook, Laura Davis, Carol Shoup, Nancy Anderson, Janet Greene, Anne Clark, Candy Dennis, Ann Osterling, Leah Oehmig and Gabriela Mateescu. Steve Provost refreshed our portico planters with bromeliads. Mona, the Troupes, Nancy, Leah all helped clean up bromeliads under the Wedding Oak. Leah, John and Jill set up little fencing around wildflower area. Laura swept the bricks around windows and all entrances of bugs and cobwebs. Eli, Karen and Kathy trimmed up arbor roses. Eli also took on trimming up huge palm cluster on front patio! Janet, Nancy, Carol tackled the portico coonties. Candy, Ann O. and Gail focused on back patio.

In all lots of things snipped, trimmed and hauled away. Gabriela cleaned up grasses in Celebration garden. Whew! Lots of good work to admire and appreciate the effort that made it happen!

Blossom, Brew and BBQ at First Magnitude

Held on March 8th – This is another event only possible by all the volunteer effort of our members. Valerie Mountjoy was Chair for this 4th annual event and another success thanks to: Gail Cook, Linda Schoellhorn, Laura Davis, Karen Beaty, Michele Gorday, Kathy Ames, Cathy Stewart, Merris Pappas, Janet Greene, Julie Lake, Elise Webb, Heather Dixon, Cheryl Troupe, Leah Oehmig, Kathy Stephens, Patti Farley. Fran Maris again recruited her son, Blaise Maris to host a Trivia game for us. He wrote the questions focused on Florida and plants and kept folks engaged in the fun with 25 teams competing over the afternoon. Thank you, Fran and thank you, Blaise!

This was a busy afternoon for our vendors who were happy with sales and so we were we! Lots of BBQ was sold and our teams of super sales women sold 115 wrist bands for a \$10 donation to GGC. (Cathy Stewart, Heather Dixon and Merris Pappas can sell anyone anything!) Begonia Circle and She Shed sold items, too. It's a great event for fund-raising and also brings visibility to GGC.

Sip N Stroll – March 13th

Linda Schoellhorn writes: What a great team! I was so proud of our first Sip n Stroll! This team really knows how to pull off a wonderful evening event and everything turned out perfectly. I especially want to thank my unbelievably talented team leaders. Carol Binello and Kathy Powell put together a terrific menu of yummy appetizers and staged and served everything wonderfully. Cleanup also was great! Candy Dennis found amazing items from donors for our auctions! What a nice variety and put together in such a captivating way! Karen Beaty's decorations were beautiful and a lovely backdrop for our evening's activities. Davis Willkomm and his band kept toes tapping. I do know that it was a very successful endeavor and we can all rest on our laurels for a bit! Thank you so much for all your hard work in making Sip n Stroll a wonderful evening to remember! Linda Schoellhorn

Sip N Stroll Team – A total of 43 Folks to Thank!

Ami Kanu, Becky O'Brien, Bruce Cavey, Candy Dennis, Candy Pigott, Carol Ann Binello, Carol Hazy, Carol Knowles, Carolyn Harrell, Catherine Parsons, David Willkomm, Debbie Coats, Elizabeth Amdur, Ernestine Ellington, Fran Maris, Gail Cook, Gwen Dennis, Heather Dixon, Ida Jackson, Janet Greene, Jill Carter, Karen Beaty, Kathy Powell, Kathy Stephens, Kristy Welch, Laura Davis, Laurie Spear, Linda Munn, Linda Schoellhorn, Lynnette Worley, Marci Wilcox, Masuma Downie, Merris Pappas, Moe LaTour, Mona Rippe, Patti Farley, Paula Waterman, Sandra Arnold, Sherry Nemeth, Stacey Copenhaver, Susan Thrall and Cindy Bennett (former member!)

CLUB & FFGC COMING EVENTS

GGC GENERAL MEETING

May 7, 2026

Join us at the end of the year general meeting and plant swap on May 7th from 9 to 11:30 AM. We will have Rachel Mallinger, PH. D, Assistant Professor, UF Entomology. Dr. Rachel Mallinger is a pollinator ecologist focusing primarily on native wild bees. She is interested in the basic biology of native wild bees, their response to anthropogenic disturbance, and their role in the pollination of both crop and wild plants.



Plant Swap: Members are encouraged to bring a plant or two from their garden. It would be a nice idea, if you have any plants that have survived our severe winter, try and propagate some and bring it to the plant swap. Please identify the plant(s) by name (Common & Botanical if you know it); growing conditions (Sun, shade, partial shade) and if it is an Annual or Perennial. The donated plants will be at the front entrance and members may take one or two home with them. Please note that you do not have to bring a plant in order to take one home. There will be plenty of plants for everyone.

Moe LaTour, 2nd Vice President
Program Chairman

MOTHER'S DAY GARDEN TOUR



May 09, 2026

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Gainesville Garden Club
1350 NW 75th Street**

Participants will enjoy a delicious brunch catered and served at the Gainesville Garden Club, providing a relaxed and inviting atmosphere for guests to unwind and socialize after the garden tour. The brunch will feature a variety of mouth-watering options, including tender meats, savory sides, and delectable desserts, ensuring that there is something to satisfy every palate.

Attendees will enjoy putting together and taking home a lovely bud arrangement to mark the day. The GGC's Mother's Day Garden Tour assures you of a day that provides large doses of beauty, magic, and good fellowship. Don't miss the perfect day for celebrating the joy of mothers everywhere!

Tickets for Mother's Day Garden Tour - Price \$30.00. Pay on-line (+\$0.75 ticket service fee). Tickets go on sale on April 10, 8:00 AM.

**MARDI
GRAS**



**Mardi Gras Luncheon - May 28th
at the Gainesville Garden Club**

Hosted by Mimosa & Begonia Circles

"A Taste of New Orleans" Luncheon

Games and Door Prizes

"Best Costume & Most Created Mask Contest"

Photo Booth, Gift Baskets, 50/50

Tickets \$25

Sign up at a Circle meeting or go on-line at www.ggcfl.org.



**HABITAT WOMEN BUILD
COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT**

GGC Circles take turns serving lunch to Habitat Women Build volunteers. They provide and serve the food and spend time talking with the volunteers who give their time each Saturday to build a home for a family in need.

Once the home is completed, GGC members (from various circles) come to the home to landscape the grounds. They speak with the family members to ensure that they know how to care for the plants.

Call to Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

To: All District V Garden Club Members, Club & Circle Presidents, State & District Officers, State & District Chairmen and Former District V Directors

From: JoLee Houlihan, District V Director, 952-410-6454, JoLee@yahoo.com

Theme: "Wonders in the Woods"

Location for Meeting: Citrus Hills Golf & Country Club
505 E. Hartford St.
Hernando, FL 34442

President: Nancy Wilcox, sleeplessinny@outlook.com

Registration
& Hospitality: 9:00-10:00 a.m. Meeting will be called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Cost: \$40.00 includes registration, morning hospitality and lunch.

Menu: Cobb Salad with grilled chicken or Pot Roast with potatoes, carrots, celery & gravy,
Vegetarian meal is available upon request

Send checks payable to: Citrus Garden Club and mail to:

Fran Woodman
Registrar
446 W. Britain St
Hernando, FL 34442-3327

Registration must be received by May 4, 2026. No refunds after May 9, 2026.

Presentations by: Mary Whisler, FFGC 1st Vice President & JoLee Houlihan, District V Director
"Bats in Your Gardens" by Shari Blissett-Clark

Club Presidents: Be prepared to give a 3-minute report at the meeting.

Announcements: Those wishing to make announcements at the District Meeting are asked to send the information to JoLee Houlihan, District Director, no later than May 9, 2026. There will be a variety of gift baskets, 50/50 share the wealth and a variety of vendors located indoors and outdoors. Plants will be on sale too.

Directions: From US-41 Head West on Rt 486 (Norvell Bryant Hwy.), continue several miles and turn left onto North Citrus Hills Blvd, continue straight to the Country Club

From Inverness, continue West on Rt 44, turn right onto Croft Avenue, continue to Norvell Bryant Highway (486) and turn left, in one mile turn right onto N. Citrus Hills Blvd and follow signs to the Country Club

From Crystal River, turn left onto Norvell Bryant Highway, continue to Citrus Hills Blvd, turn right to Hartford, turn left to the Country Club

For any additional information, please contact Jo Lee at 954-401-6454, Nancy at 352-348-8788 and Lesly at 307-256-3082.

District V Spring Meeting, Thursday, May 14, 2026, Registration Form

Information on how to identify delegates on your registration form is listed below:

- A. Membership of 10 to 25: President or alternate – total one
- B. Membership of 26 to 50: President plus one (1) – total two
- C. Membership of 51 to 75: President plus two (2) – total three
- D. Membership of 76 to 100: President plus three (3) – total four
- E. Membership of 101 to 125: President plus four (4) – total five
- F. Membership of 126: President plus one for every additional 25
- G. Membership of less than 10: forfeits representation

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Garden Club/Circle: _____ Email address: _____

Please make check payable to the Citrus Garden Club and mail to Fran Woodman, Registrar, 446 W. Britain St., Hernando, FL 34442-3327. Please note on your check memo which lunch you will be having.

Payment enclosed: \$ _____, Check #: _____

Below, please check all that applies to you:

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3
<input type="checkbox"/> FFGC Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Club President	<input type="checkbox"/> Delegate
<input type="checkbox"/> FFGC Chairman		<input type="checkbox"/> Alternate
<input type="checkbox"/> Former FFGC President	<input type="checkbox"/> Circle President/Chairman	<input type="checkbox"/> Member
<input type="checkbox"/> Former District V Director		<input type="checkbox"/> Guest
<input type="checkbox"/> District V Officer		
<input type="checkbox"/> District V Chairman		

COLUMN 1: Anyone in these categories is automatically a delegate and are NOT counted against the number of club delegates.

COLUMN 2: The Club President is a delegate, NOT the Circle Presidents/Chairmen, unless assigned by the Club President.

COLUMN 3: You may only check one (1).

FFGC, UF, DISTRICT V SHORT COURSE 2026

FFGC DISTRICT V - UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA 2026 SHORT COURSE



TOOLS FOR TOMORROW

Reception May 31
Tours, Conference & Dinner June 1
Full-Day Conference June 2
Hotel Special Rate Deadline May 6
Registration Deadline May 8

UF Straughn Center at 2142 Shealy Dr
Gainesville Garden Club at 1350 NW 75th Street

8 hours of presentations & 2 hours of tours

www.ffgc.org/education Registrar: monarippe@gmail.com



Funded in part by
Visit Gainesville, Alachua County



GGC to Host 2026 FFGC District V – UF Short Course on May 31 – June 2, 2026

For 88 years FFGC District V, with UF IFAS, has sponsored the UF Short Course to offer **education for its members, Master Gardeners and the public**. It is a two-day premier horticultural program offering tours and expert presentations.

This year's **Tools for Tomorrow** identifies emerging environmental challenges and explores innovative, research-based solutions. Grow your knowledge. Meet some plant-loving folks from across the state.

GGC actually puts on the event on behalf of our District V. We donate our time and conference proceeds are split between District V and FFGC. GGC receives clubhouse rental income and proceeds from 2 shopping events, gift baskets and a raffle. Our very small committee thanks GGC Circles for agreeing to help. Food Preparation. Many menu items will be purchased, but home cooked foods make the events special for our guests.

Circle Support:

Begonia Circle will host Sunday 5/31 - **Registration Reception** at GGC.

Gardenia Circle hosts Monday 6/1 – **Salad Lunch** at the UF Straughn Center.

Jasmine Circle and Mona hosts Monday 6/1 **Catered Floral Design Dinner** at GGC.

Mimosa Circle hosts Tuesday 6/2 - **Continental breakfast and catered lunch** at UF.

Wildflowers Circle will **clean up the conference room**.

Gift Baskets - Each circle is asked to donate a **gift basket**. Proceeds return to GGC.

Shopping Items - The She Shed & Circles are invited to sell plants and garden items during Sunday's reception and Monday's happy hour.

Please share the Short Course flyer and cards. Join us for an enriching and inspiring horticultural experience!

Thank you all!

Paula Waterman, Chairman, FFGC-UF Short Course
Paularhoades@gmail.com 318-828-3685



THE Not-so-Perfect GARDEN PROJECT

Join Us!

for a Special Children's
Interactive Reading Event
with Miss Florida 2025 &
Author, Paris Richardson!

What To Know

WHEN: 7 June 2026 1-3pm
FREE event, but RSVP required

- ★ 1 FREE book per family
- Free activity sheets
- Guided potted planting
- Tour the GGC gardens



★ First 50 RSVPs will receive FREE book. Additional books will be available for sale at event.

Supporting the C.R.O.W.N. of Health initiative, the Gainesville Garden Club joins Paris Richardson, reigning Miss Florida 2025 and Author of "The Not-So-Perfect Garden Project" to promote community food-wealth. Educators are welcome to attend, observe and discuss possible school garden opportunities with GGC after program.

Scan QR Code
or go to URL
below to RSVP
on April 1st



www.ggcf.org

Events - Calendar - "Story Time in the Garden"



Story Time in the Garden

Join the Gainesville Garden Club for a Special Children’s Interactive Reading Event with Miss Florida 2025; Author, Paris Richardson!

What To Know: DATE: 7 June 2026 TIME: 1-3pm FREE event, but RSVP required!

- 1 FREE book per family
- Free activity book sheets for each child in attendance
- Guided potted planting for children
- Tour the GGC gardens

First 50 RSVPs will receive FREE book. Additional books will be available for sale at event.

Supporting the C.R.O.W.N. of Health initiative, the Gainesville Garden Club joins Paris Richardson, reigning Miss Florida 2025 and Author of “*The Not-So-Perfect Garden Project*” to promote community food-wealth. Educators are welcome to attend, observe and discuss possible school garden or garden-related activity opportunities with GGC after program.

About Paris Richardson

Author • Health Advocate • Former UF Cheerleader. Miss Florida 2025, Paris Richardson is the founder of C.R.O.W.N. of Health, a statewide initiative rooted in her early work as a student leader. She began her journey at Jean Ribault High School in Jacksonville, where she co-founded Get R.A.W. (Ribault Access & Wellness), the first student-led advisory board for a school-based health center in Duval County. Her advocacy led her to the national stage, where she represented her school at the National School-Based Health Care Conference and championed H.R. 2075, a bill that supports school-based health services nationwide. That experience inspired the creation of C.R.O.W.N. of Health, which stands for: Community, Research, Outreach, Wellness, and Nutrition. C.R.O.W.N. is a prevention-focused initiative designed to make wellness accessible and actionable across Florida.

Paris has brought this mission to life through school visits, community events, and creative partnerships. She authored *The Not-So-Perfect Garden Project*, an Amazon # 1 New Release in Children’s Gardening, and donates proceeds from every book sold to Feeding Northeast Florida. This initiative has helped to fund over 1,600 meals for families across eight counties. The book was also sponsored by PBS KIDS, which donated 100+ copies to Head Start classrooms and featured the project on their national podcast. A proud Double Gator, Paris earned both her Bachelor of Public Health and Master of Health Administration from the University of Florida. She served as a four-year UF Cheerleader, cheering at over 300 games, including the 2025 Men’s Basketball National Championship, and was inducted into the UF Hall of Fame and Florida Blue Key. Her healthcare background includes research internships with UF Health and the Mayo Clinic, where she studied maternal health access and transplant evaluation tools, respectively, and presented her findings at a national conference in Madison, Wisconsin. Having placed as the 2nd runner up at the Miss America Competition Paris now has been awarded over \$64,000 in scholarships earned through the Miss America Opportunity, Paris is now using her platform to scale C.R.O.W.N. of Health statewide, partnering with schools, nonprofits, and mission-driven brands to inspire the next generation of health leaders.

WHAT IS A KEYSTONE TREE?

Keystone trees are native plants critical to the food web and necessary for many wildlife species to complete their life cycle.

Without keystone plants in the landscape, butterflies, native bees, and birds will not thrive.

Ninety-six of our terrestrial birds rely on insects supported by keystone plants.



GGC & MASTER GARDENER'S
FALL HORTICULTURAL EXPO 2026



The 2026 Fall Expo Committee is thrilled to announce the theme for this year's event.

"EDIBLE BY NATURE" ... Plant for the people, pollinators and the planet!

Additionally, horticulturist and bestselling author **BRIE ARTHUR** will be our Keynote Speaker. Her published books, *Foodscape Revolution* and *Gardening with Grains* promote the theme of this year's Expo. Ms. Arthur will speak on Friday, October 16th to the Expo Volunteers and then Saturday, October 17th for the General Public.

Expo 2026

Introducing our Keynote Speaker...

BRIE ARTHUR
AUTHOR
HORTICULTURIST
SPEAKER

Foodscape Revolution
Finding a Garden That
Provides Space for
Pollinators & Bees
in Your Garden
Brie Arthur

... "on this tiny spot I'm living on, I'm making the world a better place" - Brie Arthur

EDIBLE PLANTS

Adding plants to your yard comes with a heap of benefits—they help clean the air, improve our moods, turn backyards into **beautiful escapes**, boost **curb appeal**, and some even attract butterflies. If that's not enough reason to get planting, plenty of plants are edible too. These edible plants not only add a nutritional and flavorful punch to your home meals but also trim down those grocery bills. Plus, there's something special about stepping into your garden to snip fresh basil for a homemade pasta dish or harvest an artichoke to pair with grilled salmon for an alfresco dinner before lounging around your elevated fire pit.

NATIVE WILD BEE TRVIA

- **Q: Approximately how many native bee species are found in North America?**
A: Over 2000 B: Over 3000 C: Over 4,000
- **Q: True or False: Most native bees live in large hives with a queen.**
A: True B: False
- **Q: What is the only bee species in North America that is NOT native?**
A: The Carpenter Bee B: The Bumble Bee C: The Honey Bee.
- **Q: Do male native bees have stingers?**
A: Yes B: No.
- **Q: What is a "sweat bee"?**
*A: Large, solitary, beneficial pollinator with shiny black abdomen.
B: Small, often metallic green or striped bee that is attracted to the salt in human sweat.
C: Dark, with bands of whitish hair on the abdomen.*
- **Q: How many wings do bees have?**
A: Two B: Four C: Six.
- **Q: What is a "cuckoo bee"?**
*A: Solitary, pollinator, make its homes in dead trees or wood.
B: Bee that does not gather pollen, but instead sneaks its eggs into the nests of other bees
C: Is social, a pollinator, which nests in the ground.*
- **Q: True or False: Native bees can see red light.**
A: True B: False.
- **Q: How many eyes does a bee have?**
A: Two B: Five C: Six
- **Q: What is the primary cause of native bee decline?**
*A: Fertilizers
B: Being eaten by birds and large insects
C: Loss of habitat and plant diversity.*
- **Q: How far do most native bees travel from their nest to find food?**
*A: Three hundred meters.
B: Six hundred meters
C: Eight hundred meters*



Bees communicate with a special dance

When a forager bee goes out and finds a really good nectar source they come back to the hive and tell their fellow foragers where to go to get the good stuff before it's gone. Actually, they 'show' the other bees by performing a precise series of turns and shakes to communicate their findings and tell the other bees where to go. And, yes 'Waggle Dance' is the technical term.

Here's how it works: The dancing bee waggles back and forth as she walks forward in a straight line, then circles around to repeat the dance. The length of the middle line, called the *waggle run*, shows roughly how far it is to the flower. The circle she makes to repeat the waggle run indicates how far the source is. Bees use the position of the sun and the relative direction of the waggle dance to calculate the direction they need to go.

A LOOK BACK AT GGC ACTIVITIES

DOWN & DIRTY WORK DAY
March 3, 2026



Steve Provost



Kathy Powell, Karen Beaty & Eli Redstone



Candy Dennis & Ann Osterling



Carol Shoup, Nancy Anderson & Janet Greene

Join in the fun while trimming & pulling weeds! The next Down & Dirty Grounds Workday is scheduled for April 30th. We need your help!

BLOSSOM, BREW BBQ at First Magnitude

The Gainesville Garden Club and First Magnitude Brewing Company teamed up for the third annual Blossom, Brew, and Barbecue on March 8th beginning at noon.

The event is always fun! We had fabulous plant vendors, crafters, master gardeners, and local artisans. She Shed, GGC's very own Leah Oehmig with her beautiful flowers and plants, and Begonia were among the vendors.

Challenge Entertainment Trivia Jockey, Blaise Maris, wrote all the Florida and Horticulture based questions. Eighty-three people played on 22 teams. The brewery gave prizes for 1st (\$25), 2nd (\$15), and 3rd (\$10) place. Everyone had a great time!



The front gate team lead by Karen Beaty, and the back gate team lead by Cathy Stewart sold a total of 115 wristbands for \$10 donation each to GGC. The advantage of having a wristband was the brewery gave you a dollar off any full pour beer! It was a win-win all the way around. Also, a big thank you to Cindy Bennett for all of her fabulous Facebook and Instagram advertising of the event.

Danny of downtown Loosey's with the help of his wonderful wife, Joy, served a fabulous barbecue lunch! The line was very long, but well worth the wait. His food never disappoints. Loosey's donates any profits from the BBQ to GGC, this year the donation was \$1750.

The event was supposed to end at 4 o'clock, however, the rains moved in about 2:40 PM. Many of the customers left, as did some of the vendors with things that just could not be in the rain. The plant vendors remained quite busy until 4.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered and helped with the event.

I appreciate you all.

Valerie Skurka-Mountjoy
Event Chairman



Photo on top: Attendees had a great time, left with a smile on their faces and plants for their gardens.

SIP & STROLL
March 13 2026



Linda Schoellhorn, Ida Jackson, Lynnette Worley & Becky O'Brien at main entrance.



WINE & CHEESE



Kathy Stephens & Mona Rippe covered 50/50 & cashiers table.



Candy Dennis and her husband served the Wine & Beer



Julie Lake, Stacey Copenhaver, & Arlene Smiliov were servers.



It was good to see so many members, their families & friends.



Auctioneer



Davis Willkomm and his band. Everyone enjoyed their music!

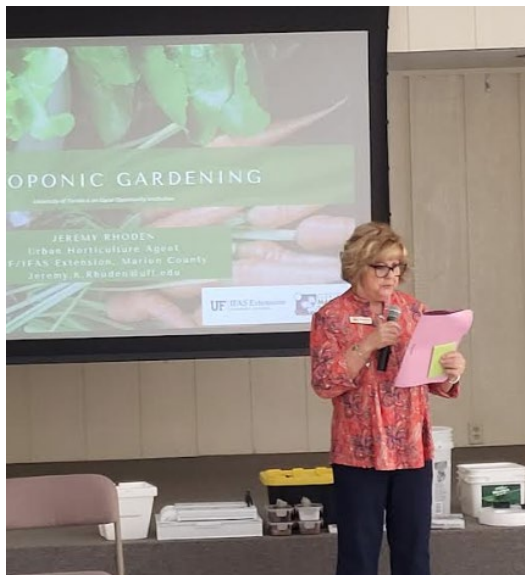
Thank you to all the sponsors, volunteers and attendee for raising \$6,632.57 for the Midnight Sky Scholarships.

COMBINED CIRCLE MEETING

February 26, 2026

Circle members attended a presentation on “**Hydroponics**” on February 26. The speaker, Jeremy Rhoden, the Urban & Residential Horticulture Agent, and Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator for UF/IFAS Extension Marion County

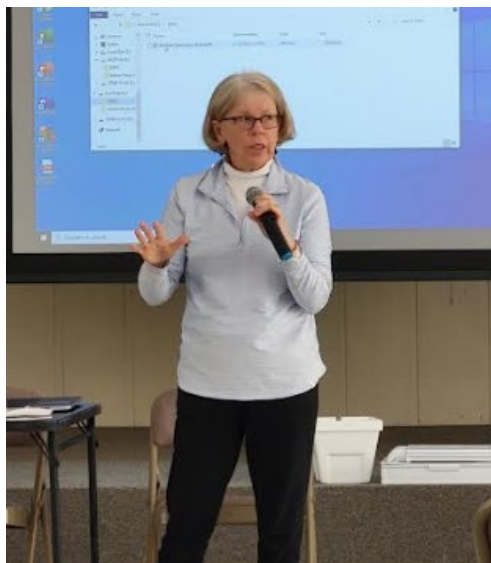
He oversees the development of greenhouse educational programs at schools within Marion County. Jeremy Rhoden described his work at the various schools and the design of the various greenhouses, hydroponics and vegetable gardening, and how students are taught to grow various plants while gaining knowledge about greenhouse management. Attendees asked a lot of questions and enjoyed being together with members from other circles.



Kathy Ames introduced the speaker.



Jeremy Rhoden presenting the program on “Hydroponics”



Paula Waterman presented an update on the 2027 Expo.



Beth Breitenbach & Moe Latour



Members taking time to visit with each other.

FUN WITH FLOWERS WORKSHOP

March 17, 2026



Betsy Gardner, The Plant Shoppe

Kathy Post works on her design

Beth Breitenbach shows off her arrangement.



Shelley Warner, FWF Chairman & Gardenia Circle Co-Chairman



Above: Gardenia Circle members take a minute to pose with the Easter bunny arrangements they had just made.

On the left: Mimosa members also took time to get a photograph of their floral arrangements.

Members, visitors and family members enjoy attending Fun with Flowers. If you haven't been at an FWF workshop, plan on attending one soon!

The next workshop will be on April 21st. Be sure to sign up on or before April 1st at a circle meeting or on line at www.ggclf.org.

FOCUS ON MEMBERSHIP



Congratulations to Marjorie Stoeker for receiving the FFGC Golden Pollinator Certification.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Steve DeCubellis	Gardenia Circle
Theoan Altschul	Gardenia Circle
Tim Lambert	Wildflowers Circle
Gabriela Mateescu	General Member



**Garden Clubs: Growing Stronger
Communities Through Shared Passion**



Circle Treasurer:

On or before April 1st, send in your Circle's paid dues report to GGC Treasurer Kathy Stephens. She will review your report and compare it to on-line payments. If it is correct, the Circle Treasurer will then be asked to send a check for the total amount of members who paid by check/cash.

On the right: Wildflowers Circle members Terry Murphy & Diane Lauramoore show off the floral arrangement they created at FWF. They are beautiful!

DUES TIME

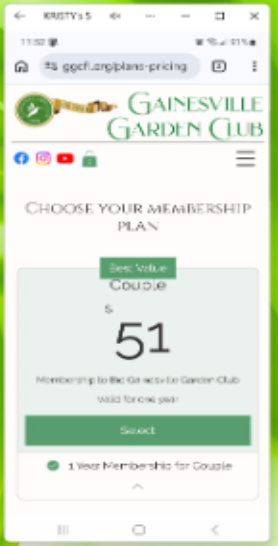
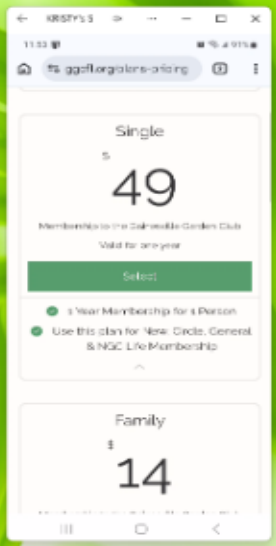
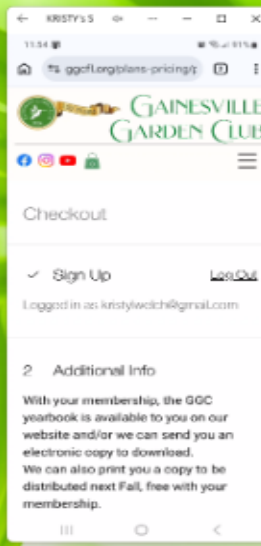
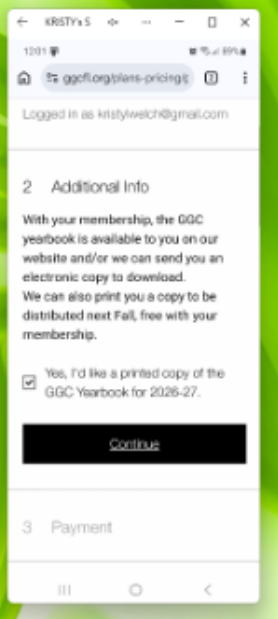
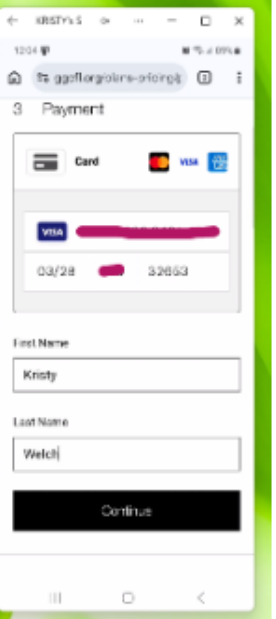
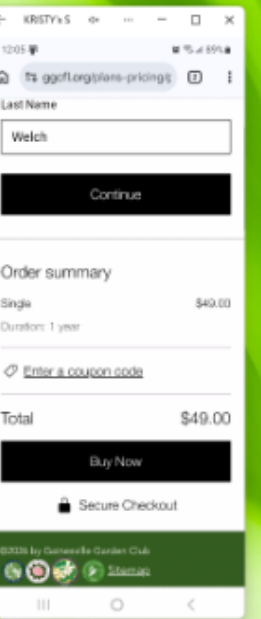
First, if you forgot what your dues will be, refer to your club handbook and look under the bylaws section, page 5, Article IV – Dues and Fees.

To make paying your dues easier, a link is on the GGC website: On-line: go to www.ggcfl.org.

Or you may pay by cash or check at your Circle meeting: If using a check, make your check out to your Circle as follows – Example: GGC Begonia Circle).



Instructions for Renewing Your GGC Membership Online

		
<p>GO TO RENEWAL PAGE</p> <p>Either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click on Renew Now! Button on email received <p>OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Open browser and go to https://www.ggcf.org/plans-pricing 	<p>PICK YOUR PLAN</p> <p>Scroll down to your desired Renewal Plan option</p>	<p>LOG IN (if needed)</p> <p>If you are already logged into the website, this screen will appear.</p> <p>If not, you will need to log in first!</p>
		
<p>PRINTED YEARBOOK?</p> <p>If you want a printed yearbook for next year, be sure to click the box!</p> <p>Then, click Continue.</p>	<p>ENTER CREDIT CARD INFO</p> <p>*Please Note: if you have an auto-fill option set up in your browser, you may need to delete & retype the Expiration Date to avoid errors. (It adds "blind" special characters that have to be removed for Wix to read it properly)</p> <p>Then, click Continue.</p>	<p>COMPLETE PURCHASE</p> <p>Once you are satisfied with accurate information, click the Buy Now button.</p> <p>Your verification email will be sent shortly after!</p>

YOUTH GARDENING NEWS

SYDNEY LANIER CENTER – serves students with severe developmental or multiple disabilities.



Above: Students planted potato plants in various size black container. Below: Carrot seedlings were planted in a large metal container and soon tall stems overflowed showing that they are ready to harvest.

Above: Mark Zadra harvests lettuce with the students to Sydney Lanier.

GAINESVILLE HIGHSCHOOL



Blanca McNab, Karen Beaty, Mark Zadra and other club members work with the students' pulling weeds, and caring for the plants at Gainesville High School.



HOWARD BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL



Above: A field has been cleared and potting soil and black know delivered to Howard Bishop Middle School so the teachers, students and volunteers can begin planting a spring garden.

EACH SEASON BRING CHANGE

“Every leaf is a soft promise that tomorrow will grow greener”



Mona Rippe had this great idea to go out and take pictures of our yard and gardens. It's a chance to learn what does well and what never to plant again! But we have to be patient and give nature time for recovery. Save your pics so we can share later and learn what you learned! Good luck!

The front entrance garden at the Veterans Memorial Park was recently cleared out of dead plants and weeds.

The photo on the right shows what survived after the many freezes endured over the last couple months. Members, headed up by Ami Kanu, the chair of the Civic & Community Service Committee.

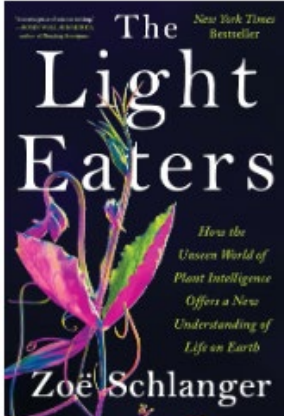


BOOK REVIEW

You might like this amazing read....

The Light Eaters: How the Unseen World of Plant Intelligence Offers a New Understanding of Life on Earth by Zoë Schlanger.

The New Yorker's Best Books of 2024 • TIME's 10 Best Nonfiction Books of 2024 • New York Magazine's 10 Best Books of the Year • Washington Post's 50 Notable Works of Nonfiction of 2024 • Smithsonian's 10 Best Science Books of the Year • A Best Book of the Year: Boston Globe, Scientific American, New York Public Library, Christian Science Monitor, Library Journal, and Publishers Weekly • An Amazon Best Nonfiction Book of the Year, And, I'd give it an award too.



This is a great quote from a review at Harper Collins: “It takes tremendous biological creativity to be a plant. To survive and thrive while rooted in a single spot, plants have adapted ingenious methods of survival. In recent years, scientists have learned about their ability to communicate, recognize their kin and behave socially, hear sounds, morph their bodies to blend into their surroundings, store useful memories that inform their life cycle, and trick animals into behaving to their benefit—a fascinating display of plant behavior and sensory abilities, to name just a few remarkable talents.”

It's available at our public library in hard copy and as an ebook. The author is a journalist, not a scientist so she makes the information understandable and even exciting. She gets a bit stuck in the debate that is apparently growing about whether plants can be called intelligent as humans are and I skipped through the philosophical discussion that may appeal to some readers. Each chapter covers a different remarkable skill/adaptation that plants have made over the eons. One of my favorite parts of the book was the reminder that plants were here first and in fact, our atmosphere and all the energy from the foods that feed every creature and critter and creepy crawly is thanks to plants and their remarkable capabilities.

- Review by Becky O'Brien

99th Annual Convention & State Flower Show
Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
"Sharing our Knowledge Plants the Seeds of Tomorrow"
Embassy Suites Orlando, Lake Buena Vista South
4955 Kyngs Heath Road, Kissimmee, FL 34746
April 14-17, 2026

CIRCLE NEWS

BEGONIA CIRCLE – Lynnette Worley, Chairman

Mimosa Circle began the New Year with a special presentation by Brian Pope of the Lubee Bat Conservancy on the role bats play in our overall ecosystem. It also gave us the opportunity to say “Batman” as many times as we could.

The Circle hosted Jeremy Rhoden in February on the topic of Hydroponics. This was a combined meeting with the Gardenia, Mimosa, and Wildflowers circles.

In March, our guest speaker was our own Bruce Cavey (photo on the right) who spoke on “Everything Bulbs”. His presentation was filled with loads of practical information it was a terrific presentation.

In between, many Begonias helped in the two School Gardens we assist with under the direction of Blanca McNab. We also tended the Front Door Garden and Butterfly Garden here at the building.

Future plans will be hearing about Orchids at our April meeting and creating flower arrangements in May.

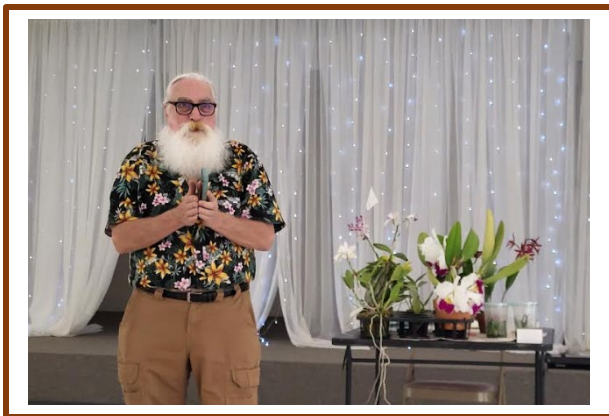


MIMOSA CIRCLE – Patricia Farley, Chairman

Mimosa members outdid ourselves with the Sip & Stroll & Blossom, Brew & BBQ events, along with other circle members.

Mimosa Circle met on March 26. The president of the Gainesville Orchid Society did a presentation on orchids.

In April we will be spending our meeting time on a boat ride in Crystal River, followed by lunch. Members have been asked to bring items for the Ronald McDonald House at that time.



The **Gainesville Florida Orchid Society** has 646 members and we were pleased to have its president, Rod Tiejien, present a program on Orchids at the Mimosa Circle Meeting on Thursday, March 26.

Mr. Tiejien is the owner of R n M Orchids and does work with the Fairfield Gardens. He brought a number of orchids he has grows to show to the attendees, provided a wealth of information and took time to answer members questions.



NATIVE WILD BEE TRVIA ANSWERS



Q: Approximately how many native bee species are found in North America?

C: Over 4,000.

Q: True or False: Most native bees live in large hives with a queen.

B: False. About 70% of native bees are solitary, nesting in tunnels in the ground, while others nest in wood tunnels.

Q: What is the only bee species in North America that is NOT native?

C: The Honey Bee.

Q: Do male native bees have stingers?

B: No. Only female bees have stingers, which are modified egg-laying organs.

Q: What is a "sweat bee"?

B: A small, often metallic green or striped bee that is attracted to the salt in human sweat.

Q: How many wings do bees have?

B: Four (two forewings and two hindwings).

Q: What is a "cuckoo bee"?

B: A bee that does not gather pollen, but instead sneaks its eggs into the nests of other bees, similar to a cuckoo bird.

Q: True or False: Native bees can see red light.

B: False. Bees cannot see red, but they see UV light, which helps them find nectar guides on flowers.

Q: How many eyes does a bee have?

B: Five (two compound eyes and three simple eyes, or ocelli).

Q: What is the primary cause of native bee decline?

C: Loss of habitat and plant diversity.

Q: How far do most native bees travel from their nest to find food?

A: Usually only a three hundred meters.



The Silent Collapse: When Pollinators Disappear

A world without bees is a terrifying thought: quiet fields, empty fruit trees, and a shrinking variety of foods on our tables. This is not a far-off scenario. It's happening right now.

Bees are in trouble, and so are we. We are facing a potential collapse of the natural systems that have sustained human civilization. Habitat destruction, pesticide use, disease and climate change are pushing bees to the brink. **Over 40% of pollinator species are at risk of extinction** (FAO, 2018), and the **biodiversity** and **global food security** we depend on are at stake. Without bees, the crops we rely on, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, could disappear from our plates. According to research, **about one-third of the world's food production depends on pollinators like bees** (FAO, 2018), underlining how crucial their survival is for our food systems.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

CALENDAR

April 4	McIntosh Garden Club's Spring Garden Show and Plant Sale	9 AM – 4 PM
April 6	Greenhouse Forum – Everyone is invited at GGC	10 AM - Noon
April 13-17	FFGC Convention & Flower Show	
April 21	Fun with Flowers Workshop	10 – 11 AM
April 23	Circle Meeting	10 AM
April 29	FFGC Webinar on Garden Club Business Guidance	
April 30	“Down & Dirty” grounds workday	9 – 11 AM
May 2	Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale, at IFAS,	8 AM - 1 PM
May 7	General Meeting, Speaker, & Plant Swap	10 AM
May 9	Mother's Day Tour & Brunch	9 AM – 1 PM
May 12	New Board of Trustees Meeting	9:30 AM
May 13	District V Spring Meeting – host Citrus Garden Club	10 AM – 2 PM
May 14	New Board of Directors Meeting	9:30 AM
May 21	End of the Year Circle Meetings	10 AM
May 28	Mardi Gras Luncheon at GGC	11 AM
May 31 – June 2	FFGC/UF/IFAS Short Course	Varies
June 7	“ <i>Story Time In The Garden</i> ”	1 – 3 PM
June 7-14	National Garden Club Week	
June 22	“Down & Dirty” grounds workday	9 – 11 AM
August 26	“Down & Dirty” grounds workday	9 – 11 AM

Newsletter Submissions

If you wish to submit Circle or member news, projects, programs, or photos for the summer newsletter, please send them in by August 1st to searnold6348@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Sandra Arnold, Editor

GARDEN CLUB WEBSITES

Gainesville Garden Club
Websites: ggcfl.org



Florida Federation of Garden Clubs (FFGC)
Website: ffgc.org



Deep South Garden Clubs
dsgardenclubs.com



National Garden Clubs
Website: NGC.org

