



## Summer Newsletter 2022

### Message from the President

Happy Almost Fall!

Although summer in the Keys gets somewhat sleepy, the Garden Club and our wonderful volunteers remain active. Rain has been spotty, although enough to keep the gardens lush. And we all keep hoping that we will avoid any devastation from a hurricane for the remainder of the season. Who can forget that iconic picture of Rosi navigating through the roots of our beloved ficus taken down during Irma just five years ago.



A focus of our mission is to eradicate invasive plants inside our walls. Our newest project is removing the Mexican petunias (Ruellia) on the top of the hill. A dedicated group of hill workers, Nell, Shelli, and Jeannie worked to dig them out, which left a large area to play with! Hazel, Nell, Pam, Rosi then worked up a plan to create a totally native area. More relocation of non-native plants and small palms took place. The ending result is a beautifully laid out bed of natives. Nell has contributed the unending enthusiasm, as well as numerous drawings as plants were located at various nurseries. The planting has begun, and we hope you all will enjoy the beauty of this new area when you return to the gardens this fall and winter.

The Gazebo fundraiser is almost to the top. If you wish to add to the donations, just go to our website [keywestgardencub.com](http://keywestgardencub.com) and contribute to this project. Yes, we really are raising the fifty thousand needed to remove and replace the green gazebo with a gorgeous and functional new structure! We have moved the project to next May. This will enable us to get through some of the red tape of construction in the Keys, as well as get us through our busy wedding season in the gardens.

We look forward to our volunteers returning in the coming months. Our first monthly Garden Club meeting will be held on November 3rd at 1:30pm. Of course there will be refreshments and catching up with one another following the lecture.

Have a safe and happy remainder of your summer.

Mary



## Loss of friends - Bob Hans

For those of us who were unable to attend Bob Hans' Memorial, here are a few photos of the lovely and emotional evening. Bob passed on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022. He first came to Key West during the Cuban Missile Crisis with the Navy and later moved here with Hazel and family. Bob was an amazing resource for the Garden Club for many years. He could fix pretty much anything and was a fabulous artist. He is missed.

*Hazel with Irie Monte, the violinist.*

*Mary Olson paid a tribute to Bob as did many friends and family.*







## Jane Dawkins

Jane was a longtime resident of Key West and Garden Club member who loved orchids. Jane was a wonderful artist with an exceptionally creative mind. She authored many books including *Letters from Pemberley* relating to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Jane graciously offered her garden for our Garden Tours. She was a kind, gentle, giving woman whose devotion to animals was an enormous inspiration to the creation of the modern FKSPCA animal shelter on Stock Island.

Jane's love of flowers and joy for life inspired a beautiful, unusual garden at her home and her influence on the Key West Community will be missed.

She inspired us all.

## Propagation Rocks!

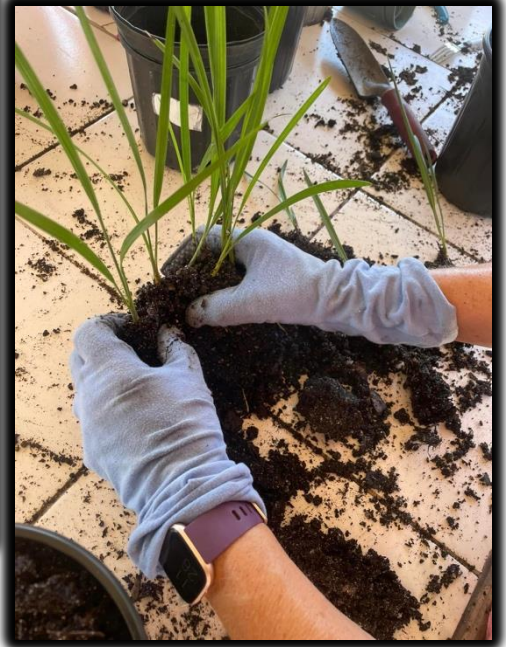
Here are some fun photos. Lynne Kemp, Carol Borland and Marcia Lara repotting a Parlor Palm that was stuck in a too-small pot. It took muscle power!!!

Also working (sweating) in Propagation are Kris Griffin and Christa Varacalli.





Propagation transplanted Buccaneer Palm seedlings, *Pseudophoenix sargentii*. It is a long-lived palm that historically was found on Elliot Key, Long Key and Sand Key. The population on Long Key was decimated in the early 20th century when they were dug and sold as ornamentals. It is a threatened species and we are doing our part to repopulate them.



Kitty Somerville brought in a beautiful double desert rose from her garden and it was re-potted into a lovely glazed pot that was donated a few weeks back. It takes a village to make the world a beautiful place.

## The Talent of Garden Club Members

Jeff Ware has been a Garden Club member for over 20 years. He also happens to be married to our Past President Rosi. Jeff has done amazing things for the Club over the years including installing the watering system and lighting and fixing stuff that broke.

He now has “branched” off into wood sculptures. At right is one of his latest sculptures “the Family” that is on display in a garden in Asheville.

He will also be having a one man show at the Studios of Key West this winter. Our Garden Club members are so clever.





## Columnist Robin Robinson

Kudos to Robin who is also a Past President of the Garden Club.

Robin was touted in the Citizen newspaper by Rob O'Neal. Twenty years ago, Robinson began her series of columns regarding horticulture and gardening. As of today, she has written 1,000 articles for the Keys Citizen.

Born and raised on a farm in Nebraska, Robin wrote columns for the Chicago Daily News, taught high school writing and Drama, and published several books. Robin, a former president of the Key West Garden Club and an avid swimmer, is also celebrating her 79th birthday. "I moved to balmy, fresh-aired Key West when my man suggested we switch winter snow and slush, to 80 degrees and sun. I sent all my winter clothes to the Salvation Army and packed tiny bathing suits and have always loved funky Key West."

Robin's articles in the Sunday paper are always fun to read and have interesting information on Keys gardening.





## Orchid Tasks for the Fall

Suggestions from Pam Van Soest

- It's "H" season. Have a plan just in case you need to move all your orchids indoors.
- Inspect your orchids for pests and disease.
- Do not repot in the fall unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Good air circulation around your orchids is essential. Orchids placed too closely together can transfer pests and disease very easily. Rule of thumb – they should be no closer than the diameter of the pot itself: 6-inch pot, 6 inches apart.
- It's snail season. Apply snail bait lightly and frequently. You can also tie copper wire around a tree (they won't cross the wire.) or place small shallow containers of beer around your orchids.
- Days are getting shorter. Water as early as possible in the day so they have time to dry out.
- Apply extra magnesium and potassium. This helps prepare the orchid for the colder weather.
- Starting in October, with shortening of the days and cooler nights, your orchids require less fertilizer and water. Remember this is the time of the year your orchids are starting their resting period.

### Top of the Hill Cleanup Crew



Shelli, Nell and Jeannie pulled out the invasive Ruellia plants at the top of the hill. The area is being replanted with native plants that can do better in such a windy, salty area. The hill crew, which also includes Hazel Hans and Rosi Ware, have been working hard to find native plants such as saltbush, golden beach creeper and bay cedar.

The imaginative Nell Smets fixed the watering hoses to go from the



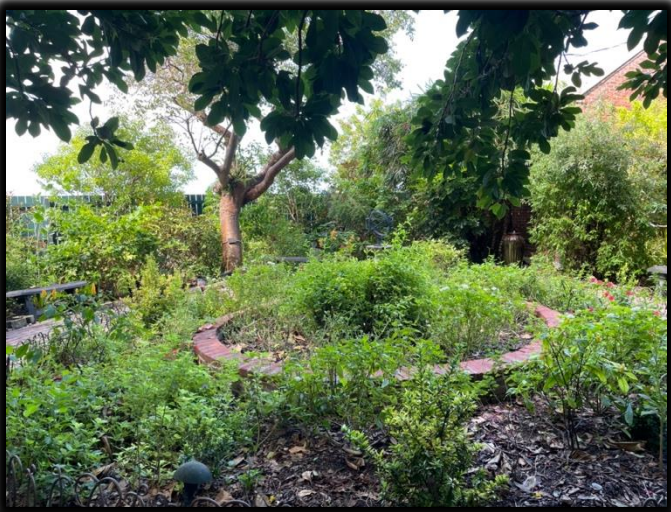
central system across the path onto a tree. That connects to hoses that can drip onto the newly planted plants.

Nell has also figured a way to keep the curly tailed lizards, *Leiocephalidae* from eating the new plants. They are ravenous. Smart!

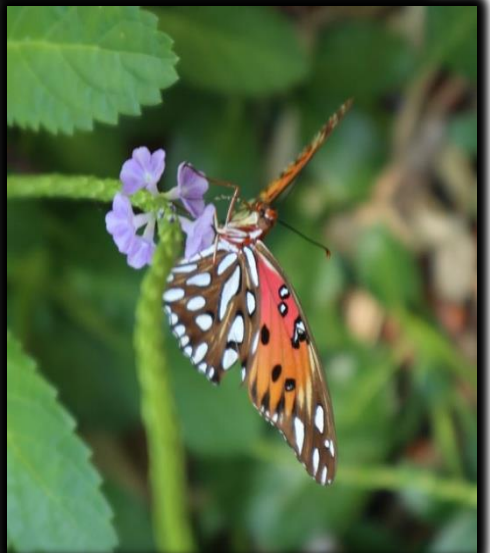




## Butterfly Garden



Donna Farrow and Cathie Gottschalk are the stalwart maintainers of the Butterfly Garden. They do a great job, especially as they are understaffed in the summer. There are still lots of butterflies!



Sunday morning after a rainstorm finds Hazel Hans chopping up a fallen bamboo and catching a rooster to take to the Wildlife Center. And it was her birthday too! Wonder Woman!



## **Garden Club Educational Lectures - Put us on the calendar!**

Our lectures are the first Thursday of the month starting in November. Join us in November to hear an interesting discussion of the evolution of our Propagation area and learn some plant propagation tips.

First Thursday of the month November through April - 1:30pm - 3:30pm - Refreshments after the lecture. Subjects pertain to gardening and environmental issues in the Florida Keys.

### **November 3, 2022**

*Key West Garden Club Propagation Presentation and History*

Kitty Somerville - KWGC Propagation Chair

### **December 1, 2022**

*Endangered Plants in the Keys*

Mary Nelson - Endangered Plants Advisory Council

### **January 5, 2023**

*The Story of Ballast Key*

Mark Hedden - Executive Director of the Florida Audubon Society

### **February 2, 2023**

*History of the African Cemetery (adjacent to the Garden Club)*

Cory Malcolm - Lead Historian Florida Keys History Center

### **March 2, 2023**

*TBD*

Michelle Mularz- Environmental Horticultural Agent

### **April 6, 2023**

*Agriculture in the Keys*

Brad Bertelli - Florida Keys Historian

The **November Plant Sale and Artist Market** will be Nov 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Please sign up to volunteer. It is a wonderful community event and lots of fun.







Thank you for photo and other contributions from **Lynne Bentley-Kemp** (most of the wonderful photos), Kitty Somerville, and Sue Sullivan.

Thank you to Christa Varacalli for proofreading.

Editor, Sue Sullivan