



Fall Newsletter 2022

Message from the President

Happy Year-End Wrap-Up

Ian. Yes, we know we were not a direct hit by Ian in September, but it would be difficult to understand that if you walked into the Garden a few days later. And yes, we had to walk from either Casa Marina or White Street to get in. The butterfly garden was covered in deep sand as we lost the fence again. The leftover sludge from the surge left a thick mess on walkways, and even intruded into the fort building. The Club and Atlantic Ave were shut down for about two weeks.



Volunteers showed up in droves. They cut, hauled, scraped, shoveled sand, scrubbed, and power washed. Donna Farrow talked to a couple walking by who inquired about the damage and Donna said that we could use help. The next day, the woman came back to work. A week later, three women visiting from Mississippi, who were all members of their garden club in MS and one who follows our Facebook page, came and helped out for the day. Sometimes it takes more than a village.

After a few weeks of general cleanup, volunteers focused on shoveling out the rest of the sand, dirt, and debris from the butterfly garden. Loads of dirt were hauled in and plants galore are once again thriving. Much to the pleasure of those pesky iguanas.

We enter the season of returning volunteers and visitors, and look forward to greeting old friends and meeting new ones as we work through the winter months.

If you haven't been back to the garden since Ian, make it a point to visit. As you view some of the tattered areas awaiting their return to splendor, know that we always evolve and grow at the Garden just like our human selves.

There is one last happy note. We have reached our goal of \$50,000 to erect a beautiful new gazebo to replace the worn out green one. The goal was topped off with donations from the community during the plant sale. Thank you to all. And watch for the new construction in mid-May of 2023.

Wishing you the best of Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Mary Olson

IAN the Terrible



Clean-Up Begins

First the sand had to be shoveled and wheelbarrowed out of the garden, then new dirt had to be brought in. Everything had to be watered and watered and watered to wash out the salt. Plants had to be found, then planted and watered and watered and watered some more. Kudos to all the volunteers and their sweat equity. Larry Searle of Searle Brother Nurseries generously bought plants and delivered them to us. The Gardens are beginning to look like their old selves. It was so exciting when the new fence was finally put up in the Butterfly Garden.





So many volunteers pitched in—including Robin Robinson's grandson visiting from Australia (top right) and new Master Gardener, Gerry Mader (Bottom right - Dr. Doug Mader, everyone's favorite Veterinarian, is her husband). An enormous thank you to all who helped. In every way!!!

Halloween

Our 10:30 Monday morning educational talks started this year with IFAS Extension Agent Michelle Mularz' presentation on the fertilization of plants: "keep it as organic as possible." There is a new Monroe County Ordinance for Florida Friendly Fertilizer Use on Urban Landscapes (Chapter 12, Article 2 Code of Ordinances) It spells out the best management practices.



Lou Ann Steely and her crew created yummy and spooky treats. Yes, it is Finger food!

A pre-plant sale 10:30 lecture had Kitty Somerville instructing members about the plant signs that Propagation has put together over time. Each sign has a photo of a plant that we will be selling and information about its care. When visitors buy a plant, they can take a picture of the sign so that they will know how to care for it when they get home. This has been a very successful innovation.

The November Plant Sale and Art Market (In spite of Ian)

Our annual sale took place and was a big success. This is such a wonderful community event and a chance for folks to mingle with neighbors and buy plants and great art and gifts, and wonderful food. Thursday was 'get the plants off the truck and set-up' day. Friday and Saturday were 'welcome the crowds' days. A huge shout-out to Janet Borch, Kitty Somerville and Mary Olson for pulling off a such a well-organized event.



This rat-tailed anthurium survived Hurricane Ian. It is located in the Bird Cage room. one of the few areas that still looked good after the storm. Thanks to Carol Borland and Propagation for tending to the plants in that room. It is one of the first pretty areas that visitors see before entering the Gardens.



A fabulous photo by Lynne Bentley-Kemp showss two ibises welcoming visitors to the Bird Cage room.



Kitty Somerville and Trish Delaney digging up native Fiddlewood seedlings to grow in Propagation. Fiddlewood is a native plant and has fragrant white flowers that attract bees and insects with excellent fruits for birds. They will be ready for sale in late 2023.



Pam Van Soest and her orchid crew kept the Gardens in vibrant color through a difficult time.



In Memorium



On Oct. 23, 2022, Jean Louise (Rogers) Rodriguez passed away in Miami. She retired from nursing and took up a career as a real estate agent, while also keeping active as a member of the Key West Garden Club and Arbor Society. Jean was adored for her quick-witted sense of humor, love and appreciation for art, refined cooking skills, and her ability to win just about every scrabble game played.

Those of us who remember Jean knew her as a very fun and creative member of the club.

New Receptionists

The Club has hired two replacement receptionists.

One is a retired Coast Guard helicopter pilot, although she looks very young. Recently moved to Key West, and just wanted something to help her acclimate and get to know people. Her name is Nicole, and she is training this week. She will start the weekend of New Years. Oh, and she went through the Master Gardener course in Jacksonville but was unable to complete all of the first year required hours. So, very garden-oriented.

The second one is a local. Graduated in 2021. Worked for an orthodontist and is doing online studies for about another year to work in the medical field. Her name is Sarah, and she will train next week, and begin working on January 2nd.

If you see a new face when at the Club, introduce yourself and make them feel welcomed.



Holiday Decorations

Once again Jane Tiedeman worked her magic on the gardens and did a lovely job making the Club look so festive. Especially if you drive by at night. We shine! Thanks, Jane.





May you all have a joyous, healthy, Holiday Season!!

Thank you for photo and other contributions from Lynne Bentley-Kemp, Kitty Somerville, and Sue Sullivan, Eloise Pratt & Rosi Ware
Thank you to Christa Varacalli for proofreading.

Editor, Sue Sullivan

