



## Summer Newsletter 2022

### Message from the President

Happy Almost Fall!

As I write this note for the newsletter, we are enjoying our first 'cool and dry' day this Fall. High 70's and crystal blue skies all around. You will be very happy to know that your Gardens are beautiful and growing. A core group of year-round volunteers and leaders have worked their magic once again, and the September rain fall has been a great help.



The new vanda orchid arbor is once again housing our vandas. And after some adjustment time (they hate to be moved) new growth and blooms are showing their shine. The pavers will be laid soon. Please join many others in ordering a nice-sized paver with your favorite quote or message in support of this project. You may find the information on our donor page in our website.

Ready for the Annual Plant Sale? I am getting very excited. Plants, plant experts, vendors and homemade food--including the famous bratwurst, chili, and smoked pulled pork. And this year, biscuits and sausage gravy both mornings. Come and eat, and do some holiday shopping, even if it's for yourself. November 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> from 10am - 3pm both days.

We look forward to seeing so many of our snowbirds over the next few months and welcome your help and support as you are able.

Mary



## Projects Around the Gardens

The new **Orchid Arbor** is coming into its final shape. Nell Smets (grand architect), Pamela VanSoest, Mike Sheehan and Davin Rose have been stalwart in keeping the momentum going this summer. The last of the base gravel/sand is down. Pictured is silica sand being delivered and smoothed, then a pipe for the electrical to power the fountain, then brick and pavers will be laid. Next, gravel around the bricks & pavers. Finally, the watering system and solar lighting. Once done, this will be a real focal point for the Garden.



## Sculptures Moved to New Locations

The African sculptures have been moved to better viewing locations. These statues were carved by free Black artisans in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and given to this Garden in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by American-born descendants of formerly enslaved African people to memorialize the suffering, longing and courage of kidnapped Africans buried in the African Cemetery on a tropical beach in Key West during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. May we never forget.



Bill Lorraine's sculptures were moved to brick walls and Perry Arnold's "Burning Spirit" was refurbished by Jeff Ware and put in the dinosaur garden.



## Propagation Rocks!



Summer crew for propagation:  
Christa Varacalli, Hanna Schenck,  
Kitty Somerville, Lynne Bentley-  
Kemp and Carol Borland.

They have kept the weeds down and coddled plants to get them ready for the November Plant Sale. In addition to propagating at the club, they are also growing plants at home.

Patti Rodrigue, not shown here, is also busy propagating many crotons and other plants in her backyard.

Courtyard plant sales will start at the end of the month. The 10:30 informational sessions will begin on November 6th.

## Fort Update

Hazel Hans is continuously juggling the issues at the Fort, such as dealing with flooding and getting the County to fix electrical issues. There is a continued effort to trap chickens and bring them to the Wildlife Center. Hazel is in close contact with the County. A big thank you for her persistence.

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

Our lectures are the first Thursday of the month, starting in November and through April, from 1:30 - 3:30 PM. Refreshments are served after the lecture. Subjects pertain to gardening and environmental issues in the Florida Keys.

### **Thursday, November 2, 2023**

Jose Esposito from Soroa Orchids: *Orchid Growing a Survival Guide*

### **Thursday, December 7, 2023 (special 5pm starting time)**

Lynne Bentley-Kemp: *Botanical Book Presentation and Signing*

### **Thursday, January 4, 2024**

Marc Wilson, Master Gardener

### **Thursday, February 1, 2024**

Dr. Corey Malcom: Fl. Keys History Center Historian

### **Thursday, March 7, 2024**

Kirsten Hines: Author, Conservationist, Photographer: *Wild Florida, An Animal Odyssey*

### **Thursday, April 4, 2024**

Allison Higgins, Key West Sustainability Coordinator: *Sea Level Rise*

## **Reposting: Pam Van Soest's Orchid Hints**

### **Orchid Tasks for the Fall**

Suggestions from Pam Van Soest

- It's still "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.



## Meet one of our new receptionists

**Julia Canady** - Julia is a student at the College of the Florida Keys. She works all weekends and fills in as her schedule allows.

Pam VanSoest works every Tuesday and also fills in, and Kim Sherman works Wednesdays and Thursdays and also fills in quite a bit.

**We are looking for another part-time person so let us know if you're interested!**



## Working around the Garden

At the top of the hill Jeanne & Nell have done lots of pruning and trimming and the baby sunrose bed is being revived with better soil. The rubble area by the brain cactus has been cleaned up. A new spigot with a stainless-steel hose was installed, and spineless agave and frog fruit were planted. Terracing was begun around the pruned palms north of the white gazebo using repurposed brick from the old orchid arbor.



Two new Alexander palms were planted next to the ramp going into the Bird Cage room and a new hose spigot was put in.

Jane Tiedeman and Jeanne working on the porterweed in the Butterfly Garden and Nell made the watering system more efficient.



On the Almond Tree Hill, the Bounce kinetic sculpture was relocated and a new *Thrinax radiata* palm was planted.



Nell and Deanne Schofield cleaned and repainted the Bonsai Area by the Pavilion and Rachel O'Conner is doing a great job caretaking.

## In Memoriam

We are sad to announce the deaths of two past members who were very active with the Club.

**Mary Elizabeth (Heim) Sandusky** passed away peacefully with family at her bedside on September 14, 2023 in Louisville, KY.

Mary frequently volunteered her time and energy at the Key West Garden Club. She entered statewide floral competitions where she won numerous awards for her designs. Mary leaves behind a rich legacy of warmth, creativity, and family unity, reflected in the close-knit family she nurtured, and the beautiful gardens she tended with love and care.



**Elaine Ann (Stern) Belanger** died peacefully at home in Maplehurst, Wisconsin on August 20, 2023, with family members present and under the comforting care of Hope Hospice. She and her husband Dave had left the world of publishing and Wisconsin's frigid winters with a move to Florida, where she spent her days working at the Key West Garden Club.

Set in a crumbling brick pre-Civil War era fort right on the beach, filled with thousands of well-tended tropical plants, she would greet visitors during the day and served as a docent at weddings in the evening, often in the same long day. Elaine liked the work and loved that she never had a grumpy "customer." Visitors from all over the world, often on winter vacation, walked through the arched entrance with a smile.

## Honor Donations

Donations were made to the Key West Garden Club in honor of Mary Sandusky by Edie Nixon of Louisville, KY and Coleen Hogan of Seaford, DE.

The **November Plant Sale and Artist Market** will be Nov 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Please sign up to volunteer. It is a wonderful community event and lots of fun.



KEY WEST GARDEN CLUB

# Annual Fall Plant Sale & Art Market

Fri. Nov. 17 and Sat. Nov. 18

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

West Martello Tower at Higgs Beach

[keywestgardenclub.com](http://keywestgardenclub.com)

More information call (305) 294-3210 // Memberships available at the club

## PLANT VENDORS

Tropical and Native Plants, Bromeliads, Orchids,  
Orchid supplies, IFAS Horticulture Advice

Ceramics, Jewelry, Bamboo Clothing,  
Tea Towels, Handmade Stuffed Animals,  
Handmade Leather Bags, Homemade  
Jams, Tin Planters, Windchimes,  
Whimsical Garden Art

Local  
ARTISTS!

The  
Florida Keys  
& Key West  
...come as you are™  
KEY WEST TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER



Newly planted tomato seeds will be ready for the Nov 17 & 18 Plant Sale. We will have our well-researched tomatoes specifically for the Keys. Sun Sugar, Carmelo and a few other varieties will be available, plus rosemary, chives and 3 varieties of basil. Kaffir lime leaves for Thai stirfry will also be sold.

We have 101 seeds already germinated of the 140 tomato seeds we planted! Off to a good start in just 5 days!

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

Editor, Sue Sullivan

