



District IX Newsletter

Inspiring Buds to Blossom

June 10, 2017



Celebrating Installation!

Director's Message:

This is the first newsletter of my term as your District Director. Our theme "Inspiring Buds to Blossom" has a couple meanings/connotations. One is a gardening one -- we all love to see our plants, trees, flowers move from buds to blossoms. But, secondly buds refer to our friends and we all love to see them blossom too.

Claudia Bates, our new FFGC President, will be concentrating on two issues during her term -- planting flowering trees and increasing membership. We are excited about supporting her and her team these next two years. We're trying to ensure this newsletter is informative and interesting. Judy Francino is the Communications Chairperson, and the newsletter editor. See page 3 for more from her as to how you can contribute articles/events etc.

Lastly, I am excited about meeting you and hearing about all the great things your clubs/circles/councils are doing. If you would like me to visit, please send an "invite" and I'll do my best to arrange a convenient time.

Let's blossom together,

Laura Jibben
District IX Director

Meet your new District Officers!

Director: Laura Jibben ljibbenfmb@embarqmail.com 312 320-4566

Asst. Director: Leslie Montwid ronmontwid@yahoo.com 863 687-4750

Treasurer: Bernadette Hamera bhamera@outlook.com 239 233-1166

Recording Secretary: Bonnie McClure bonmclure@hotmail.com 847 630-3218

Corresponding Secretary: Vicki Williamson vbwilliamson47@gmail.com 802 324-3847

Parliamentarian: Brenda Norris norris.brendacb@gmail.com 239 489-0343

FFGC Awards Chair Challenge!:

The new FFGC Awards Chair, Valerie Seinfeld, has issued a CHALLENGE to all Districts!

Each Garden Club is encouraged to write at least one award application this year.

The most award applications mailed in by Districts will be honored at the 2018 Convention Awards Luncheon.

This will be done fairly between Districts by percentages of total garden clubs in each District.

So, let's get busy!! District IX is fine!!

Jean Shields is the District IX Awards Chair. She is new to this position and is learning on-the-job as is your Director. Jean's email is hijean1@comcast.net

Save the Date!.....

District IX Fall Meeting – October 3, 2017

Meet our FFGC Officers!

Embassy Suites Fort Myers

10450 Corkscrew Commons Drive

Estero, FL 33928

District IX 2017 Spring Meeting Report:

The District IX Spring meeting was a delightful event with a great turnout in Estero. It was beautifully hosted by the Fort Myers – Lee County Garden Council with a very special silent auction featuring items from the Estate of former FFGC President, Berne Davis. What a treat it was for many of our members to go home with a treasured keepsake from that very special lady! Ms. Katy Errington, Councilwoman from the Estero City Council greeted us with a delightful overview of this new community and her involvement. This was later followed by an informative presentation by Ms. Rachel Rainbolt, an Outreach Coordinator for C.R.O.W., with assistance from “Lola” who flew in for the day! Kathleen Hawryluk addressed the members and extended her appreciation for their support over the past two years. Our new officers were introduced and Laura Jibben assured us that she is looking forward to a fun time for us all in the coming year.

Let's Communicate! by Judy Francino, Communications Chair

District IX is on FACEBOOK! Check us out at [District IX FFGC](#)

This is a “closed group”, so you must request to join the group. I will approve and then you can post or comment. We ask that all comments be positive or constructive and “on topic”. Let's make it a fun way to get to know what's happening in the District and know each other better. I have posted our next couple of District IX meetings in the Events section, so be sure to check that out.

You can send me information on your club events to be communicated in the District IX Newsletter and FB group, and note if you would also like them to be posted on the FFGC website. You can include a flyer for the event as well. My email is JfrancinoD9info@centurylink.net.

Garden Club Spotlight:

In each Newsletter, we will spotlight one or two member clubs by giving an overview of their history. Many of our clubs go back quite a number of years and we think we'll learn some interesting things about our members! We hope you will enjoy this feature. The first club to be under the Spotlight is our Director's very own, Estero Island Garden Club.

A Short History of Estero Island Garden Club

Two women – one idea – to learn about gardening in Florida in order to beautify Estero Island.

In the Fall of 1959, Mrs. Irene Paden, a newcomer to Fort Myers Beach, approached the new president of the Women's Club about the "deplorable condition of the island". The President, who had planned to reactivate the horticulture department of the Club, then made Mrs. Paden, Chairman.

Mrs. Paden put an advertisement in the Beach Bulletin inviting all interested women to meet in her home. She also invited the President of one of the Garden Clubs in Fort Myers, who spoke to the 27 ladies present, on the advantages of being a Federated Garden Club instead of a department of the Women's Club.

Mrs. E. Carlisle Hunter was appointed Chairman. A vote was taken and the decision was made to become a separate Garden Club.

During the years of EIGC's life, many areas of Fort Myers Beach have been improved, including the approach signs, the old entrance Arch, the Lee County Park, the Beach Library, the Beach Elementary School, members' yards, the entrance to Matanzas Pass Preserve, and the Estero Island Historic Cottage.

EIGC is a working service club, offering assistance and expertise to the Town of FMB in their planting projects. Programs are sponsored for the Beach Elementary School students, involving them in Arbor Day activities, classroom projects and a school community garden in conjunction with other community groups. The club has landscaped the gardens at the Bay Oaks Recreation Center and established the Ann Reasoner Memorial Garden. Scholarships are also provided to Camp Wekiva.

Inspiring Your Buds to Blossom by Debbie Hughes,
Senior Horticulturist,
Edison & Ford Winter Estates

Summer can be a difficult time to keep the garden looking its best, but with just an hour a day in the early morning or evening (if it doesn't rain), the garden can be kept neat and tidy. We all then have our own version of what needs to be trimmed and what needs to be pulled out. The decisions you make in the garden keeps that important synapses firing in our brains. Gardening is also great exercise for the body burning depending on the intensity 240 calories per hour, as well as, bending stretching and lifting (the right way of course). One of the first chores we find necessary in the garden would be weeding. The definition of a weed is a plant in the wrong place; interestingly, a weed to my neighbor may not be a weed to me-you see how this goes. There is an old saying, "if you pull on a plant and it comes out easy, it probably was a plant you wanted." I have found this to be true in most cases. The butterflies thrive on the nectar of weeds or wildflowers so be kind to these creatures. Weed killers in the lawn probably should not be used in the summer, partially because the rains will wash most of the chemicals into the waterways and the high temperatures mixed with chemicals put undue stress on turf grass. If the plan is to use roundup on pavers, sidewalk, or garden beds make sure you are extremely careful. Keep in mind a windy or rainy day may not be the best time for applications. If you grow roses or herbs, do not apply weed killer near any of these plants as they are extremely sensitive. I personally love to use a weeding tool, called a cobra head cultivator and there is also a long handle version. Check-put this website: <https://www.cobrahead.com/>. Kneeling on my pad and using this amazing tool to weed can be extremely meditative for my soul. There are many ways to meditate: form a mental picture of mountainside overlooking a waterfall, listen to the birds sing, watch for those fluttering butterflies, smell the good earth, or just sing a song.

Once the weeds are pulled, the next chore beneficial to suppress those weeds and add organic matter is by spreading mulch (2-3") deep. My favorite mulch is the ground-up Melaluca trees known as Florimulch. Use of this mulch is an excellent way to rid the nature areas of this invasive tree planted in Florida in the early 1930's.

If this was the month of May, I would encourage the use of a balanced fertilizer to our gardens (except maybe some of our natives). Lee County passed an ordinance in 2008, requiring landscape companies to be certified in Best Management Practices, and more importantly banning the use of granular fertilizers June 1-September 30. There are some exceptions to this ordinance- check out this website <http://fertilizesmart.com/> for more information on this important environmental issue. If you have lived in Florida during rainy season, you would realize our serious rain events washes granular elements into the roads, sewers, rivers, and eventually the gulf. Please be smart-enjoy the garden by wearing a hat, gloves, insect repellent, and appropriate clothing to preserve our precious skin. Find a shady spot to take a break with a tall glass of water, iced tea, or lemonade and check out all you have accomplished in just an hour a day.

What's Happening.....

Upcoming District IX Member Club Events:

- June 24, 2017: Taste of Lee Tropical Fruit Fair
Gate Ministries (formerly First Baptist Church of Ft. Myers)
1735 Jackson St., Fort Myers
- September 8, 2017: Fort Myers – Lee County Garden Council Meeting
Council Headquarters, 2166 Virginia Ave., Fort Myers
- October 3, 2017: District IX Fall Meeting
Embassy Suites Fort Myers
10450 Corkscrew Commons Dr., Estero
- December 1 – 2, 2017 : Punta Gorda Home Tour
Specific locations still being finalized
- March 13, 2018 : Punta Gorda Garden Club Standard Flower Show
First United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall
507 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda
- May 2, 2018 : District IX Spring Meeting
Punta Gorda Isles Yacht Club
1780 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda

Photo Gallery By Pat Shira

