



GARDEN CLUB OF CAPE CORAL

PO Box 152022, Cape Coral, FL 33915

Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.,
Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc., (District IX) and Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council

NEWSLETTER – MAY 2020

May is the month in which we celebrate our birthday so enjoy some virtual cake!



*Garden Club of Cape Coral
founded 1997*



May is always the last meeting of our business meeting season and over the last two or three years, we have been getting together monthly socially at local bars/restaurants. Unfortunately, we will not be able to do this in the current situation so hopefully, the next time we will all be together will be at our Potluck Welcome Back meeting on September 9. You will already have seen President Ann's email about this but stay tuned for further information nearer the date.

As well as our birthday this month, we're also celebrating the awards we received in the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs 2019 Awards program. Apart from one other club, **we were the only club** in the Federation's District IX to win awards this time, so let's pat ourselves on the back and thank all who were involved in submitting our award applications (President Ann, Judy Peltier, Lillian Peterson, Sue Lawson and Sylvia Swartz).

The four awards we won were as follows:

Award # 11-6 - Yearbook

Award 14-4 - DePalma/Sillik Website award (for our newly designed website put together by our talented club member, Lillian Peterson)

Award 36-4 Community Service - for our 2019 March in the Park event (organized by our Ways and Means Committee chaired at the time the event took place by Judy Peltier and Carolyn France.)

Award 51-4 - Environmental Education Involving Youth (in respect of member Judy Peltier's work with the Middle School kids at Trafalgar Middle School. Judy mentors the kids in growing vegetables and fruit which are used both at the school and donated to local food banks, and has also helped the kids design a flower garden, which they use to make bouquets for elder-care facilities.)

We also received **Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.** Awards as follows:

Awards 5A iv - Public Relations – March in the Park

Award 15A iv - Environmental Education Award (Trafalgar - Judy)

Award 33A6 - Yearbook, 3rd place.

Many congratulations to all involved!

Membership Dues

Membership dues need to be paid to the club by the end of this month in order to ensure inclusion of the member's information in the next Club Directory. Dues are \$30 for an individual and \$45 for a couple.

Before mailing your check, please take a look at your entry in the current Yearbook to make sure your personal details are up-to-date and correct. If anything needs to be changed, please email Sylvia Swartz or give her a call.

Please make checks payable to Garden Club of Cape Coral and mail your check directly to Membership Chair, Susan Noble at her home address shown in the email accompanying this newsletter or check your Directory.

Checks should reach Susan as soon as possible and definitely by the end of May if you wish to be included in the 2020-2021 Directory.

Club Directory Photography Competition - We have a Winner!

Congratulations to Betsy Koscher, winner of our Photography Competition. Here is the beautiful photo that Betsy submitted which will be on the cover of our 2020/2021 Directory.:



This Monarch butterfly found an appropriate color-coordinated y resting place on one of Betsy's beautiful Hibiscus shrubs.

Thanks to all who submitted photographs. There were more than 50 entries this year! The competition will start up again in September for our 2021-2022 Directory so get snapping!

Articles from Garden Club of Cape Coral Members in *The Breeze*

For many years, club members Jean Shields and Joyce Comingore have taken it in turns to contribute weekly articles to *The Breeze* newspaper on gardening and environmental issues. They are now taking well-earned retirement from this task and we extend our thanks to them for all the information they have shared with the Cape and surrounding areas over such a long time. We know they have been instrumental in piquing the interest of readers who have ended up joining the club because of these articles –our President Ann Block states unequivocally that the articles were the reason that she joined our club.

The baton is now passing to other members - and three of our Master Gardener members have agreed to take up the challenge: Cathy Dunn, Janetta Fox, and Deborah Haggett. Our thanks to them. They will take it in turns to submit articles. President Ann is going to kick off the new guard in the May 15th *Breeze*, with an article on Gardening in May. If you have any interest in writing an article for *The Breeze* on something that particularly interests you, please contact President Ann.

A message To Our Newer Members

Have you joined a committee yet? We rely on our committees to run the business of the club. We are a registered non-profit 501 c3 charitable organization What we are not is a social club – we're here to fulfil our charitable objectives. Our mission objectives include the education of our members in horticulture, native plants, organic

A message To Our Newer Members – continued

gardening, landscape design, flower arranging, environmental concerns and conservation, plus working with local schools and the youth of our city while promoting the goals of NGC, FFGC and friendship amongst our members. All that doesn't happen without a lot of work! So, you must join a committee to help make that happen.

Attached with the email circulating this newsletter is a list of all the committees that fulfill the objectives of the club together with the name of the committee chair, whom you can contact to join that committee. Please review this and make a commitment. Refer to your Directory for contact information.

Things you can do in your Garden - How about Making a Rain Garden?

(source: National Gardening Association Weekly Newsletter – edited)

Summer seems to be already here in SW FL, and the hot, days are likely to be punctuated with thunderstorms that drop lots of water in a short amount of time, rather than with long, soaking rains. When a thunderstorm unleashes a torrent of rain, all that water landing on impervious surfaces like roofs, driveways, and walkways often runs off into the nearest storm drain and from there eventually to local waterways, or it goes directly into nearby streams, rivers, and lakes. Even when the rain lands on lawns, gardens, or other vegetated surfaces, so much comes down so quickly in a thunderstorm that much of the needed water runs off rather than soaking into the ground.

The problem with runoff is that it can pick up and carry all sorts of pollutants as it makes its way into the watershed, from nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorous that fuel algal blooms, to pesticides, herbicides, oil, grease, heavy metals, and harmful bacteria. Equally important, water

that runs off is water that is not available in the soil for thirsty plants to take up - which puts rain gardens front and center.

Rain gardens need to be shaped like shallow bowls that are designed to capture storm water and hold it until the ground can absorb it. By capturing a sudden deluge of water before it becomes runoff and letting it soak into the ground, a properly designed rain garden helps protect the environment and recharges the groundwater. It can also be an attractive addition to your landscape and many of the plants that are suited to a rain garden are natives that attract beneficial and pollinating insects, butterflies, and birds. It's win win all round!

Locate your rain garden where downspouts or swales can direct water from roofs, driveways, and other impervious surfaces, but place it at least 10 feet away from the foundation of your house, at least 30-50 feet away from septic tanks, leach fields, and drinking water wells, and away from any other underground utilities. When siting your garden, it's also important to remember what a rain garden is not.

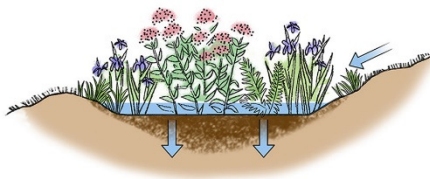
It's not a bog or a swamp; it's a temporary water holding basin. So, it doesn't belong in a spot that is naturally wet or where water stands for long periods after a rain. A low spot that is fairly flat with soil that allows any standing water to drain within a day or two after a storm is best. To check if the soil drains fast enough, dig a test hole about 10 inches deep and fill it with water. If the water drains away within 48 hours, you're good to go.

A common concern is that a rain garden will become a "mosquito garden" as well. But because it's filled with water for only brief periods of time, you don't need to worry about a rain garden adding to the local skeeter population. Similarly, the plants that are appropriate for a rain garden are not wetland plants that need constantly wet soil. Instead, choose plants that can tolerate both temporarily saturated and drier soil. Both herbaceous and woody plants can be

Making a Rain Garden – continued

appropriate choices. Specific plant choices will depend on your climate, the size of your garden, and your site's exposure. Fortunately, there are many online resources with information on designing, planting, and maintaining rain gardens in various regions of the country. Or contact your local Extension Service or Master Gardeners program for advice.

How big should you make your rain garden? Ideally it should be about 20-30 percent of the size of the area draining into it; for example, a 300 sq. ft. garden to hold the runoff from a 1000 sq. ft. roof. The deeper the garden and the more freely draining the soil, the greater the volume of water a given area will be able to accommodate.



Excavate the chosen area about 6 inches deep; then level out the

interior and add compost to the soil. Try to select both woody and herbaceous plants to provide a changing display of seasonal interest. This new garden will be a lovely spot that will help the environment, wildlife, and the water table -- and add beauty and color to any yard.

There are no upcoming events to list.

The next Newsletter will be published in early September. Please send information to Sylvia Swartz on anything you would like included in the newsletter.