



GARDEN CLUB OF CAPE CORAL

*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*

The ***magic of Christmas*** never ends and its greatest of gifts are ***family and friends*** -
Christmas.365greetings.com (courtesy of Valorie Breen)

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2022



Countdown to Our Holiday Party

December 14 is just around the corner so let's get ready to celebrate the season at our annual holiday party – a luncheon event this year at Palmetto Pine Country Club, our usual meeting venue. Ann and Elsa have great plans to make this a happy, fun occasion. So, if you've signed up, we're looking forward to seeing you at 11:30 AM on the 14th, a lunch time meeting instead of our usual evening meeting. We will have our usual 50:50 Draw plus a small SILENT AUCTION!!! Look out for some great goodies to bid on.

We will again have a collection box to support the Cape Coral Caring Center – canned and boxed dry foods only. Our collection at last month's meeting

generated more than 280 lb. of food for the Center which Terry Fisher kindly delivered – thank you Terry!

December Birthdays

Happy birthday to all our December birthday babies!
Enjoy your special day!



Ria Benton
Debbie Clements
Susan Gornall
Tammy Wilson

Val Breen
Debbie Cooper
Cheryl Shaw
Joyce Comingore

Newsletter Editor

Please welcome **Donna Schmidt** as your new Newsletter editor. Donna will begin her new role with the January 2023 edition.



DONNA SCHMIDT

Donna joined the club in November 2021, and she is looking forward to being the Newsletter editor. Donna says that when she joined us . . . “I knew I was in the right place to meet so many wonderful people and to learn about gardening in SW Florida. There are many things that are important in my life – spending time with family and friends, traveling, crafting, volunteering, and gardening. I love playing in the dirt and watching my plants grow – it is my therapy!

“My hometown is Pasadena, MD, where I raised four beautiful and amazing daughters. In May of 2016 I happily retired from T. Rowe Price in Baltimore after being there just shy of 20 years. Then in January of 2017 I made the journey with Paul, my incredible partner, to our home in Cape Coral. I am blessed with five precious grandchildren - four grandsons and one granddaughter - along with eight snuggly grand fur babies.”

Thanks for stepping up, Donna and good luck!

Unhappy With Your Picture in the New Yearbook?

If you don't like the picture of your in the membership section of the 2022-2023 Directory – you can get it changed! Club Photographer Carmen Sprague has generously offered to retake pictures at a club meeting – so let Carmen know if you

want to have your picture re-taken for the next Yearbook.

(carmens321@aol.com).

Extract from National Gardening Association Newsletter Dec 3 2022

'Tis the season to be jolly -- and to attend holiday parties. Do you have trouble making small talk? Here are some fun facts about holiday plants to help you break the ice and get the conversation started.

Poinsettias are the number one flowering potted plant sold in the U.S - especially impressive since almost all are sold in the six weeks before Christmas. How did this tropical plant become such an important symbol of the winter holidays?

Legend has it that a poor Mexican girl, embarrassed for not having a gift to bring to Christmas Eve services, fashioned a modest bouquet from common wildflowers. When she placed the bouquet at the nativity scene, it transformed into a display of brilliant red flowers. Witnesses claimed a Christmas miracle and named the plant "Flowers of the Holy Night."

Joel Roberts Poinsett, first U.S. ambassador to Mexico and a skilled amateur botanist, was so enchanted by this plant's colorful show that he brought samples back to the U.S. and began cultivating it in his South Carolina greenhouses in the 1830s. The plant was classified as a new species and called *Poinsettia pulcherrima*; the genus

name honored Poinsett, and the species name translates to "very beautiful." Later, botanists agreed that the plant belongs in the genus *Euphorbia* (so it's now called *Euphorbia pulcherrima*) but the common name poinsettia has stuck.

Another tropical plant that has come to symbolize the holidays is the Christmas cactus. Native to South America, the plant is a tropical rainforest epiphyte, growing high in the tree branches. The plant has adapted to short periods of drought.

Ever wonder why your "Christmas" cactus blooms too early? It's possible that it's a Thanksgiving cactus. Although similar in appearance, they are different plants. Both Christmas cactus (*Schlumbergera russelliana*, aka *S. bridgesii*) and Thanksgiving cactus (*Schlumbergera truncata*) respond to the shortening days of fall, by setting flower buds. Thanksgiving cactus just responds about a month sooner. To tell them apart, examine the leaf pads. Leaf segments of Christmas cactus are gently lobed; those of Thanksgiving cactus have spikes on the sides of the stem segments. If your cactus blooms too late, it might be an Easter cactus. Look closely at the tops of the leaf segments. If there are small bristles, you have an Easter cactus.

Evergreens were revered in ancient times as promises of rebirth and renewal, because they remained green throughout the dark, gray winter. Evergreens, especially hollies, were thought to ward off evil spirits and protect a home's inhabitants.

The Druids believed that the pointy leaves of holly trees provided protection from witches and lightning strikes.

Mistletoe - is a parasitic plant; it attaches itself to tree limbs and burrows in, robbing the tree of nutrients and water. A bad infestation of mistletoe can kill a tree. Where on earth did the practice of kissing under the mistletoe arise?

The first association between kissing and mistletoe is found in references to the festival of Saturnalia. Mistletoe was believed to have the power to bestow fertility. In ancient Scandinavia, mistletoe was a symbol of peace, and this led to the custom of kissing under a tree bearing mistletoe.

Mistletoe fruits were considered the seeds of life, since the plants appeared to arise spontaneously in treetops. The Anglo-Saxons observed that mistletoe would often appear on a branch where birds had left droppings. "Mistel" is the Anglo-Saxon word for "dung," and "tan" is the word for "twig." So, mistletoe means "dung-on-a-twig." Romantic, huh? According to the rules of etiquette, a man should remove one of the berries when he kisses a woman under the mistletoe, and when the last berry is gone, the kissing is over.

Christmas Social

Join members of other Lee County Garden Clubs at the Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council Christmas social and Cookie Exchange this coming Friday, December 9th 1-4pm at the FMLCGC Headquarters building. If you're planning on coming, let Susan Lawson know asap (slawson921@gmail.com) The Garden Council will be decorated for the season,

and there will be cookies, music, games, and prizes. And there will be another opportunity to create something crafty to take home to celebrate the season (nominal fee \$5 for supplies). Come mix and mingle; bring a friend and make some new friends. Be prepared for fun!

Upcoming Events:

Feb. 14 **SWFL Orchid Society**
Annual Sale, Faith Utd. Methodist
Church, 15690 McGregor Blvd.
Preview 6:30 PM Sale begins 7 PM

Edison-Ford Estates Events

Workshops:

December 10 – Make a Holiday Wreath
Jan 14th – Staghorn Ferns & Jungle Cactus

Gardening Classes:

Jan 24th or 28th – Intro to FL Gardening
Part 1
Jan 31st or Feb 4th – Intro to FL Gardening
Part 2

These two-hour programs include classroom and garden time. Space is limited and registration is required. Choose from Tuesdays at 1:30pm or Saturdays at 10:00am

\$10 for Members; \$15 for Non-Members
Participants get a 20% off
Garden Shoppe coupon Register online at
www.edisonfordwinterestates.org



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
TO ALL, OUR FAMILIES
AND FRIENDS.**

**MAY 2023 BE A
BETTER NEW YEAR
FOR SW FL**



Newsletter Online

Our monthly newsletter is always available online – go to our website at <https://www.gardenclubofcapecoral.com/getinvolved/newsletter/> Comments always welcome as are suggestions for items to include. Contact the editor at newsletter@gardenclubofcapecoral.com