



GARDEN CLUB OF CAPE CORAL

July 2026

**We look forward to seeing you at our first
meeting of the season,
Wednesday, September 9th ,
in the Gulf Coast Village auditorium.
We hope to see you there!!**

This month, my note to you is all about active membership. This club, which is now nearly 30 years old, depends on the involvement of its members to keep it going. Many of you may be surprised that it takes the combined effort of the Board with the support of nearly 30 Committees to keep this club running and to continue its civic and charitable purposes. The Board cannot do it alone. We need the help of our members.

The Ways and Means Committee needs someone to take over the role of finding financial support (sponsorships) for March in the Park. (See also p. 5) We have a database of names – just need someone to make the calls!

Kay Davis has been our hosting chair with the support of Terry Fisher for several years but it's time for these two to step back (with our grateful thanks). They have both more than done their share. So, come on, step up and sign up to chair the hosting committee. You need not do it alone – you can do it with a friend or friends. Talk to me to get details.

Finally, Rachele Epp has to step down as our Inspirational Message Chair, mainly because the venue change and day of meeting are difficult for her which I totally understand. Thank you Rachele – your messages have always been apt and on point. Thankfully, she will continue her role with obtaining city permits etc. on behalf of the Ways and Means Committee.

So, who will step up to this? Let me know!!

Sylvia

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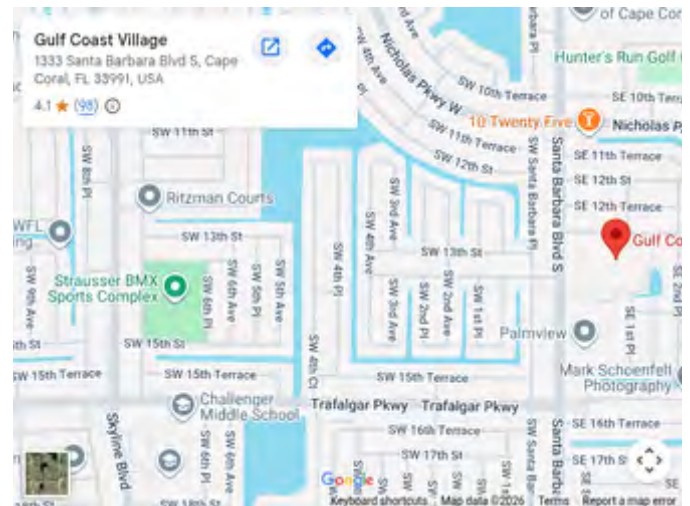
NEW VENUE

Starting this fall, we'll be meeting in a new place and on a different day. Our new home is the auditorium at Gulf Coast Village in Cape Coral — a beautiful, comfortable room with much better sound. Parking is plentiful, bright, and offers more accessible spaces. Its spot on Santa Barbara makes it a handy central location for many.

We're also returning to our original meeting schedule — the second Wednesday of each month.

Our first meeting of the season will be on September 9 at Gulf Coast Village, 1333 Santa Barbara Blvd., Cape Coral.

Excited to welcome everyone back and enjoy a strong turnout.



click on the map to get directions

BLUE STAR MEMORIAL

On July 1st, members gathered at the Blue Star Marker in Four Mile Eco Cove Park to honor America's 250th anniversary. A wreath made by Nancy Finnegan and Peggy Loyson was placed, followed by remarks from Sylvia Swartz on the meaning of the milestone. Cathy Dunn then offered a prayer for unity, peace, and justice. Members finished by placing miniature 250th anniversary flags around the garden, and everyone received a small red Penta to plant as a lasting reminder of the day.



Our first Summer Social at Blossom and Brie on June 10th brought together 21 members for great food, warm service, and even better company. Gathering with friends, members, and guests is always the best part.



JOIN US AT OUR NEXT
SOCIAL ON JULY 14TH
AT MICELLI'S, ON PINE
ISLAND ROAD.



WAYS & MEANS

The Ways & Means committee powers our club by organizing events that help fund our mission. With co-chairs Nancy Finnegan and Claudia Arguelles-Miller leading the way, the 2026–2027 season already includes our annual planned events.

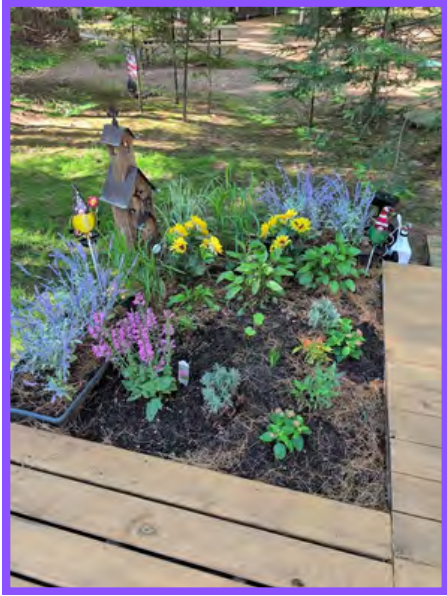
Our first fundraiser will be the October Plant Sale at Rotary Park. Members are needed to help grow and prepare plants ahead of time. Whether you propagate your own or revive bargain finds, every contribution helps. Members are also needed to help work the event. The sale is tentatively planned for Saturday, October 17th.

March in the Park is the Club's biggest event of the season, and this year comes with a few changes. The date has shifted from the usual second Saturday to the first, March 6, 2027. A speakers lineup will also be added inside the rec center, with topics and presenters still being finalized. **A new Sponsorship Chair is needed** to reconnect with last year's supporters and reach out to new ones. A rain barrel has been donated again and needs a creative artist to paint it for the grand prize in the Opportunity Drawing.

Members are welcome to share ideas for additional events.

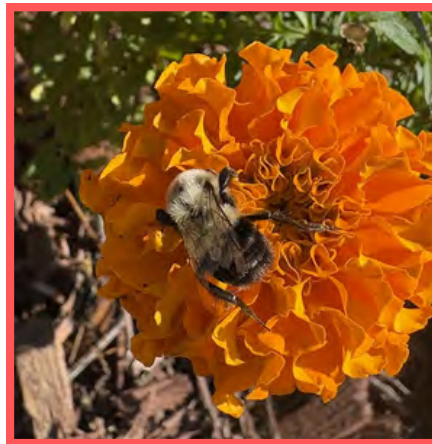


You have another garden outside of Cape Coral?



Penny Salvesen's
garden in St
Germain, WI.
She has big issues
with deer!

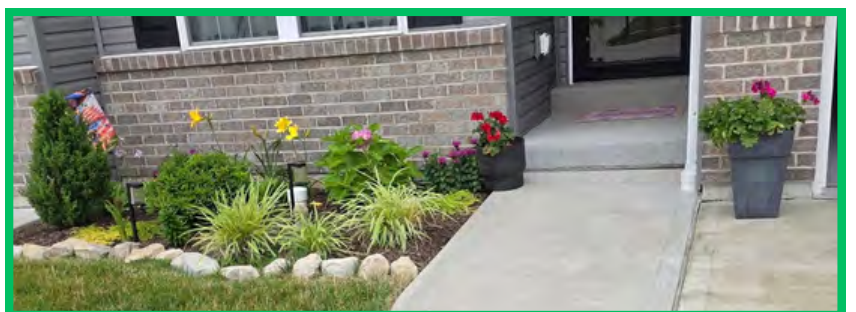
Sue Merrill's gardens in New Hampshire
- loved by pollinators.



Debbie Denton's gardens in Kentucky -
notice her usage of plates for a design
element!



Vicky Sanders from her
small villa in Missouri



GARDENS AND PARKS STILL NEED MAINTENANCE DURING THE SUMMER!

The Blue Star Memorial, the gardens at the library, Sands Park, and the museum's rose garden all need consistent care to stay healthy and provide us with a place to enjoy. With our summer heat and fewer helpers available, the work becomes tougher. Any time you can offer—whether often or only once—is truly appreciated. The rose garden at the museum is in special need of weeding help at the moment. Please reach out to our committee chairs if you can offer your time.

Blue Star Memorial - Cheryl Shaw

Library gardens and Sands Park - Sherie Bleiler

Historical Museum Rose Garden - Cynthia Mahoney



Nancy Finnegan and Sylvia Swartz did some planting and mulching at the Blue Star Memorial right before the presentation of the wreath and flags on July 1st.

Sands Park butterfly garden is having a tough time due to the slow start to the rainy season. It seems to be raining everywhere else but here in the southwest Cape! Much of the dune sunflower has turned brown, probably due to both age and dryness. We are helping it to reseed. This covers much of the sides of the garden and is critical to the view that the public sees. Sands Park is heavily visited, with many runners and walkers, with and without dogs, who go by this stretch of garden.

Sands is such a large area with room for additional plants. It invites us to try new varieties of native wildflowers to see what grows on this sandy berm, a pine flatwoods ecosystem. We have added torchwood, for giant swallowtail butterflies and blackbead for cassius blue and orange sulphur butterflies. We have hungry rabbits who seem to love tickseed, sunshine mimosa, pencil flower, liatris and silkgrass. Wire cages seem to keep them safe and can sometimes be removed when the new growth toughens up. Bunnies do not like gaillardia, beebalm, milkweed, twinflower or salvia. We will continue experimenting with other varieties to see what will thrive and not be eaten.

New member, Jeri Danley, has joined us this summer, and added a hanging bird bath as a water source for birds and insects. George Kolebas has brought water with microorganisms to build up the soil. Tanya Rowland has brought plants from distant nurseries and made many plant tags to identify plants for the people who pass by. Bob and Ann Fowler have planted many new plants. Mirta Barnett and EVERYONE on this team has helped keep them watered. Sally Stevens has been cheering us from the sidelines since she had shoulder replacement surgery a month ago.

We invite you to join us on Thursday mornings. For any questions, contact Sherie Bleiler.



Tanya, Jeri, Sherie and George.



Black Swallowtail caterpillar



The Library Butterfly Garden is enjoying the height of the butterfly season. Monarchs are always visiting the milkweed. Along the back fence, the Dutchman pipevine is full of leaves and blooms. This has been inviting the polydamus butterflies since May and is full of their caterpillars now. Before the end of the summer, we expect the vine to be completely eaten by them. But it will rejuvenate itself in the fall.

We planted parsley and fennel to draw in black swallowtail butterflies, but between the hungry rabbits and the heat, these are not doing well. We added a new Mexican senna to go with the Privet senna that is already well established. These will invite the yellow sulphur butterflies. We released 5 giant swallowtail butterflies because their host plant, wild lime, is planted in the back.

Thank you to the regular Tuesday morning summer crew: Cindy Wasilak, Joanne Kishfy, Valorie Breen, Debbie Clements, Elsa Schutzman, Lynne Viacava & Sherie Bleiler.



Scholarship Awards - part 2

During the April and May meetings, the Garden Club proudly presented the 2026 Marty Ward Merit Scholarship Awards, with two honorees recognized at each gathering. Shown here are the two recipients presented at the May meeting.

The 2026 recipients are:

- Juliana Schoeberlein – Cape Coral High School
- Reagan Wood – North Fort Myers High School
- Emily Feichthaler – Oasis Charter High School
- Audreyana Brendel – North Fort Myers High School

The Garden Club also presents the Donna Conway Scholarship Award on behalf of Donna Conway's husband and family, who established this scholarship in her honor.

Recipients of the 2026 Donna Conway Scholarship Award are Reagan Wood and Audreyana Brendel.



Emily Feichthaler



Audreyana Brendel



Our club continues to grow, even during the months we do not meet. In June we have added four new members.



Frank Ohl

- Kim Cook
- Lenard Ramonette



William Plakas

Upcoming Events

DATE	CLUB	EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
September 9th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
October 14th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
November 11th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
September 9th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
December 9th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
January 13th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
February 10th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
March 6th	GCCC	March in the Park	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Rotary Park
March 10th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
April 14th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium
May 12th	GCCC	General Meeting	5:45 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf Coast Village auditorium

2026-2027

Officers

President

Sylvia Swartz

First VP/Program Chair

Gail Miller

Second VP/Membership

Peggy Cruz

Treasurer

Jeannine DeLaat

Asst Treasurer

Patty Lyon

Recording Secretary

Gayla Moore

Corresponding Secretary

Annelise Kump

Ways & Means

Nancy Finnegan

Claudia Arguelles-Miller

General meetings are held
on the second Wednesday of
the month, September -
May, beginning at 5:45 PM,
in the auditorium at
Gulf Coast Village
1333 Santa Barbara Blvd S,
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

Thank you for reading!

There are lots of ways to stay connected with garden club news and events
between meetings: our website, Facebook and articles in the Breeze.

website address: <https://www.gardenclubofcapecoral.com/>

Our Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/gcofcc>

Latest articles in The Cape Coral Breeze

Another great Facebook page to follow is District IX's.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1309829002404914>

Roberta Murphy

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME
WITH ITEMS/PICTURES/EVENTS YOU
WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEXT
NEWSLETTER.