

# The Bloomin' News

APRIL, 2014, Vol. VI, 81

Les Leckron, Chairperson

Joanie Opperman, Editor

Member of FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS



## Chairman's Message

Thanks to all who are making the Spring Tree and Plant Sale happen! Lots of action taking place and more to come! The months of preparation will come together this month on the 10th, 11th and 12th of April as plants and sale supplies are loaded on Thursday, transported and placed for sale on Friday, selling to our community on Friday and Saturday and then transporting back to the Tree Farm on Saturday afternoon. The new tee-shirts and Printed Sale Signs will really be a nice addition! Please bring your friendly "Customer Service" to the sale and enjoy seeing our community purchase plants to enhance their landscapes. Thanks again to each and every one of those who have worked so diligently to have plants ready for the sale. This is a time to take pride in what we do and how we, as an organization, contribute to our Greater Titusville Community. Keep it Growing! Les

### New Members, YOU Are Welcome

We are always looking for new members and have great opportunities for learning at our monthly meetings, at the Tree Farm and at special events. We have facilities to start plants from seeds/clippings. We meet at 7:00p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at the Garden Center on Sisson. For information, call RoseMarie: 385-9051.

### APRIL IN THE GARDEN

April is a busy month in the garden. Most plants are growing well. By mid-month, day temperatures will be up in the 80's and most nights will be above 65 degrees.

Replenish mulches to conserve moisture and keep weeds down.



AZALEAS have about finished blooming. Now is the time to continue a care program to assure good blooms next year. Feed each AZALEA with a good, acid-forming fertilizer at the

rate of ½ cup per plant per month. Prune and trim large AZALEAS, and pinch back branch ends until mid-June. AZALEAS, unlike most other plants, will branch wherever you cut them.

DAY LILIES are ready to start blooming. An application of a Bloomer fertilizer, such as 2-10-10 or 10-30-10 will assure better blooms.

ROSES are growing rapidly. ROSES are heavy feeders and require frequent watering. Regular fertilizing every 2 weeks in our sandy soils is not excessive.

CRAPE MYRTLES already have extensive new growth. An application of a Bloomer fertilizer every 2 weeks will

assure more and larger blooms. Mildew is a common problem on both leaves and blossoms, even in full sun.

LAWNS should be fertilized now if you did not fertilize in March. Plug, sod or seed to fill in bare areas in your lawn or to start new lawns. Provide sufficient irrigation, within water restrictions, to give your lawn an inch of water in any week your lawn gets less than an inch of rain. Cut Bahia and St. Augustine grasses 3 to 4 inches high. If grass clippings are left on the lawn, the grass should be mowed more frequently than when clippings are removed.

Move ORCHIDS to shady outdoor locations and feed every 2 weeks. Move tropical plants outdoors. Feed all container-grown plants.

Bulbs for April planting include ACHIMINES, AMARYLLIS, AGAP ANTHUS, BLOOD LILIES, CANNAS, CALADIUMS, CRINUMS, DAHLIAS, GLADIOLI, GLORIOSA, GINGER and RAIN LILIES.

Warm season plants that will perk up flower beds include AGERTUM, ASTER, BEGONIA, BLUE DAZE, COLEUS, COSMOS, DAY LILIES, IMPATIENS, MARIGOLDS, PENTAS, PERIWINKLE, SALVIA, VERBENA and ZINNIA.

### Garden Club Web Sites

National Garden Club: [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)

Florida Federation of GC: [www.ffgc.org](http://www.ffgc.org)

TGC site: <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/tgc/>

TMGC site: <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/tmgc>

### THE PINEAPPLE – Steve Korpacz

Have you ever tasted home grown PINEAPPLE? It is usually very sweet, much better than grocery store fruit. You can start by cutting the top off a PINEAPPLE, wait a day or two for it to harden off, then plant an inch or two deep in a rich, slightly acidic organic soil. You can leave

some of the fruit on the edges of the top; the plant can use this for food until it becomes established. I like to start with a 6" x 6" pot, since the roots are not deep. I fertilize lightly and monthly with a liquid fertilizer like Miracle Grow or Peter's. Just pour onto plant and in crown too. Once the plant has become established, you can move it to a 3 gallon size pot, after 6-7 months.

In a 3-gallon size, you can fruit the plant once it has some size (18" – 24"). At 1 year old, I like to take a small piece of apple or banana and force it into the crown. As this decomposes, it emits ethylene gas and forces the plant to fruit. You can harvest your first PINEAPPLE a few months later. You will know it's ready when you can smell it from 2 – 3 feet away. Just twist the fruit and it will detach from the plant, then you can start all over again. The PINEAPPLE can be propagated several other ways: slips, suckers, rations and crowns (described above). Slips arise from just below the fruit, suckers from the axils of the leaves and rations which grow from the base. Slips and suckers are the preferred method of propagation.

A 5-gallon is all the plant will ever require as they don't have deep root systems. I like container growing mine; it's easier to weed and to protect from cold weather. The PINEAPPLE is not cold tolerant at all. They will need protection. Give growing PINEAPPLES a try. The flavor of a home-grown PINEAPPLE can't be beat. **Keep it Green.**

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**Review of "The Mini-farming Guide To Composting" by Brett L. Markham - submitted by Bob and LouAnn Smith**

If you are trying to garden in Florida, you MUST understand the value of making and utilizing compost. Your soil can, and does, vary biologically immensely from one spot to the next in your backyard garden. This one fact alone dictates the value of raised beds where you as the gardener can mix your soil for maximum nutrients. By consistently adding organic matter, you will build the soil season after season, thus requiring less and less fertilizer, fungicides, and pesticides.

"...Nature is on your side. It's really hard to mess up compost so badly that you will get no compost at all. Nature loves compost and will turn anything that was once alive into compost all by itself."

So, while most books only cover "aerobic" composting made at relatively high temperatures (thermophilic), Mr Markham has chapters on anaerobic (without oxygen), aerobic (using oxygen), indoor mesophilic composting, vermicomposting, biochar, and more. This book is chock full of references from many sources for those who seek more in depth information.

In chapter 2 entitled "Starting With The Soil" he states "counting earthworms is the easiest and least expensive method of assessing your soil's biological activity." We have, therefore, been devoting a good bit of time and energy to raising red wiggler earthworms. By utilizing the castings to produce "worm tea" for use as a foliar spray or as a drench, we feel we have seen a significant

improvement in our garden. The worm castings can also be spread in the beds for a wonderful organic fertilizer. By feeding the worms our kitchen compost materials, we also reduce the amount going to a landfill. For information on making your worm bin and raising earthworms, there are many videos on U-tube, or you can contact us and we will share the information we have accumulated. We have a large number of ornamental and vegetable starts to trade or share. What do you have? Call Bob or LouAnn (267-1673) in North Titusville. We hope you will look forward to future articles about other aspects of our garden experiences such as Keyhole Gardening, Kokedama, Living Walls, ideas for more sustainable living, and Hydroponics or Aquaponics.

**TREE FARM NEWS - Ed Rahn**

Thanks again to all the folks who help weed and tend to plants and trees on Tues. and Thurs. Thanks to Janice for fixing street sign/ banner for our Spring Tree & Plant Sale in April. Thanks to Buck for m-o-w-i-n-g!!!

Buck has also built two raised beds for vegetable planting in Tony's honor as he always had peppers, stringbeans, tomatoes, kale, red beets for us to enjoy!

We have been having fun re-potting and splitting the grasses that were root bound; up-potting the podocarpus, cannas, roses, long-needle pines, crepe myrtle, maples, lilies, viburnum, holly, tomatoes and



many others to take to Spring Sale. We have also been propagating in the mist house, and request cuttings from your home; plants that we should be planting vs. buying. Please check with Ed, who is mastering how to propagate crepe myrtle. He is searching for deep purple variety. Mulberries are almost ready to enjoy.

**2014 EPCOT FNGLA – Ann Wicks Shares Ideas**

*While visiting the various gardens at EPCOT, we found many displays very interesting and wanted to share with everyone. I too, am a firm believer in recycling !!!!!*

- 1. This display involves 3 wooden chairs that have the seats missing. In their place is a basket lined with moss/coconut fibers and planted with various flowers.*
- 2. Pallets are stacked on top of each other with the top pallet having its bottom and sides covered with burlap. Soil is then put into the inside of the pallet and plants (these are vegetables but flowers could be used) are planted into the rows between the wooden slats.*
- 3. Wheelbarrows are used as planters for vegetable planters. These planters can then be rolled around the yard as needed for the sunshine or shade. Same can be done for the 4 wheel garden wagons with wire sides.*
- 4. A bale of straw hollowed out, add gardening soil and plants. Water as needed. Plants can be inserted into the sides of the bale as well as the top.*
- 5. A cracked birdbath that won't hold water any longer can also be used as a planter. Various salad plants can*

be placed into the birdbath--scissor trimming can add to a great tossed salad. Adding a few strawberry plants along the rim of the birdbath can not only provide additional color but fruit also.

### **Joanie's Corner – Forsythe Pot**

Something new to try!! First get a plastic pot with drain holes, at least 6-7 inch diameter with a hole in the bottom.

\*A 2-1/2 inch clay pot—sorry, it has to be clay.

\*Vermiculite (or other soilless mix) a growing medium.

\*Paper towel or a scrap of used paper.

\*A small cork or plug of children's play clay.

\*Water

#### **How to make a Forsythe Pot**

\*Cover the hole in the bottom of plastic container with paper.

\*Plug the hole in the bottom of clay pot with cork or clay. This is the most important step in Forsythe Pot basics. No water should drain from the hole at the bottom of this pot!

\*Fill plastic pot almost to the top with Vermiculite.

\*Push the empty clay pot into center of Vermiculite filled pot.

\*Fill the clay pot with water and water the Vermiculite until water drains freely from the bottom.

You've just completed your first Forsythe pot! Propagation can begin when excess drainage from Vermiculite stops. Just place your cutting stems into the Vermiculite in circle around clay pot. Vermiculite holds water; clay doesn't. Keep clay pot filled with water and it will gradually seep through the clay into Vermiculite, but will only let enough water to keep Vermiculite damp. Propagation is easy because the cuttings will remain in a moist, but never soggy, environment. Just keep the clay pot full of water and let the pot do all the work!

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### **Titusville Garden Club--Day Group From the Prez**

April 2 - "Creating beautiful Flower Arrangements" –

Wendy Vancott, Floral Cottage

April 2 - TGC and FFGC Dues are due

April 2 - Annual Reports due/General Meeting

April 16 - Board Meeting

April 14, 15 - FFGC Convention, St. Petersburg

**April 28 deadline--registration \$23 for Ormond Beach Garden Club Spring Meeting--District 6**

***Please contact Carol Herman, President***

### **Florida Native Plant Society- Sea Rocket Chapter**

The Sea Rocket Chapter's meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month; 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Enchanted Forest, 444 Columbia Blvd (Hwy 405). The public is welcome. For info: 264-5185

<http://www.nbbd.com/npr/SeaRocket/>

## **Titusville Men's Garden Club**

**Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at  
7:00 p.m.**

**Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road,  
Titusville, FL**

**Our next meeting is April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 !!**

**\*\*\*\*\* Annual Dues are due April 2nd \*\*\*\*\***

**Single member \$25; couple is \$45.**

### **Men's Garden Club Tree & Plant Sale –**

**April 11<sup>th</sup> – 10:00a.m. to 7:00p.m.**

**April 12<sup>th</sup> – 8:00a.m. to 2:00p.m.**

**Searstown Parking Lot – U.S.1 - Titusville**

**April 12<sup>th</sup> – Brevard Botanical Garden –  
Spring Plant and Craft Sale (9am to 1pm)  
Cocoa Ag Center. For info: 633-1702**

**April 26<sup>th</sup> – Native Plant Society Plant Sale  
10am-3pm... Enchanted Forest on S.R. 405  
Come celebrate Forest's Earth Day Festival.**

**April 26<sup>th</sup> - Brevard Rare Fruit Council –  
Edible Fruit Tree Sale. (8am to 4pm) at  
Melbourne Auditorium**

### **TWIGS & BERRIES -- Steve Korpacz**

**Closing soon! All plants & supplies ON SALE!  
300 Cheney Hwy (Hwy 50) Phone: 747-7260**

Please send your articles to Joanie at [freddiefla@yahoo.com](mailto:freddiefla@yahoo.com) to be included in next month's Bloomin' News.



**The Bloomin' News  
Titusville Men's Garden Club  
Joanie Opperman, Editor  
Email: [freddiefla@yahoo.com](mailto:freddiefla@yahoo.com)  
Cell: 321-480-8807**

# The Titusville Men's Garden Club

Next Meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the Month, 2014 -- 7:00 p.m.

Titusville Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road, Titusville, FL 32780

## INVITATION TO JOIN THE TITUSVILLE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB

**Who We Are:** A non-profit club that enjoys gardening and contributing to our City's beautification and our environment.

**What we Are:** As a part of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, we are a partner of the Titusville Garden Club.

**What We Do:** We educate and help each other to enjoy gardening, teach and learn to enjoy plants. We assist others to propagate, grow and distribute trees and plants to non-profit organizations. We participate in voluntary efforts to help Titusville's "Tree City" initiative to plant 2,000 trees per year.

**Where We Meet:** We meet on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Garden Center, 5275 Sisson Road (south of SR 50 / north of SR 405). We also meet at our Tree Farm near the Titusville Water Maintenance Facility. Members adopt trees and plants to grow and have fun.

**How We Operate:** We presently sponsor an April and an October Tree and Plant Sale. The sales receipts are used to support the Club, purchase materials, and donate plants to the City and other worthy non-profit causes. Some members grow plants to landscape their own homes (all are welcome to do so). With permission from a plant's adoptee, members may take plants for personal use. Dues are \$25.00 annually.

**Send application below to Titusville Men's Garden Club, P. O. Box 1783, Titusville, FL 32780.**

**Phone RoseMarie @ 385-9051**

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**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_