



# Smoke Signals

## The Calusa Garden Club Newsletter

**November, 2021**

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### *Letter from Our President*

Can you believe it is November already? October flew by but many of us enjoyed the floral design workshop, creating a grouped mass design, under the leadership of Lindy Kowalczyk and Sue Oldershaw, and learning the ins and out of orchids from Linda Schwoeppe (plus some of us came home with bits and pieces of her garden plants!). The Gadabouts trip was a success too! Now we are into the season of celebration – Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and, most importantly, our Plant and Thanksgiving Floral Arrangements Sale on Tuesday, November 23! Please make sure your plants are identified with the cards sent out earlier and sign up to work a shift. More workers mean a more successful sale! Additional information will be given to members at the November 8 meeting. Let's all look forward to our Holiday Gala at the Marco Island Yacht Club on December 9. The Special Events Committee has worked hard to make this an enjoyable event. Many of us are vaccinated and have received a booster, but please be mindful of your health and that of others and follow CDC Guidelines with social distancing and wearing a mask. Have a Happy Thanksgiving and welcome back snowbirds!

*Susan*

### December Program

The future of Tigertail Lagoon and Sand Dollar Island

Presented by CGC member Linda Colombo,  
President of Friends of Tigertail and Linda Ryan ,  
Board Member of the City of Marco Island Hideaway  
Beach Tax District.

### IMPORTANT DATES: November - December

<b>Monday November 8</b>	10 a.m.	Board Meeting
	11 a.m.	Member Meeting
	12 p.m.	Member Social Time
	1 p.m.	Program
<b>Saturday November 13</b>	9 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Gadabouts- Naples Yard and Garden Show
<b>Monday November 15</b>	10 a.m.	Floral Design Workshop- Lindy Kowalczyk
	1 p.m.	Horticulture Workshop- Linda Schwoeppe
<b>Tuesday November 23</b>	9 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Plant and Thanksgiving Centerpiece Sale
<b>Saturday, November 27</b>	8:30 a.m.	Calusa Park Butterfly Garden Work Group
<b>Monday December 6</b>	10 a.m.	Board Meeting
	11 a.m.	Member Meeting
	12 p.m.	Member Social Time
	1 p.m.	Program
<b>Tuesday December 7</b>	9 a.m.	Gadabouts -Edison and Ford Winter Estate Horticultural tour
<b>Thursday December 9</b>	5 p.m.	Holiday Gala
<b>Monday December 13</b>	10 a.m.	Floral Design Workshop- Creating a Christmas Centerpiece
	1 p.m.	Horticultural Workshop – Sedums, Succulents and Echeveria
<b>Wednesday December 15</b>	1:30 p.m.	Holiday Themed Arrangement Workshop
<b>Saturday December 18</b>	8:30 a.m.	Butterfly Garden Work Group

## THE HOLIDAY GALA

Black & White Gala

December 9 at Marco Island Yacht Club

5:00 p.m.

Spouses are invited, cocktail attire

Pricing and Menu available soon

Looking for volunteers to help with set-up/take-down and making centerpieces

## NOVEMBER HOSTESSES

Linda Walker

Terri Pike

Kathy McNabb

Susan LaGrotta

Opi DeFalco

Monna Hormel

Margy Bruckman

## FLOWERS IN PUBLIC PLACES:



Susan Neustadt's design at Mackle Park



Jenn Ferrier's design at the YMCA

## NOVEMBER 23 PLANT SALE NEEDS SOME HELP

### CALLING ALL CGC MEMBERS!

We need you to help at the November 23 Plant Sale! We can use some men as helpers who can carry and set up tables and set up tents at 7:30 a.m. and who can assist with take-down at 3:00 p.m. Please ask your husbands, sons and friends who may be able to work with us.

Please drop off your plants, succulent dish gardens, Thanksgiving floral designs and beautiful extra containers at Marco Lutheran Church at 8:15 a.m. sharp! Also, please volunteer to work a 3-hour shift at the sale. We have and will continue to contact each of you to make assignments for your contribution to our sale.

*Thank you!*

*Your November 23 Plant Sale Committee*

## MEET YOUR CALUSA GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS!

For this issue of *Smoke Signals*, we profile committee chairpersons of Awards -Opi DeFalco; Parliamentary Advisor-Linda Colombo and the committee chairpersons who grouped under Civic Beautification: Flowers in Public Places-Opi DeFalco; Memorial Markers and Arbor Day-Linda Colombo; and Special Projects- Sharon Lewis. The profile for Susan LaGrotta, Chairperson of the Butterfly Garden, will appear in the December *Smoke Signals*.



**Opi DeFalco** is CGC's chairperson of Awards and Flowers in Public Places, as well as being a member of the Advisory Council as a CGC past president. Flowers in Public Places was started during Opi's Presidency in 2009, and she feels that it has become a wonderful advertisement for Calusa Garden Club, attracting new members and informing the public of our events. Opi is originally from Rockville Center, Long Island, New York. She and her husband, who is now deceased, lived there in their early marriage and then moved to many places including England, Upstate New York, Colorado, in her husband's career with IBM. She has one daughter, Danielle, and one granddaughter, Sophia. They bought a vacation home on Marco Island in 1997 and visited often. In 2002, after 9/11 – which was very close to their home in NJ, they decided to sell their home in New Jersey and live full time on Marco. Opi's professional life primarily consisted of volunteer work, including Jr. Gardener programs, teaching art at an inner-city school, and volunteering at soup kitchens. For the last 10 years or more she has organized the volunteers from San Marco Catholic Church to serve at the Guadalupe Soup Kitchen in Immokalee.

As chairperson of Awards, Opi's job is to encourage our committee chairs to take the time and a little effort to apply for FFGC awards to recognize our hard work. Calusa GC and individual members have won many awards. Calusa has won for their flower shows, field trips, Blue Star Marker, Publicity, and many more. Check out Awards on the FFGC website. Opi says that applying for an award is easy, and that she is available to assist you.

Opi describes her love of gardening: "I have always loved gardening! When I was a child, I loved digging in the dirt and planting pansies and growing basil. I have had large vegetable gardens over the years and then became very interested in flower gardens and floral design here in Florida. When I joined Calusa Garden Club, I was asked to create a design for

the flower show. I had no idea what I was doing but with the help of several members I ended up receiving the top award! After that, I was hooked!”

Opi’s advice for our Club members: “I have enjoyed being a member of Calusa for over 20 years. I have seen the Club grow and evolve and create many lasting friendships. We have strong leaders to take us forward for many years to come. If you have any questions, please ask me. I may not know the answer, but I can usually point you in the right direction.”



**Linda Colombo** agreed to serve President Susan Neustadt as the Club’s Parliamentarian, but since she is not a registered parliamentarian, she prefers that the position be called Parliamentary Advisor. Linda’s working career included being a flight attendant for American Airlines for 34 years, and she also was a dental hygienist. Linda and her husband Russ moved to Marco Island in 1996 from Long Island, New York. Linda became active in community activities by serving on the Island’s Beautification Committee and working with Friends of Tigertail Beach, of which she is currently serving as a two-term President.

Linda joined Calusa Garden Club 2007 and was our President from 2015-17. If you know Linda, you know she pitches in and gets things done! She began her CGC work as chair of Hospitality, and continued with the Blue Star Memorial, which became Memorial Markers when Linda realized the local markers were suffering from neglect and added the other markers to our care list. She initiated our Calusa.org website and serves as our webmaster. Linda worked with our Gardening Guide Committee to draft and publish our Gardening Guide and now works to promote and sell the Guide.

Linda is an avid gardener and enjoys different types of plants, with a special interest in native and Florida friendly plants. She invites all CGC members to come visit her yard—and says, “It is definitely not your typical Marco Island yard.”



Sharon Lewis is the CGC Chairperson for Blue Zones Project, as well as the Chairperson for the Marco Towne Center plantings that is part of the Special Projects part of Civic Beautification. On Marco Island, Sharon is active in noontime Rotary, volunteers in the Parkinson’s disease boxing and balance classes at the YMCA, and volunteers as an Audubon Owl Watcher. She visited Marco Island often with her husband, Howard, and they visited her brother and sister-in-law. After Howard passed away, Sharon purchased a condo on Marco. She has two children who live in San Diego and San Francisco.

Sharon was born in Rochester, New York, and because her father was in the military, Sharon lived in many European countries and many states in the U.S. during her school years, ending in Asmara Ethiopia, Africa, where she graduated from an international school before starting classes at Washington University in St. Louis. Next the family moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where Sharon attended classes at Washington University. She became a flight attendant with TWA Airlines in international routes, then later became employed at Siemens Corporation. While living in the D.C area, Sharon retired and began her volunteer career. She worked as a volunteer in the florist department of the WHITE HOUSE during the Clinton and Bush years. This enabled her to learn how to put together a variety of flower arrangements and to assist in decorating the White House for Christmas. This was a highlight and privilege of her retired career. Later Sharon used her skills developed at the White House and worked at a large garden center in Northern Virginia called Merrifield. She created large outdoor flower designs for their customers and from that work she developed her own clientele and own business.....and still takes care of those clients to date.



Sharon says she loves the camaraderie of Calusa Garden Club and enjoys all the strong and talented members of our Club. Her passion for floral design is evident in the designs she has created for our Flower Shows. Sharon takes charge of a project and sees it to its completion with dedication and vision. She also remarks that "I am fully engaged in the Blue Zones Project for Marco Island and was instrumental in getting our Calusa Garden Club as a recognized Blue Zone Club, as I am committed to their lifestyle principles."



## Blue Zones Project: November Member Profile

Chairperson: Sharon Lewis

***November Blue Zone's Project features Monique Doyle, her husband Patrick, and favorite companion "Blarney."***



Monique Doyle joined the Calusa Garden Club in 2017. She had a desire to learn about tropical gardening in our Marco Island paradise. She has made many friends and given back to the community with the various Garden Club Projects. But she especially loved that we are a Blue Zone Club because the Blue Zone principles fit her lifestyle.

The Doyle's enjoy homes in Illinois and Florida. Both homes back up to nature preserves where beauty is everywhere and is a place to be quiet, be grateful and meditate. Monique loves that she is able to enjoy both climates and has fun gardening in both.

Monique was brought up in an active household, as her mother was a health and gym teacher. So, she has been active all her life. She is an avid Pilates member which keeps her limber. She loves golf, and loves to ride their Harley motorcycles, she fishes in Midwest lakes, Canada, and the Gulf of Mexico.

She loves her Midwest shade garden and the exact opposite garden in Marco where she loves air plants, succulents, orchids and container gardening. Monique picks apples right before she comes to Marco for the fall. Here is her favorite recipe to share.

### **Apple Squash Soup Recipe:**

(1)Medium onion, (1) Butternut squash, peeled and quartered (6-8 cups), (1-2) large tart granny apple, chopped. Place all vegetables on sheet pan, toss with 2T olive oil. Pinch of nutmeg, cinnamon, cayenne, S&P. Roast 375 degree, 30 minutes until soft. Cool. Blender with 1 cup of water. Return to pot. Add 3 cups broth, 1 can of evaporated skim milk. Add more spices to taste. Simmer 20 minutes.

## October CGC ACTIVITIES

Many thanks to Lindy Kowalczyk who presented a workshop on grouped mass designs, both traditional and creative.

And more thanks to Linda Schwoeppe who held a workshop on orchid cultivation.



Lindy Kowalczyk at her workshop



The Orchid cultivation workshop with Linda Schwoeppe



Gadabouts went to Freedom Park



## *Raffle Donations Needed*

Members! Please donate for the November Meeting Raffle! Contact Jenn Ferrier before the November 8 meeting to let her know you will be donating a plant, container, or gardening related item. We hope to raffle 5 items per meeting. It's a great way to donate to the Club while receiving a chance to get a new plant you have been wanting! Tickets are only \$1.

## *PINEAPPLE MARKER IS IN NEED OF A NEW VOLUNTEER:*

The pineapple marker on Barfield; opposite our meeting facility, is in need of a new caretaker. Maria Lamb has done a terrific job of being the official caregiving for several years and has asked me to find a replacement. As you can see it is all freshly weeded and planted but will need routine looking after. If you are interested, please let me know. Thank you. Linda Colombo, committee chairperson of Memorial Markers [lindadeec@comcast.net](mailto:lindadeec@comcast.net)



Pineapple Marker

# Happy Thanksgiving





## Calusa Garden Club

- Tuesday, November 23
- 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Rain or shine!
- Marco Lutheran Church Parking Lot  
525 N. Collier Boulevard  
Marco Island

... GARDEN PLANTS ... HOUSEPLANTS

...

... VARIETY OF ORCHIDS ...

... FRESH FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS ...  
FOR THANKSGIVING

... SUCCULENT DISH GARDENS ...

**CASH, CHECKS AND CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED**

Proceeds benefit the Garden Club's scholarship and community beautification projects.



## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS:

THANK YOU to Cache Cleaners for storing our 6 bins of archives. Cache Cleaners is offering Calusa Garden Club members a 10% discount on cleaning services, which you can obtain by showing your CGC Name Badge.  
Thank you, Bruce, and Susan Neustadt!

