



Smoke Signals

September 2025

www.calusa.org
calusagardenclubcommunication@gmail.com
Barbara Perez - Editor



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LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

To All Calusa Garden Club Members,

I hope each of you is enjoying your summer and you are ready for a new year of Calusa Garden Club. October 13 will be our first general meeting. Take a moment to ask yourself: how can the club contribute to my interests, and how can I contribute to the club's purpose? The best way to do that is to be involved.

A recent update to the club website now gives you the opportunity to select the committees that interest you. You can do this by updating your profile on our website. (Step-by-step instructions are in the box below.) You can update your profile at any time. Maybe your interests change or you have created friendships with members on other committees that you want to join. By having the ability to update your club interests, you have the flexibility to support the club in different ways throughout the year as well as to cultivate your interests. To understand the different committees, the Standing Rules, found on the website under "resources," describes the responsibilities of the chairmen of Standing Committees and Subcommittees.

Be diligent on checking out all of the sections on the website as there have been many updates as well as new links. Member events are listed on the club calendar. Since the public can also view the events, it is important to sign in to view all of the information that may only be for members to view. Looking forward to a fun year.

With kind regards,
Linda Colombo

To update your Profile on the website:

Go to our website www.calusa.org

Click "Member Log-In." In the "Members Only Area" scroll down to enter your Email and Password. Click "Sign In". Next to "About", click Profile. A list of Garden Club Interests appears. Please make your selections. When done, scroll to the bottom and select Save/Continue/Edit Account. Scroll to the top of the page to sign out.

UPCOMING EVENTS
September 20– 8:00 am – Maintenance at Leigh-Plummer Park
September 23, 9:30 am – 12:00 – Painting ceramic flowers at Watermark
September 26 – 8:00 am – EcoTots at Tommy Barfield Elementary School
September 27 – 8:30 am – Maintenance at the Butterfly Garden (see below)
October 4, 18 – 8:00 am – Maintenance at Leigh-Plummer Park
October 6 – 11:00 am – CGC Board Meeting, Rose Auditorium
October 9 – 11:00 am – Walk the Grounds at Watermark, Rose Auditorium
October 10 – 9 am – Gadabout at Pepper Ranch Preserve, Lozano’s, Sanctuary Nursery
October 13 – 10:30 am– General Membership Meeting, Rose Auditorium
October 21 – District IX Fall meeting
October 25 – 8:30 am – Maintenance at the Butterfly Garden
October 27 – 9 am – 12:00 - Floral Design Workshop – New Life Community Church
October 28 - -Horticulture Workshop “Terrariums” - Watermark Auditorium

First Gadabout of the Season

9:00 am – 3 pm, Oct. 10, 2025

“SUNFLOWER BLOOM” AT PEPPER RANCH PRESERVE

LUNCH AT LOZANO’S MEXICAN RESTAURANT, IMOKALEE

SANCTUARY NURSERY

Imagine vast fields of Florida native sunflowers! We will be able to drive close to the fields.



After lunch we will stop at Sanctuary Nursery where wonderful Florida-friendly plants are available.



For lunch we will be going to a Mexican restaurant called Lozano’s in Immokalee. The food here is delicious! Buen provecho.



Calusa Park Butterfly Garden Committee

Saturday Sept. 27, 2025 at 0830.

The committee will meet at Susan LaGrotta's home

1411 Quintara Court, Marco Island.

We will pot volunteer native plants for the plant sale and/or the butterfly garden.

Afterwards we go to the butterfly garden for planting and maintenance.

Please bring your own work gloves, thank you!

WATERMARK

Watermark is a newly inaugurated assisted living facility on Marco Island, and, according to their website, “is a vibrant senior living community that offers a perfect blend of care, comfort, and connection, situated in a picturesque setting.” Due to our 1st VP Diane Chestnut’s dedication and hard work, the Calusa Garden Club has become the recipient of a generous donation. Calusa offered to present two monthly activities for the residents: one will be designed for those in Assisted Living, and the other for those in Memory Care. Members of the Garden Club will volunteer to guide the activities with the residents as well as participate. Another benefit for the Club is that we will be able to use the facilities at Watermark for our different activities and programs.

Please be in contact with Diane, (diane4calusa@icloud.com) to volunteer, participate or ask for further information.

THE PIONEER GARDEN ON N. BARFIELD DRIVE

The Pioneer Garden at the Marco Island Historical Museum has undergone a transition over the past year. It was officially dedicated on Feb. 28, 2020. It is a small plot of land which juts into the parking lot on the south side of the museum, across from the Marco Island Library/Rose Auditorium

In 2024, meetings were held with Rebecca Mazeroski, Museum Manager for the Marco Island Historical Museum, to modernize the garden. CGC members worked to plan and design an area that would resemble an historical garden with vegetables, herbs and fruit - most often called a ‘kitchen garden’. In the past, these were essential for survival and were planted close to the house for easy access.

The county added irrigation to the garden which is necessary given its location. After working with Rebecca on the final planting design, the majority of the old plants were removed, the ground was amended and new plants were installed on May, 13, 14 and 15. Small areas were left for planting of seasonal vegetables.

The garden is representative of plantings in the late 1800’s, when early pioneers arrived in the untamed wilderness of Florida’s Gulf Coast. Early businesses included a fishing village, pineapple plantation and a clam cannery. Marco and Caxamba were the two ‘villages’ on the island.

Today the garden is already producing fruits and herbs – bananas, key limes and rosemary. The “beauty berries,” which were made into jam, are starting to ripen. The berries are plentiful, so, ... who is up for forming a “Beauty Berry Jam Committee,” to harvest and process the jam and re-create this unique slice of history?



Marker at the Garden



Ripe “Beauty Berries”



Kathy McNabb with Key Lime



Bananas and Coontie Palm



10901 Old Cutler Rd.
Coral Gables, FL 33156 (Miami Area)
February 17, 2026 Field Trip



Mark your calendar (better yet, register now) for a fun Calusa Garden Club bus trip on **Tuesday, February 17, 2026** to Fairchild Tropical Botanical Gardens in the Miami/Coral Gables area. The trip cost is **\$150** and includes bus transportation, garden admission, private garden tour by tram, box lunch and snacks on the way back! We will leave Marco by 7:30am and should return by 5pm.

Space is limited to 24 people, so be sure to register early. Registration will be open soon on the website events page and also available at the club meetings. Payment is required to confirm your seat on the bus. You can pay by check or pay online with an additional service fee of \$4.50 (approximate). Friends and family members are welcomed but must be included in **your** registration.

Please note the Registration fee is **non-refundable after 12/31/25**, but you can substitute someone in your place if you can't attend. We are looking forward to this garden trip and hope you will be able to join us. Please contact Susan Ridyard, Trip Coordinator, with questions (susanridyard@gmail.com or 239-571-2334)

LAST LUNCHEON OF THE SUMMER AT CAV'S

On Wednesday, September 15, Calusa Garden Club members met at Cav's Kitchen and Cocktails for the September social lunch. The 11 members present enjoyed socializing and talking about the weather -- rain was expected for the day -- and their summer trips and experiences. Everyone wanted to catch up with others and get updates on their friends' families and activities. In addition, a lot of conversation was devoted to the upcoming November 22 Plant and Floral Design Sale and Family Fall Festival. Chairman of the Family Fall Festival Diane Chestnut brought some of the clay flowers she has prepared for fastening on stakes to make garden ornaments. Some of the flowers had been painted beautifully by CGC members in workshops, and others were awaiting painting.



Dee Luccisano, Margie Bramel, Susan Neustadt



Diane Chestnut, Sara Wolf, Linda Spell,
Linda Scherzinger



Sue Oldershaw and Gloria Fabijanec



Linda LaGrotta and Linda Colombo

Your Club Publicity Committee

Sara Wolf is chairman of the Publicity Committee for CGC. The committee’s goal is to inform and educate the public about Calusa Garden Club’s activities for the purposes of increasing community awareness, increasing attendance at club events, and attracting new members.

The committee sends press releases to the Marco Island and Naples newspapers, places announcements in local calendars of events, purchases ads for events, and assists event committees with that event chairman’s publicity.

Other committee members are Carol Donegan, who publishes articles about our upcoming meeting speakers and Susan (Dee) Luccisano, who sends out interesting articles about our summer luncheons.

The committee welcomes any of you who want to contribute! Please send your photos and comments about any and all club activities to Sara at sarawolf617@gmail.com . This will make our press releases and other publicity items better, more inclusive, and more interesting to the public.

**REMINDERS ABOUT THE UPCOMING
PLANT SALE AND FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL**

Fun Family Festival needs: toilet paper rolls, clay pots with saucers, acrylic paint, art paper, 16 or 32 oz. jars with tops, succulent cuttings. Please be collecting. Also needed: coolers on loan.

Plant Sale: Rhonda has plants still to be harvested. Be in touch with her to schedule a planting, bring 3 gal. pots, tools and \$3 per pot to cover the potting mixture. (rhondamarco@gmail.com)

Activities prior to the FFF, to be held at Watermark, all invited: Sept. 23, 9:30-12:00 for painting clay flowers; Oct 28 at 2 pm for making terrariums; Nov. 13 (hour tbd) for practicing making flower crowns.

**CORRECTION TO THE JULY 2025 SMOKE SIGNALS REPORT
ON THE BUTTERFLY GARDEN**

The text should have read:

Past months volunteers Nancy Adams accompanied by her friend visiting from Arizona, as well as another Friend of the garden visiting from Hawaii, Miranda. (her dad enjoyed spending time in Calusa Park and his butterfly garden) Debra Kulhman, Susan LaGrotta Barbara Perez, Kathy McNabb, Pam Bodenhamer.

SHORT TAKES

For information to be included in the “Friday Communications” (aka ‘blasts’) your material should reach Linda Colombo (lindadeec@comcast.net) by Wednesday at 5 pm.

To promote our dedication to Conservation, let’s remember to use our re-fillable, non-disposable, beautifully decorated, philosophically significant (mine says “Go Bills”) travel mugs to keep us hydrated as we are out and about.

Committee chairs: brief descriptions of your activities will help new members understand how we can contribute to the Club’s activities. Please forward to the editor (blyons1248@gmail.com).