



Smoke Signals

September 2026

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Barbara Perez – Editor



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ETC.

Hello fellow Garden Club members! We're already into September. And even more amazing: it's a new year for Calusa Garden Club!

Many of you are up north or traveling and may not be aware that members here are still very much involved. Leigh Plummer Park and the Calusa Butterfly Garden are maintained monthly. Thank you to those who brave the heat and assist Marianne Foley and Susan LaGrotta.

We have also enjoyed inside get-togethers with our summer lunches that Linda Schzinger has set up. Lunches will continue throughout the year. This will be new for Calusa, but they will offer another day to get together with fellow gardeners. Please join us, going forward.

Our hospitality co-chair, Liz Clancy, unfortunately will not return to Marco till January, so Deborah Kuhlman will need a hand for the next few months. Please contact Deborah to find out how you may assist.

Your Board of Directors will hold its first meeting September 14. If you are on the board or hold a committee position, please mark your calendars. As always, we must have a quorum to conduct business.

The FFGC District IX fall meeting is to be held on September 22, at the Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center in Fort Myers. Information is attached in this newsletter. The registration date is September 11. So convenient for us, please make an effort to attend.

We hadn't contemplated a September Smoke Signals, but there is a lot of information to share. And of course, lots more in the upcoming season.

Looking forward to seeing each of you again!

Linda

UPCOMING EVENTS
September 5 – 8:30 am – Maintenance at Leigh-Plummer Park
September 14 – 11:00 am – Board of Directors Meeting, Rose History Auditorium
September 19 – 8:30 am – Maintenance at Leigh Plummer Park
September 22–FFGC District IX Fall Meeting – Ft. Myers FL
September 24 – 12:00 – September Luncheon – At Cavs
September 25 – 8:00 am – EcoTots – Tommie Barfield Elementary School
September 26 – 8:30 am – Maintenance at the Butterfly Garden

FFGC District IX Fall meeting

On September 22. The District IX meetings are always fun, enjoyable and informative. This year it will take place in Fort Myers, at the Sidney and Berne Davis Art Center convenient to all of us. Please make every effort to attend. Here is more information

[District IX Fall Meeting](#)

ECO-TOTS AT TOMMIE BARFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- The new year of Eco-Tots at the local elementary school will begin on Friday, September 25. Headed by Kathy McNabb, and assisted by Susie Baker, Gretchen Nash and Barbara Perez, this will be the fourth year of the program.
- First graders have been the focus of the project, but this year fourth and fifth graders will be participating. Undoubtedly some of the students will have been part of EcoTots in previous years. It will be good to see how gardening has become a part of their lives.



CALUSA AWARDS ITS ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP

On May 19, 2026, the Calusa Garden Club awarded its annual scholarship to Catherine Taddei, a 2026 graduate of Marco Island Academy. The criteria for the scholarship includes living on or graduating from a high school on the Island, a demonstrated interest in the environment, horticulture or gardening, and plans to pursue a degree related to biological science, the environment or conservation. Marianne Foley, the chair of the scholarship program, presented the award at Marco Island Academy Awards Night.



Taddei plans to attend the Un. of South Florida, pursuing her career goal of becoming a veterinarian in graduate school. Her interests in biological science, environmental protection and conservation are apparent in her career choice.

Read about it and enjoy the pictures at [the Coastal Breeze](#).

LITTLE PINK HOUSES

Calusa Garden Club once again participated in the Little Pink Houses program that provides comfort for the families dealing with breast cancer. Thanks to the generous participation of our members, bouquets and decorations were placed in the houses where the families were able to spend a few days of relaxation on Marco Island. Pictured are Claudia Bruni and Jen Ferrier, Marianne Foley (Chair) and Linda Colombo, Nanette Baumgardner and Marianne Foley.



MAY LUNCHEON – at Café Marquise



JUNE LUNCHEON – at C.J's on the Bay



JULY LUNCHEON



Our September Luncheon

It will be held at Cavs on Thursday September 24th at noon.
Deadline for reservations on Tuesday Sept 22,
on the Events Calendar, or directly with [Linda Scherzinger](#).
Let's hope for a big turnout !

WATERLILIES AT THE N.B.G.

Kathleen Tuttle, one of our newer members, shared this wonderful photo of a waterlily, taken at the Naples Botanical Garden.

The NBG hosted a Waterlily Weekend on August 29th and 30th, which included a Walk Among the Waterlilies Event for those arriving between 9:30 and 11. The program will be repeated in April, and again in May 2027.

We should check their calendar periodically, to not miss the fun and informative activities of this important local resource.



BUTTERFLY GARDEN

The Butterfly Garden is gearing up for the season, as members start returning from their summer abodes.

Susan LaGrotta invited members to a maintenance session on August 29th the last Saturday of the month, as always.

It will be good to see how their efforts have helped Mother Nature repair the unfortunate intervention of a few months ago.

Here is a link to a nice video of the garden, posted on Facebook.

[Facebook Reel](https://www.facebook.com/reel/1786385312729839)

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PROGRAM AT THE OCTOBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Monday, October 12th a representative of the Big Cypress National Preserve will speak to CGC about their work to raise awareness of the preserve's diverse ecosystem systems, and inspire wonder for the wild through outreach and educational programs.

Information will be available about the upcoming event, Swamp Wander on October 24th.

See more at: <https://www.friendsofbigcypress.org/about>

ONLINE RESOURCES FROM FFGC

Sandy M. Troy Pennington of District IX of the FFGC shared some online material for members. Here are links to the online E-Zine with a plethora of information and suggestions, maps and surveys, guidelines for committee chairpersons, and so on.

For Board members & Committee Chairs et al.

Resources and Tools E-Magazines

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/f9a8803b72.html>

For New Club member's orientation

E-DIX Events magazine (all 30+ event flyers)

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/19cce6daf9.html>

Sandy M. Troy Pennington [239-994-8147](tel:239-994-8147)

DIX For You Newsletters

OUR MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

What a great idea for escaping the Florida heat - cruise to Croatia.

Doesn't it look like heaven? Sara Wolf reports:

Kimberly Korb Porter and I went to Croatia in August for a trip together on Sail-Croatia from August 16-23. These photos are of the two of us at a vineyard where we went for a dinner and wine tasting, plus one photo of us swimming in the Adriatic Sea when our yacht was stopped for our daily swim stop.





FFGC IN LAKE BUENA VISTA

The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, of which we are all members, is holding its 99th Annual Convention and State Flower Show from September 12 to the 17th, in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. You can find the [schedule here](#). Lodging is suggested at the **Embassy Suites Orlando - Lake Buena Vista South** and here is [information](#) about the hotel's expedited booking.

OCTOBER GARDEN SHOW

Put it on your calendar, always a wonderful event:

UF/IFAS Extension Collier County
Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program
2026
NaplesYard and GardenShow
Saturday & Sunday October 24-25
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
14700 Immokalee Rd. Naples FL 34120

Visit the current edition of the [Florida Gardener](#)
The Official Publication of Florida Federal Garden Clubs, Inc.
Lots of good information, activities and links.

Notice from the FFGC of a change in their email address
ffgc@ffgc.org

Connie Lowrey, chair of the Flower Show and Opi DeFalco

AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

If you're a member of Facebook, you might have come across a message from the American Horticultural Society. Members enjoy free admission to 400 "gardens" across the USA. Gardens nearby to Marco are the Wonder Gardens in Bonita Springs, The Fairchild Tropical Botanic Gardens that our members visited this past year, and the Miami Beach Botanical Garden, "three-acre urban greenspace in the Art Deco district of South Beach." [HTTPS://AHSgardening.org](https://AHSgardening.org)