Leaf Newsletter

Apollo Beach Garden Club, Inc.
Message from the President

Article by: Paula Olesen, President of the ABGC

Here we are in March, with our successful February Plant Sale behind us. It is our big event of the season and it does take a village to pull it all together. I want to thank my leaders Jill, Tammy, Joanne, Annie and Raleigh for making it all the organized success it was. They made light (well, not really) work of the preparations on Friday. Their helpers all felt needed and worked so hard to get everything done before the afternoon showers. Saturday was just fun helping buyers find the right plants.

Thank you to everyone who provided items for the raffle, there was a great array. Please be sure to thank the vendor. The fairy basket won by Avery, who gave it to her best friend Ava was a delight to see. (Pictures of their 2 creations attached). Thank you to all the volunteers who participated Friday, and again on Saturday. Avery, Ava & Drew from Bell Shoals Academy. Truck drivers who delivered many plants & returned a few to Garden. And to all who donated, and grew plants for the sale. We made $231 – raffle & $1547 for plants for a total of $1778.00, A special thank you to Tyler of the Racquet Club who allowed our sale on their court. Heard some say food and ‘margaritas’ were very good! Great job all!

A Grafting Workshop was held on March 6th in tandem with Third Insight Design at their nursery. Although it rained on us, no one left (sign of a true gardener)! Annie & Raleigh did a fantastic job showing us techniques for doing a split graft, and on my avocado a side graft. Looking forward to doing my native lemon root stock. Thank you for a fabulous workshop. It is a great time for feeling renewed with our spring coming quickly, birds migrating North, butterflies appearing and helping to keep our bee & wasp populations thriving & growing.

At our March 16th at 3 PM Board/Membership meeting we will have a local bee-keeper present on the possibility of putting a bee hive in our Community Garden. I think a true goal of ours is to increase and regenerate the bee population & other pollinators in our area. YOU are all INVITED, Mask, hat, chair, water.)

We are so thankful and appreciative for the $5000 grant that was acquired by the Greater Tampa REALTORS® through the National Association of REALTORS® in support of the Apollo Beach Garden Club and Community Forest Garden through the application prepared by Alison Hughes of the Hillsborough County Parks & Recreation Department. The Greater Tampa Realtors had their volunteer work day on February 10 with 15 or more Grater Tampa Realtors, Park staff, joining Raleigh, Annie, Jill and I to install, prepare the substrate & plant the blueberry tubs with 8 Emerald Blueberry bushes with their own irrigation system. They mulched a lot of the Community Forest Garden! Volunteers put together 2 tables and 4 benches for the pergola area. Raleigh & Annie installed the provided irrigation drip lines and timer to the inside & outside planted areas by the fence. In the shed you will see irrigation sets for each plot without one, new tools, including plot tools, small hand tools, 2 pruners, a batter operated weed whip (which Scott Sent put together, charged and used to clean up the Garden, thank you!) Annie has designed the tree labels and has been getting them installed. No more guessing what a tree’s common & scientific names are. More plant label stands have been ordered by the Club to complete the project. There is still a new large marquee sign to come from the Grant.
Thank you to the dedicated Volunteers who continue to work on the many projects of the Community Forest Garden and the Club. Come visit and see the many changes and improvements. We have had several middle school students volunteering for their Junior Honor's hours the past months. See the Bee house they completed this past week. A true pleasure they are. The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs is holding its annual Florida Convention in Daytona, April 11-13th. There are lovely accommodations at the Hilton Oceanfront Resort. See your Winter 2020 edition Florida Garden for information on registration or call me. I hope to attend some of it at least, but have to see how life proceeds with spouse's unknown health plan.

Hope you are all getting outside, enjoying the grand warm days, and planting flowers, warm weather veggies, and/or a new fruit tree.

Does anyone want a field trip to Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota in the next few weeks? Admission fee is $25.00 unless a member. Let us know.

We hope to resume regular meetings inside in April. As always we welcome your suggestions, questions and ideas.

Did you know that planting garlic chives around your rose bushes can help prevent aphids?

Please enjoy everyday,
Paula
Paula Olesen
Tammy has tried Red Russian kale in many ways and she was never impressed. So much so she gave away bundles and bundles of it to fellow gardeners. Finally, the other day she found the ultimate recipe that even Kale-haters are supposed to like!

Sunflowers in the ABCFG.

Fairy gardens from the Volunteers.

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Plant labels being put up with help of Volunteers on a Saturday Morning.
Sequence of bud-grafting a seedling citrus with grapefruit using the inverse 'T' method.
ABGC Calendar

Tuesday, March 16th 3:00pm. Board meeting at the AB Community Forest Garden. Everyone is welcome.

Saturday, March 27th. Rock painting class.

Starts at 3:00pm. Everyone is welcome, a beekeeper will join us to talk about the possibility of adding hive to ABCFG.

Rock painting class led by Jill Conson. More information coming soon.
Community Calendar

April 11-13th. Florida Federation of Garden Clubs annual Florida Convention in Daytona.


May 16th. Manatee Rare Fruit Council Annual Tree Sale


Rare Fruit Tree Sale

**New Location - Huge Outdoor Area**

Sunday, May 16th, 2021, 9am-3pm

Premier Sports Campus
5895 Post Blvd, Lakewood Ranch, FL 34211

Exit 217 (Route 70) off I-75, go east 4.65 miles and left on Post Blvd

Ample Free Parking

Restrooms

Expert Advice

- Apples (Low Chill varieties)
- Atemoya
- Avocado
- Banana
- Barbados Cherry
- Bay Leaf
- Blackberry
- Black Sapote
- Blueberry
- Carambola
- Canillo
- Canistel
- Cashew
- Cherimoya
- Coconut
- Figs
- Grapes
- Guava
- Jaboticaba
- Jackfruit
- Jujube
- Kumquat
- Loquat
- Lychee
- Mangos
- Dwarf Mangos
- Macadamia Nut
- Malay Apple
- Miracle fruit
- Mulberry
- Monstera
- Papaya
- Passion fruit
- Pineapple
- Plantain
- Peaches (Low Chill)
- Pears (Low Chill)
- Persimmon
- Plum
- Pomegranate
- Pummelo
- Raspberry
- Rie Grande Cherry
- Rollina
- Sapodilla
- Sour
- Star Fruit
- Strawberry
- Sugar Apple
- Surinam Cherry
- Wax Jambu
- White Sapote

Also other fruits, herbs, vines, and more

20+ Vendors

All plants subject to availability

Sponsored by Manatee Rare Fruit Council, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization

No Entry Without Masks; Safe Social Distancing Required

Most vendors accept credit cards, but bringing cash is a good idea.

No ATM onsite

Further information at mrfc.org
Minutes for Apollo Beach Garden
Club Board meeting 2/16/21, 3 pm

Present:

Board: Annemarie Jimenez, Jill Conson, Kathy Shutler-Johnson, Raleigh Barnes,

Members: Tammy Kennedy, Joanne Armstrong

Absent: Paula Olesen, Judy Siemonsma

Jill Conson called meeting to order


Financial report: Kathy Shutler-Johnson reported $1303.86 balance. Income to be plant sale and membership dues to replenish. Dues due in May, starting this year. Two new members. Florida corporation fees paid. Tax exempt filed with federal income taxes done. Next thing due is insurance in June, -456.00. $5000 Realtor Association Grant funds were spent through the Realtor Assoc. We provided requests through Alison Hughes of what we needed.

Picnic Tables: Tables will need to be treated with mineral oil, then sealant, can in the shed. Filler for nail holes once dry. Mineral oil good choice to do 2 x year. Wait few months for wood to cure. Fall /spring to apply. With first treatment before end of march.

Irrigation: Blueberries have micro jet set. twist head down all the way nothing comes out. When all the way open too much water. Timer set for Tuesdays and Saturdays at 9am while someone here to watch. Runs for about 15 minutes. Annie would like all to be trained so anyone can manage as they will have to be changes for summer months. Brown hose by fence is a drip line with extra fitting on it. Need to lightly cover line with mulch to help keep water from running off and the weeds out. We don't have more drip line may need to buy some or use some kits we have now. Raleigh said we need to see if new people want to install in beds. Jill Conson made motion to use kits for exterior and new members should take class and get own irrigation. All approved.

Other:
1. Jill Conson asked to move small OAK tree because of location and fear wont survive. Just outside fence along parking area. It was determined unnecessary.
2. Joanne Armstrong expressed need for tutorial for pruning trees.
3. Annie Jimenez wants to have next work day to set up irrigation and education for pruning, & cutting positions. Have 1 extra timer and Ruskin Park gave a timer that can be used for tree forest. Can use with tripod sprinkler. Trees look good in spite of decreased irrigation.
4. Jill Conson explained plan for mulching from parking lot side to baseball side. Keep foot traffic to keep weeds down.
5. Raleigh Barnes suggested talking to Jason Elikson, to see if he has anyone doing community service that we could have pull weeds, etc. Jill to ask if we have any community service volunteers.
6. Jason McKenzie has been talking about building something around mulch pile by parking lot.
7. Joanne Armstrong recommends to put name on all our tools. Raleigh will put some fluorescent tape on so we can locate tools if left out & its dark.
8. At workshop when we install irrigation, Annie Jimenez would like to add a segment to show how to sharpen and oil new clippers.
9. Raleigh Barnes said blueberries are from Bobs Berries in Riverview. Blueberries a variety called Emerald, patented so can't propagate.
10. Still need inventory of shed. Need a system for hanging tools so we could see where things are.
Suggestions are pallets, 2x4 at angle so tools can hang on a hook, peg board.

Plant sale: Some seedlings repotted today. With tiny ones use plastic cups, egg crates, plastic could hold more than one. Jill to bring something. Use pencil or small knife to push out from bottom. Squeeze bottom of Loofah and lift whole stem. Can cut the tray in fours and sell 4 for $1.00. Bring box cutters - Friday will arrange. Some bigger we may want to use liners. 5-6 picnic tables we can use and move at nursery. Four donated. Tyler asked to set up in field around oak and basketball court. Cashier can have tent cover. Tyler asked to park along white fence so not interfere with raquet club. Annie will print signs for parking. Need to remind member to bring all plants Friday.

Raffle items for plant sale: Items expected: Desert Rose, packaged seeds, succulent, bake goods, canned items, something made from ingredients in the garden, a tree, garden basket. A possible silent auction item.

Have tee shirts, $20. Meet at Garden at 8:00 Friday with trucks to move plants.

Rain barrels: Annie Suggested workshop for daisy chaining rain barrels. Can make tea and do several things with education at that workshop for insecticides.

Extending Garden: Raleigh has asked Chris Sanez - from County, about extending garden possible 60 feet toward track. No plans but definitely a possible future project..

Raleigh gave out tobacco seed. Good for insecticide and has fragrant flowers.

Be careful, a car broken into at Rec. Center, in broad day light at 3:00 last week. Be aware of surroundings when at garden alone.

Get through plant sale then start planning for upcoming board, club, and garden events. Need to find other people for classes and outdoor activities.

Tree Labels: Jill recommends reminder for community service should be posted for plot owners. Leasees may have not read or understood the lease agreement. Can ask them questions, orientation, reminders in each Newsletter. May need to do revisions in the lease.

Tree sign stakes were ordered in grant, so won't use the can labels. Annie will design and place.

Shade for pergola: Joanne has umbrella stand, but need umbrellas. Can use 5 gallon bucket or larger with concrete. May fit against post/fence for support if windy. Center beam in middle of picnic table so hole for umbrella not going to work.

Compost bins: Readdress compost and build 3 bay system with one side open or something that can be removed. Rotation of moving front to next to next...

Kathy used 2 of current compost systems for a 2 way bay. Kathy to take a picture and send to Annie for newsletter. Can get a free pdf to build per Raleigh. Banana circle should be composting station as well. Annie said the original plan was for 3 composting stations. Bay system accelerates the composting process. We need to somehow mark what compost barrel we are working on for everyone to know. Use of sign or flag initially until we can get something different.

Back Gate: If no need to bring something in via tractor or car via back gate, could open area to allow for planting more trees which would then allow more space near pad for kids garden/ (Mandela). Decision was to currently leave area open (until the ADA gate done) in case a stretcher/ ambulance needed to get in.

Joanne reminded us that our swale still needs to be repaired/replaced.

Recommended adjournment by Tammy Kennedy, seconded by Kathy Shutler-Johnson. Unanimous. At 4:30pm

Have a great day!
Recorder: Tammy Kennedy
Reminders for this month

- Sat. and Tues. members of the Community Garden are working together and Volunteers are welcome!
- Cardboard and mulch perimeter of Community Forest Garden is almost done, great work!
- We need more “community articles” for our newsletter and pictures, too!!
- Please stay tuned to Facebook for our next Volunteer Work Days at the Community Forest Garden.

Reminders for next meetings

-Due to the current upsurge in Covid cases the Board made the decision in December to postpone indoor Club meetings through March. Indoor meetings should resume in April.

To do in the Community Forest Garden

-Mulch in between raised beds. After the rains and then dryer months mulch has gotten low in between raised garden beds. If each member of the ABCFG can mulch around their own bed and their neighbor’s it will be a quick task.
- Weed and mulch underneath table beds.
- Spread leftover soil along the berm on the north side. This soil has many grass rhizomes, it would be wise to use it but not inside the garden beds. After soil has been spread, north area can continue to be mulched.
- Continue laying double layered and ‘woven’ cardboard along perimeter and foodforest and mulching. Jill has done a great job! Thank you!
- When possible water newle planted trees.
- We need to stay ahead of the Coco-Grass, if you see grass growing in the mulch please pull a small section and discard it in the trash or far away by the oaks. As soon as the rains pick up the grass will too, with many hands helping we may stay ahead of it!
- Oil new tables with mineral oil. Be mindful that tables must be dry, if it rained the day before they will still be wet th day after. A few consecutive days of no rain are needed.

If you are interested in writing an article for the “Community articles” section or sharing pictures of your garden/nature related adventures on the “Pictures” section of the Leaf Newsletter please email abgardenclub@gmail.com. Articles have to be sent in by the first Tuesday of the month at the latest.