

FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS
AWARD # 31, CLASS A

THE MADIRA BICKEL CIVIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

DISTRICT V

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB
FLORAL CITY, FLORIDA

33 MEMBERS
AND
49 PERCENT MEMBER PARTICIPATION

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FLORAL GARDEN CLUB WRITES BI-WEEKLY COLUMN

In November 1989 the Citrus County Chronicle with a circulation of over 22,000, initiated the weekly Lake Life edition to offer more localized news.

Eager to share the many activities of the Club with the community, the Floral Garden Club did not hesitate to support the new edition when the Club was approached by the Editor. Mona Belle Turpin, the Club's publicity chairman, coordinated a bi-weekly column. She was assisted by club member and Master Gardener, Kathleen Mueller. Sixteen club members of the 33 active and inactive members, submitted articles on their favorite subjects.

At the end of the first year, the Club lost Mona Belle Turpin, but Kathleen Mueller, willingly assumed the coordination. A new assistant, Marie Jones, quickly stepped forward and the column was off and running without missing a week.

During the initial year, 24 bi-weekly columns were printed. The subject matter varied widely. Emphasis was placed on introducing the community to garden club objectives. During the second year, 31 articles were printed and emphasis was placed on horticulture.

Only a representation of the articles have been selected for inclusion. More articles from the 1990 columns are included in order to reflect the variety of subject matter covered.

The Floral Garden Club is now into the third year of the bi-weekly column. The Lake Life edition enjoys a circulation of over 7,200: an effective means to communicate garden club objectives to area residents!

Serving East Citrus County from Floral

Local drivers
love their sport Page 8

Garden clubs.....p4
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Lake

A Regional edition of the Citrus County Chronicle



**Jan
Witherspoon**

LAKE LIFE EDITOR

A moving time

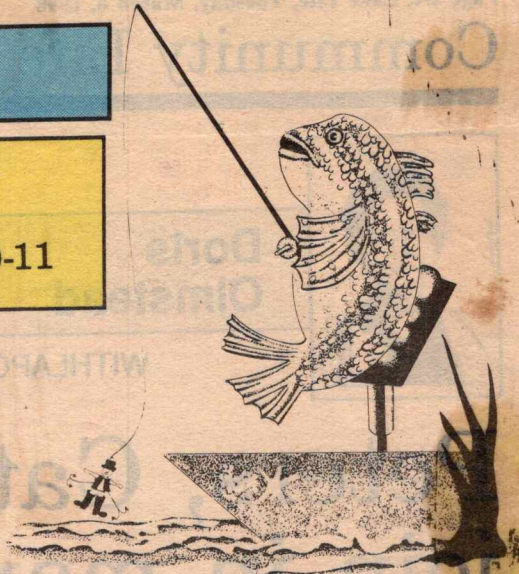
Welcome to our first edition of Lake Life. We're excited to be publishing an additional section to our paper that will concentrate on local life around the lakes region. Lake Life will be published each Tuesday and will be full of features and local activities.

It's always exciting to start a new project, to move to a new area and to find new friends. I'm getting to do all three at the same time and I'm pleased with the prospect of getting to know all about Inverness while doing so.

City to Hernando

A look at
Ferris Groves Pages 10-11

Life



Tuesday, March 6, 1990

This is the cover page of the first Lake Life section to the Citrus County Chronicle. Jan Witherspoon, Lake Life Editor introduces the issue. The initial article for the Floral Garden Club column follows.

MARCH 6, 1990

Exciting things happening

Exciting things are happening in Citrus County! ... Today we are reading LAKE LIFE, a brand new section of the Chronicle. The Floral Garden Club of Floral City is also doing exciting things!



Mona Belle Turpin

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

At the January meeting representatives of the Sumter Electric Company talked to the club about trees and the electric company's problems in cutting and pruning them so that their usefulness and beauty will not be destroyed. This led to questions and to a very lively discussion among those present.

The January meeting was the anniversary of the club's founding in 1956 and the historian presented the scrapbooks from past years. Several of the founding members were present to enjoy the beautiful birthday cake made and decorated by member Connie Henning. A visiting friend, Barbara Harvey, read an original poem about Floral City which sparked enthusiasm for upcoming endeavors for the Cleanup program in anticipation of the Garden Club's participation in the Adopt-a-Highway program.

The following day began early with Floral Garden Club members back at the Floral City Community Building. Outside the building a big neighborhood flea market/yard sale was in progress. Inside the Citrus County Rose Society was conducting its annual flea market and the Floral Garden Club members were busy with their annual "Trees and Treasures" sale. Some of the members were selling plant and trees

donated for the purpose, while others were selling the "treasures," and still others were doing a lively business selling hot soups, muffins, coffee, etc. The day was cold and the hot food was very welcome. Proceeds from the sale of food will be used in the community beautification program. Earnings from plants and other items will be added to the club treasury for the purchase of garden books for the Floral City Library and other projects of the group.

Members of the Floral Garden Club and interested friends are working on the Adopt-a-Highway Program. Periodically they police a two-mile strip of Road #48 from the stoplight at Road #41 east to Trails End Road. Picking up all the discarded waste paper, cans, bot-

les and other trash which is thrown from car windows is REAL WORK. These people and others in the county who are doing like work should be highly commended. It takes hours of time and at the end of several hours everyone who has participated is exhausted. If everyone who throws trash onto the streets and roads could spend a day in this work of retrieval, each of them might be more considerate next time he is tempted to toss a used item from his car window. It's a joy to see these clean roadsides at the end of the days' work, but so discouraging to see the build-up of trash starting the very next day.

During the coming months

Floral Garden Club members will continue such established programs as sponsorship of the Junior Garden Club, started in 1960; sending representatives to Camp Wekiva each summer; planting and maintenance of

certain public flower beds, i.e. the one in front of the Floral City Post Office.

**FLORAL GARDEN CLUB
PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

COMMUNITY LIFE

Camp: a great experience for kids

We, in Floral Garden Club, believe that the Wekiva Youth Camp is a great experience for a child.

We believe in teaching them to love and appreciate our world of nature, to use its resources carefully and to preserve them carefully for the future. Wekiva Camp is a place where these things can be taught.

It was founded in 1966 by the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. It is located within Wekiva Springs State Park near Apopka. It has 13 cabins, each housing 8 campers and 2 counselors; 4 leaders' cabins; a large dining hall; an office-infirmery; a crafts building; a swimming pool and large recreation area for general sports activities.

Any child, boy or girl, grades 3-8 may attend. Eighth graders are accepted in a special program. Campers are accepted without regard to race, color, or creed.

Floral Garden Club sponsors two children every year and pays the regular charge of \$75 a week for each child. These two children go to camp for a



Mona Belle Turpin

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

week and report their experiences to Floral Garden Club at its first fall meeting. They usually tell us some of the things they did and whether they liked it. Those who went last year said they would be happy to go again.

Camp Wekiva is a self-supporting, non-profit organization. The charge per week covers all housing, meals, crafts, activities, and standard medical insurance for the camp.

It is staffed by senior and junior counselors, a qualified director and counselors selected from mature young people who live in the cabins with the campers. Adult Garden Club volunteers help in the teaching

program. The staff also includes a qualified water safety instructor for the swimming program. A nurse is on duty at all times. The dining room is staffed with cooks who serve well balanced meals planned in advance by a dietitian.

This camp is dedicated to providing an outdoor living-learning experience for young people so that they can grow in appreciation of our natural resources and in knowledge of how to preserve, conserve and enjoy Florida's beauty.

A child need not be sponsored by a Garden Club to attend Camp Wekiva although many of them are so sponsored.



**Mona Belle
Turpin**

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

Civic club and library work hand and hand

Since its inception in 1956, the Floral Garden Club has endeavored to make the Floral City area an even more satisfying place to live. To this end, the club has been working with the manager of the Floral City Library, Flossie Benton Rogers.

Of the many talented flower arrangers in the garden club, one member is chosen each month to contribute a floral arrangement to the library. Artificial flowers are not permitted to be used in the designs which are composed of dried flowers and other dried plant materials.

The monthly arrangement is displayed next to a library book coordinating with it in color and text. Ms. Rogers states that library patrons comment favorably upon the arrangements and are interested in the books which accompany them.

Floral Garden Club has donated many books to the library's gardening book section, which now consists of over one hundred selections. These books have been given to the library by garden club members and their gardening friends. Many volumes have been donated as permanent remembrances of the deceased members, spouses and friends. Names of the donors and the persons in whose memory the

books have been given are written inside the books' covers.

There are books about annuals and perennials and all sizes of plants from ferns to trees. If vegetable gardens aren't of interest, there are several books to help start a water garden. Of special interest to new home owners are books on establishing Florida lawns. Creative people may choose one of several books about flower arranging, or how to plan a table setting around a floral design.

With today's water shortage the books of Florida's native plants are an aid to landscape planning. There are several books available to assist in identifying Florida wildflowers.

The Floral Garden Club hopes that everyone will take advantage of the library's numerous books to help them enjoy Florida's year round gardening. The Floral City library will be happy to accept donations of books about gardening or funds with which to purchase gardening books.

Putting the Floral in Floral City ob

We asked our club Historian, Ruth Kenny, to write a resume of the club's activities through the years with this result: The Floral Garden Club was formed in October 1956 in Floral City, Florida. The first meeting was held in the home of Ruth and Cecil Blankenship on October 12, 1956. Ruth was elected the first club president.

Floral City's first beautification program started in October 1970 when flowers were planted at the Community Building, fire department and library as well as at the corner of Hwys. #41 and #48. Palm trees were planted on Rt. 41 both north and south of Rt. 48 in Floral City. Each month residents of the area were given honorable mention for the beautification of their properties. We have resumed this practice. On November 10, 1989 several people received awards for adding beauty to their property during the year.

Hampton Dunn, Historian, who was born and reared in Floral City, appeared as one of the first guest speakers to honor the club in January 1975. The following year we entered a poster contest, "Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl," for which



**Mona Belle
Turpin**

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

we won four awards. In December of that year, there was a tour of private homes, during which the Floral Garden Club held a flower show in each. Through the years this club has continued to present home shows in various locations. Our most recent Standard Home Show "Welcome to My World" was held, with great success, in the "Catalina Villa" model home in The Landings on Gospel Island, Inverness.

The Floral Garden Club participated for many years in the county fair under the leadership of Elinor Bonifield, Marie Morris and later Marcia Beasley. Elinor Bonifield was devoted to the club and in tribute to twenty-five years work at the fair and her many horticultural projects, the new Horticulture Building was named for her. She was a director of the fair at

the time of her death in 1982. As chairman of Civic Beautification in 1980 she worked to make a beautiful entrance to Floral Park.

Marie Morris and Lydia Steeves are still active charter members who have devoted many hours to the club and its projects.

Each year we pay the expenses and send two local school children to Camp Wekiva for a week.

We continually strive to "Put the Floral back in Floral City" by planting public gardens and participating in such programs as Adopt-A-Highway, etc. Our monthly meetings are educational and inspirational. New residents join to learn about gardening problems in Florida. Guests and new members will always be welcome.



**Mona Belle
Turpin**

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

Nominations are wanted for beautification awards

A friend called the other day. Seems she had been reading this column and thought the Floral Garden Club would like to recognize her neighbor for a beautification project she had accomplished single handedly.

The call was timely because the club is now soliciting community input for their Landscape Beautification Awards Program. This program was initiated in November 1989 when twenty-seven area residents and four businesses were awarded certificates. A committee of six met to establish award criteria and location boundaries. To get the program started the first year, the committee selected a small portion of the total area. They did not solicit public nominations but reviewed the input from garden club members. They recognized the fact that many others in the area had maintained their yards to high standards over the years and that yards of

new homes were being well maintained.

This year the committee seeks input from the community. Nominations for beautification of properties with the following boundaries will qualify: north boundary is Fort Cooper Road; east boundary is the Withlacoochee River; west to CR491; and south to the Hernando County line.

Nominations for the awards will be welcomed from now until the end of September. Nominations can be made by providing the name, address, and telephone number (if known) of the property owner to be nominated.

Send this information to Chairman Marcia Beasley, 9626 E. Tsala Apopka Dr., Floral City, FL 32636, or call 726-7740. Please state your name when you make this nomination. Thank you for your interest.

The floral is coming back in Floral City

Gradually, the floral is coming back to Floral City. Individuals in the community who have improved their landscapes this year have received award certificates.

This awards program was initiated by the Floral Garden Club in 1989 when a small portion of the Floral City postal zone was selected for recognition. This year, the area was expanded.

In September, the community was asked to make nominations. As a result twenty-eight residences and four businesses received certificates for their beautification efforts.

The Landscape Improvement Awards Committee was chaired by Marcia Beasley and members Ruth Kenny, Lois Neal, Toni Meyers, Marie Morris and Kathy Mueller.

The Garden Club expresses special appreciation to the Floral City Volunteer Fire Department who has made outstanding improvements to the landscaping of the Fire House on Orange Ave. The beautification of the Firehouse grounds next to the Community Center has



Mona Belle Turpin

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

encouraged the Kiwanis and the Garden Club into working on the Community Center and its grounds.

Businesses receiving certificates this year include Sun Mart (Shell Station) Betty's Beauty Shop, both on Highway 41, and M J & S Plant Farm on County Road 39 (Istachatta Road).

Residences on Duval Island nominated and receiving certificates included: Coye Stokes, W. Pennington, Ralph Haynes, M. Stewart, John Hartman, Connie Denny, Paul Saylor, Bunk Minniss, and Chet Glover. In the Cove Bend area the Edward Witkowski residence was recognized. The David Crockett residence on Castle Lake Park; the Earl Carter residence on Old Floral City Road;

the Elizabeth Ryals residence on Istachatta Road; and the William Naczi, Jr. residence on Jefferson Street all received certificates.

In Singing Forest and Devil's Neck areas the following residences were awarded: Mr. and Mrs. Cleaver, Jack Thorne, Millie Evans, George Maxham, Sr., Ruth Ward, James Brown, Jim Craig, and Mona Belle Turpin.

Several residences of the many eligible for nomination were singled out this year in the Withlapopka Isles area. They include: James Edlin, Leroy Renfroe, John Nicholson, Russell Scarborough, and Donald Zimmerman.

The Floral Garden Club realizes that many others in the Floral City area have improved or maintained their yards.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Members are busy planting flowers

By Marie Jones
Floral Garden Club

The Floral Garden Club has planted periwinkle around the light posts at the corner of County Road 48 and U.S. Highway 41. The flower beds in front of the community building have been weeded and fertilized. Impatiens and periwinkle have been added to the beds for summer color. Timbers have been placed at the post office plantings to retain the mulch.

Isn't it amazing how fast the grass grows with a few showers?

The weeds like the moisture too. Hope everyone has mulched well; it really does hold the moisture and keeps the weed population to a minimum. Being a transplanted northerner it took me a couple of years to follow the advice I heard stressed so often. Believe me gardening is a pleasure now. No more hot hours of weeding and if I go away for a week or two it won't be a Herculean task facing me when I return. For those of you who like to spend the lazy days of summer reading may I recommend you explore the wealth of information at the Floral City Library.

Watch for Master Gardener Kathy Mueller's horticulture articles. We will be alternating columns. Do you have Sept. 13 marked on your calendar? That's the next meeting of the Floral Garden Club. Next time I'll tell you when it all started and what has happened over the years.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Club tossing about new ideas

By Marie Jones
Lake Life correspondent

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

The officers and board members have been busy planning the meetings and events for the coming season. The best of the old and some new ideas have been incorporated into the calendar of events for the 1991-92 garden club activities.

A new idea is the grow and share table. Members will be asked to bring seeds, cuttings, plants, gardening magazines or any other information pertinent to gardening. In line with our conservation policy, members and guests are requested to fur-

nish their own china, cloth napkins and flatwear to partake of refreshments. In September we will be entertained with a slide show of Camp Weikiva and a presentation by Kevin Streight who participated in the camp activities this summer.

In October we will be touring a hibiscus garden. January is our birthday tea presentation of the community landscape improvement awards, and our trees and treasures sale. A flower show is

planned for March and in April we are off on a bus trip to Kanapaka Gardens. Sounds like a busy, informative, fun season. Are you ready to participate? Looking forward to having you join us on Sept. 13.

Floral Garden Club enjoys trip

By Kathy Mueller
Floral Garden Club

In March this year, members of the Floral Garden Club, other area garden clubs, the Floral City Woman's Club and some residents of Singing Forest, enjoyed a trip to Sarasota's Selby Botanical Gardens.

The gardens were a gift to Sarasota from Marie Selby, whose husband owned the first oil well in Texas. Mrs. Selby, a concert pianist, was the donor of many college scholarships and is known as the first woman to drive from the east coast to the west seaboard.

The gardens employ 40 full-time workers to care for the innumerable plants and several buildings on the grounds. Four hundred volunteers assist at various times in caring for the plants, as guides through the gardens, and in the museum and gift shop.

Exotic plants from the tropics are the specialty of the gardens, but the grounds and greenhouses also contain many familiar Florida varieties. There are three kinds of mangroves growing near the Baywalk Sanctuary on Sarasota Bay. They form dense tangles of roots which afford refuge to small marine animals and fish. The buttonwood tree has rough bark and button-like blossoms. Sea grapes border the mangrove sites. The roots of the coontie, one of many cycads in the Cycad Collection, were used by the Indians as flour.

Among the trees in the Palm

Exotic plants from the tropics are the specialty of the gardens, but the grounds and greenhouses also contain many familiar Florida varieties.

Grove is the black palm which bears long spines to prevent cockroaches from climbing up the tree. There are huge banyan and fig trees and cacao trees, from whose pods we obtain cocoa and chocolate. In the Bamboo Pavilion, we learn that some bamboos, the fastest growing plants, shoot up as much as four feet a day.

The Hibiscus Garden includes plants whose blooms of pink, red, yellow and lavender are up to 10 inches across. In the Cactus Garden we found many cacti and succulents such as the aloe, noted for its medicinal properties, and the jojoba, whose oil is used in manufacturing in lieu of whale oil. The Waterfall Garden possesses numerous varieties of water lilies, some of them native to Florida. Surrounding the pool are elephant ears and cypress trees.

The Tropical Food Garden contains pineapple, plantains, bananas, and sugar cane as well as

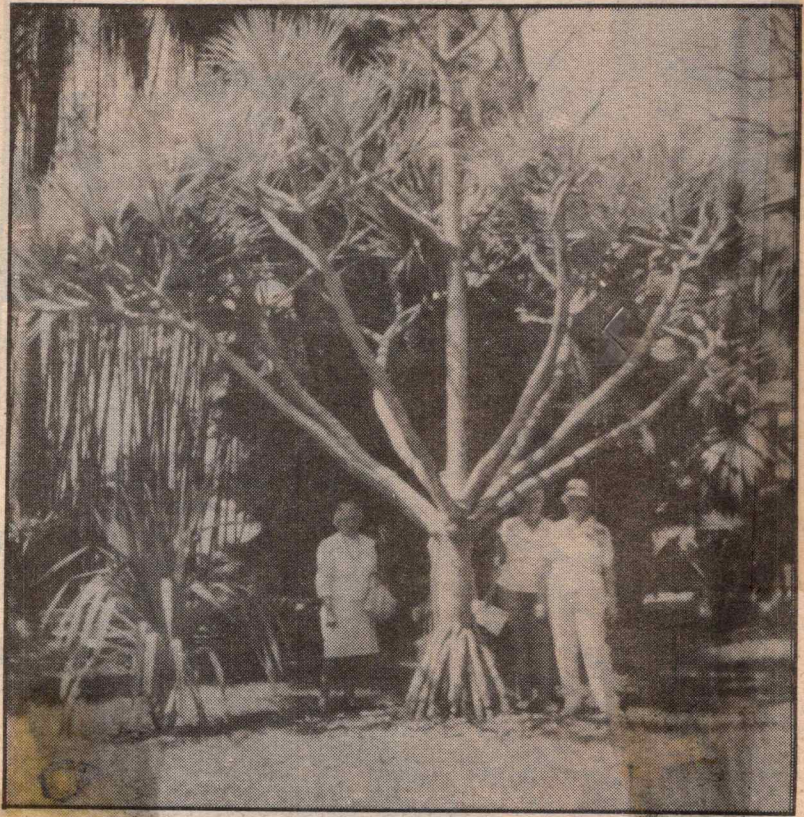
spinach from Ceylon, the white Cuban sweet potato, and the black sapote from Central America. Among these edible plants is the luffa, edible when young, used as a sponge when fully ripe.

The Tropical House displays fern, bromeliads and carnivorous plants amid 6,000 orchids. A large arbor is blanketed with white blossomed vining begonias and an adjoining wall is covered with red anthuriums. Staghorn ferns ranging in size from mammoth to tiny and grass-like are displayed in a separate room.

The garden clubbers are so pleased with the Sarasota tour that they're planning a trip to Kanapaha Gardens in Gainesville soon. To observe Earth Day, 1991, Floral Garden Club members participated in Adopt-a-Highway and Operation Wildflower. They collected litter along Highway 48 and planted wildflowers on the roadsides.

continues

to botanical gardens



Members of the Floral City Garden Club recently toured the Sarasota's Selby Botanical Gardens. The group had a good time and is planning another trip to Kanapaha Gardens soon.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Don't forget the decorations

By Marie Jones
Lake Life correspondent

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

A few years ago while spending the holidays with friends in South Carolina we visited a city where every household had decorated the outside of the house in Christmas decor. Some were simple and some were elaborate, but no two were alike. Traffic moved slowly as cars drove down the street admiring the sights.

I have often thought of the cooperation, perhaps friendly rivalry and the planning sessions enjoyed by the neighborhoods. The Floral Garden Club will be making wreaths and door swags to be distributed to the Floral City businesses this year as decorations to be enjoyed by all who pass through. This is a new project this year and we would like to make it a tradition.

By the time you read this the club will have enjoyed films from Wekiva Camp, been on a field

trip to the home of Henry and Viva Bolton to tour their hibiscus garden, worked on the flower beds at the post office, gone to Ocala for the district meeting hosted by the Pioneer Garden Club and had an Adopt-A-Highway pickup. Be sure to stop by the library in Floral City to get acquainted with all it offers, and while you are there, take a look at the floral arrangement — a new one each month.

Yet to come are the trees and treasures sales and the planting of dogwood seedlings between the oaks on Orange Avenue in January. Two workshops in February to learn more about floral design in preparation for our flower show to be presented with the Citrus Garden Club at the Community Building on March 28 and 29, 1992. Now is the time to prepare your plants for winter.

GARDENING AND PEST CONTROL

Ants vs ants: a new way to get rid of them

By Kathy Mueller
Floral City Garden Club

On Nov. 13, we published an article in this column about a table-top garden. Some of the construction details were inadvertently omitted. Should you be interested in building a garden of this type, Mrs. Clark invites you to call her at 344-2339 for more complete instructions.

By the way, did you see the square-foot garden on TDC-TV recently? It is quite similar to Mrs. Clark's table-top garden.

Several of our members and friends have been intrigued by the ant fighting suggestion published by Troy Bilt, manufacturers of Troy Bilt garden tillers. The article appeared early in 1990. The writer said "It works the first time with no need to do a repeat performance."

Take two flat-bladed shovels to where you have several mounds of ants. Scoop a full shovel of dirt off the first mound cutting level with the ground. Leave the shovel in place while you do the same with the second shovel to a hill nearby. Carry the second shovelful over to the first mound, removing the shovel there, and place the first and ants from

the second hill on the first. Then carry the first shovelful over to the second hill and deposit it there. Place the dirt slightly off-center so that a piece of the original mounds are exposed.

By removing the dirt, you expose the tunnels down in the mounds. The ants inside come up and recognize the new ants as invaders. A battle to the death occurs, resulting in the destruction of both mounds. This method has been tried often and it really works, for fire ants as well as all others.

Blooming annuals which tolerate the cold weather have been planted in the Floral Garden Club's xeriscape garden at the Floral City Post Office. Pansies, petunias, and snapdragons, though not xeriscape plants, have been planted for their color.

The garden will be watched closely and watered when in need. Oak leaves will be added as mulch to help retain moisture and soil heat. The periwinkle which was so profuse during the summer and fall will be cut back and the seed from these plants will provide bloom for next summer. After the first frost the plumbago and day lilies will be cut back leaving the Pacific juniper and Asian jasmine providing a green collar for the blooming annuals.

Interesting facts on gardening

By Marie Jones

Lake Life correspondent

A potpourri of information and interesting facts to share this week. Did you know that one of the top six most popular design topics for postage stamps is flowers? Switzerland was the first country to use flowers on postage stamps. Now almost every country that issues stamps has used flowers on some issues.

Garlic planted in flower beds will protect them from insect at-

tacks and helps to increase the fragrance of the flowers as they bloom.

Frogs and toads are nature's insecticides, being avid consumers of garden pests. It is estimated a toad eats up to 10,000 insects in about three months. It gobbles up cutworms, grubs, crickets, rose beetles, squash bugs, ants,

caterpillars, flies, mosquitoes and sometimes moles and any other bug that happens to cross its path.

Most problems with house plants can be prevented by remembering a few rules. Don't fertilize house plants too often.

Please see **GARDEN**, Page 11

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

GARDEN

continued from Page 6

Once a month with diluted water soluble fertilizer is sufficient.

Don't fertilize to make plants grow, feed them because they are growing. Under water rather than over water. More plants are killed by overwatering than anything else.

COMMUNITY LIFE

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

Protect ornamental plants from cold

By Kathy Mueller

Lake Life correspondent

Winter temperatures in Florida are frequently low enough to cause cold injury to plants not adapted to Florida's climactic conditions. Freezing temperatures occur annually in north and central Florida.

Cold injury can occur to an entire plant or to parts of a plant. Leaf and stem tissue will not survive ice formation inside the cells as a result of rapid freezing. Cold injury to roots of plants is common and is not evident until the plant is stressed by higher temperatures.

One type of winter injury is desiccation or drying out due to dry winds and solar radiation, resulting in totally brown leaves. Home owners can help protect plants from cold injury by proper selection of planting sites and providing good care and maintenance. Temperature fluctuation can vary from one location to another within a home landscape. Tender plants should be placed in an area with good air circulation, not where cold air settles.

Landscape plants in north and central Florida should be fertilized four times a year. Two-thirds the standard rate of fertilizer should be applied in the fall as

plants consume less nutrients in the colder season.

Tree canopies raise night temperatures under them by reducing heat loss from the ground to

the atmosphere, thus plants in shade usually show less desiccation than plants in full sun. Fences, buildings and adjacent plantings can protect plants from cold winds.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Pay attention to labels for safety

This article was written by Kathy Mueller, Master Gardener.

Every pesticide has a label which gives instructions on how to use the product correctly. The label is the information printed on or attached to the pesticide container.

The brand name shows plainly on the front of the label. Many companies use the same name with slight variations to designate entirely different chemicals, so you must beware of choosing a pesticide by brand name alone. Each pesticide label must list what the product contains. The list specifies the active ingredients and the percentage of each ingredient in the pesticide. Both the common and the technical names of the



Mona Belle Turpin

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

active ingredients appear. The percentage of total contents comprised of inert ingredients must be shown. The front panel of the label tells the type of pesticide in the container, such as: insecticide for the control of certain insects on ornamentals; herbicide for control of weeds, or soil fungicide. The amount of pesticide in the container is also stated on the front panel. It is best to purchase small amounts of pesticides for ease

of handling when in use.

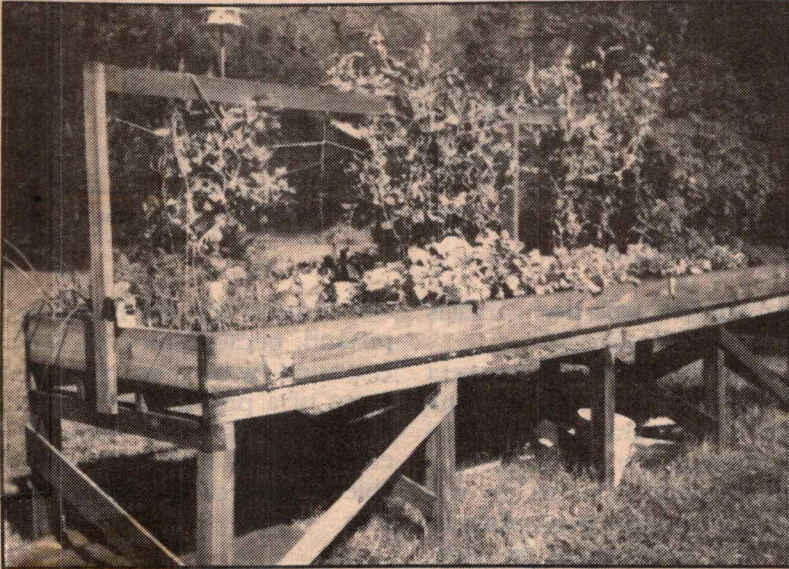
The name and address of the manufacturer is required to appear on the label with registration and establishment numbers. This information indicates approval by federal and/or state governments and identifies the facility at which the product was made. Every pesticide container carries a word in large print showing how dangerous it is to

humans. DANGER signals that the pesticide is highly toxic.

This word is accompanied by a skull and crossbones symbol and the word POISON in red. The words WARNING and CAUTION denote lesser toxicity hazards. For example, DANGER is typically followed by the warning "Fatal if swallowed," WARNING advised "Harmful or fatal if swallowed," and CAUTION states "Harmful if swallowed." DANGER labels advise first aid treatments in case of poisoning and a note to physicians describing appropriate medical treatments and antidotes.

Some pesticides warn of toxic effects on wildlife. Other labels carry environmental warnings or advise of hazards such as flammability or corrosive effects.

Gardening made simple with a



Mrs. Dorothy Clark knows how to have a garden that needs very little work and doesn't require constant bending. This table top garden costs about \$100 to construct.

Mrs. Edward (Dorothy) Clark, our former Floral Garden Club president, wrote the following:

Would you like to have a beautiful vegetable garden without stooping, bending, hoeing or crawling around on your hands and knees? If your back cries out when you do the above, but you still would like to "grow your own," here's the answer. It's the "no stoop, Lazy man's (or woman's) table-top garden. It's a 16 ft. long x 4 ft. wide, 8" deep, 3 ft. high table-top garden.

The foundation consists of 10 4 x 4's approximately 3 feet tall. Between each leg is two 2 x 4's (one on each side of legs) is used for support of 2 x 4 stringers. 1" x 4" x 17 foot boards are placed diagonally as braces on both sides. Five 2 x 4 x 16 ft. stringers are now nailed on top of the 2 x 4 foot cross members.

On these stringers was built a bottom of " hardware cloth which was then framed with 2" x 8"s. Then a piece of nursery cloth 4 ft. x 16 ft. was put down the center to divide the bed into two sections, 2 feet on each side. A 4 foot 2 x 4 is

This article continues on the next page.

table top garden



**Mona Belle
Turpin**

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

nailed vertically at each end in the center to which a 16 foot 2 x 4 is nailed between and hog wire was nailed to make a fence for snow peas or pole beans to climb. All lumber used should be pressure-treated to prevent rotting.

The planting medium consists of one-third part of each of the following: organic peat, compost or good top-soil, and perlite. May substitute cheaper builders' sand for perlite.)

Cultivation is simple. The only tools needed are a trowel, hand cultivator or a fork.

It's easy to keep the garden weeded as everything is planted solid instead of in rows. Tabletop gardening has more advantages than just "no-stoop/no bend." Less water is used; a few minutes with the hose is sufficient.

The idea came from an arti-

cle in the Charleston (N.C.) newspaper about four years ago. This is the fourth year of our using this way of gardening. It cost about \$100.00, but we sold our roto-tiller for the same amount.

Each "crop" is separated with string. In between plantings, kitchen peelings are buried in the soil. They decompose in several weeks enriching the soil. As soon as one crop is finished another is planted.

The fall's garden is up and blossoming - three tomato plants (in cages), two plantings of carrots, turnip greens, multiplying onions, green onion sets, kale, bibb lettuce, four cucumber vines (growing up a tomato cage) and runner beans and snow peas climbing up the "fence" in the center. No space is wasted!

COMMUNITY LIFE

Gardening is well worth the work

This week's article was contributed by Floral City Garden Club member Carolyn Gazzano. I hope you enjoy it as much as we did at a recent club meeting.

"The word 'gardening' brings to the mind's eye, pictures of blue morning glories reaching for the sky, red poppies swaying in the summer breeze, shiny zucchini squash shaded by fan-like leaves, green beans hanging in clusters.

"Let's turn the picture around and look in the back.

"Gardening means hard work, dirty fingernails, (I start out with gloves, but can't really get the feel of it), sore knees, and perspiration - no, plain ordinary sweat.

"The frost still glistens almost every morning when the seed catalog comes in the mail. 'Hope Springs Eternal' - who said that? I can't recall just now, but no matter, it does.

"The pages of the catalog display shining eggplants hanging from sturdy stems, lush red tomatoes, cucumbers on luxuriant vines and the flowers! Blooms of all colors of the rainbow. Nothing can stop us, we must send our order now. When the package arrives, we wonder 'Did I order all these seeds?'

"Finally, planting day arrives with its warm sunshine. After much digging and raking, the



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seeds are planted. In time, the first string bean pops through the ground and the zucchini seeds sprout.

"It is all working - the soil, the sun and the rain - and so am I! A cool weather prediction and we scurry to cover the tender young plants.

"Spring progresses and everything is flourishing. Daily inspection shows another leaf on each plant. Now comes the fertilizing, weeding, and mulching - all time consuming and back breaking.

"One morning the zucchini flowers are wilted and ready to fall, but a minute squash is forming behind the dropping flower. Holes in the leaves of the bean plants? - where do they come from - these invaders? Time to bring out the sprays and powders. Then the tomato worms appear. We pick

them off and stomp them onto the earth with a vengeance. Work every day - one day missed and an invader takes hold. A watering routine is established.

"Time passes. Then comes the harvest. Suddenly there are so many zucchini we are supplying the neighbors - smart people - they have no garden! All those cucumbers must be made into pickles in a 90 degree kitchen.

"The enjoyment comes with fresh tomatoes for salads and the blooming flowers which enhance the view and seem to enjoy their own existence.

"In the fall as the vegetable garden seems to have worked itself to 'old age' the pantry shelf is full with jars of pickles, tomatoes and string beans and the freezer is filled.

CONSERVATION

Bringing butterflies home

Few outdoor activities are more rewarding and as easily available as attracting butterflies to a well-designed butterfly garden. A successful garden must provide food, water and cover for the butterflies.

The butterfly garden must take into account the food preferences of the adult butterflies and their larva or caterpillars. By providing nectar for the adults and plants as food for the larva you will have greater numbers of butterflies.

The first step in designing a butterfly garden is making a list of the kinds of butterflies inhabiting your area and the plants which they prefer. Decide which butterflies are your favorites and focus your efforts on attracting them.

Some flowers attract more



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Turpin**

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butterflies than others. Simple flowers like the daisy and aster or milkweed and viburnum are preferred types. Double flowered varieties of cultivated flowers and white varieties are inferior to single and colored ones. Having a wide variety of flowers is preferable to having just a few. Flowers that produce the strongest scent usually produce the most nectar.

Different butterflies have a different flower preferences. As

a rule, small butterflies visit small flowers for nectar and large butterflies prefer larger flowers. Try to have plants with staggered blooming seasons to have flowers throughout the warm months. Flowering trees, shrubs and vines should be included in your garden design. A small area of shrubs will provide protection from rain and high winds and a safe place for butterflies to sleep at night.

A number of butterflies rarely feed on nectar. These species are attracted to rotting fruit and tree sap. They can be encouraged to come into your garden with a feeding platform holding mashed overripe bananas or papayas.

A good butterfly garden will provide a place for butterflies to drink. A drinking station can be the saucer of a bird bath with sand added to reduce its depth. Add a rock in the center for a resting place. A large flower pot saucer will work as well.

Larval food plants must be tailored to specific butterflies. Some plants are hosts to several different butterflies, but often each species requires its own plant. You must remember that these plants will be chewed on if you are successful. Resist the urge to protect these plants from caterpillars. Birds and other predators are quick to eat them so few caterpillars get large enough to do extensive damage.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Xeriscaping saves water and soil

Want to save time, energy, money? Who doesn't?

It has been said that "through Xeriscaping you can save yourself maintenance time and cut back drastically on your water bill", a clear case of killing two birds with one stone. Right?

It was with high hopes for a beautiful flower garden that members of Floral Garden Club worked to prepare the soil and set plants to give blooms of red, white, and blue in front of the Floral City Post Office last spring. The excessive heat of summer 1989 and subsequent watering restrictions took their toll. That beautiful dream was a disappointment.

This year a different approach is planned. We shall be using a fairly new method called Xeriscape. A new word? It is pronounced as though it were spelled Zero-scape. It is landscaping to use water sparingly and efficiently. It is water conservation by intelligent selection and use of plant material. Seven principles are involved: start with good design, improve the soil, water efficiently, limit the area, choose low-water use plants, use



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mulches, practice good maintenance.

It is said that the amount of water used can be reduced 10 percent to 80 percent by applying these principles. We shall be working under the supervision of our Citrus County Horticultural Agent Tim Johnston.

Xeriscape principles were first demonstrated in Colorado nine years ago and the idea has swept the country since then. (It seems we are returning to the way our ancestors used for generations).

The National Xeriscape Council, Inc., has offices in Austin, TX. The current president is Bruce Adams, who lives in West Palm Beach, Florida

and works for South Florida Water Management District, commonly called "Swiftmud", with their local office at 2303 W. Gulf-to-Lake Highway in Inverness. You may secure informational materials from them or from the Citrus County Agricultural Extension Service, Highway 41 South. There is also a fine article in the March issue of Southern Living Magazine.



Mona Belle Turpin

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

Wildflowers bountiful in our home county

Floral Garden Club is always pleasantly informed and entertained when Dimmock and Lydia Steeves present one of their outstanding slide programs on wildflowers. Their pictures are beautiful and their commentary is very rewarding. With this in mind, it was an automatic reaction to ask Lydia (Mrs. Steeves) to contribute to this column. Her reply follows:

FLORIDA WILDFLOWERS by Lydia Steeves.

There are approximately 3,500 species of wildflowers in Florida and half of these are found growing in Citrus County. Though some plants of the southern Everglades and some of the cold-loving plants of the North will not survive, many of the wildflowers of both the temperate and the tropic zones may be enjoyed here. Thus, we have the best of two wildflower worlds.

In January, we tread lightly past a soft carpet of the low-growing Innocence. In February, while the snow is still falling in the North, the tiny white Field Pansy, a violet, makes its first appearance, quickly followed by the beautiful common blue Violet. Suddenly they all come up together. First the white flowers of the Dewberry, then the little bells of the Florida Blueberry.

In marshy places, hundred of Sun Dews begin to appear, showing their little hairy arms and sticky mouths, consuming careless little insects. A few steps away white-headed Bog Pins and Hat Pins grow next to the showy Butterwort with its yellow green leaf rosettes and violet blossoms.

Nearby in open water the yellow buttercup-like Bladderwort rises on leafless stems. Looking closely, you will see the leaves just under the surface; they're shaped like the spokes of a wagon wheel.

In late February to early March roadsides provide the best wildflower show of the year. Overnight, the blue Sage and the lyre-leaved Sage appear, casting shadows on the

new green grass. Soon there are riotous patches of the colorful Phlox. You may find, here and there, the blossoms of the Zephyr-Lilly and the striking yellow blooms of the Calliopsis (coreopsis). Blue Flags stand proudly in wet ditches.

At the time the "snow-birds" return to the North, the exotic summer flowers appear. No plant is more spectacular than the Florida Cactus in bloom. St. Johnswort is next, just before the magnificent white Thistle Poppy. Among the ferns deep in the woods, hundreds of large and small blooms appear.

In all seasons, the roadsides, hammocks, and marshes of Central Florida are waiting to expose the hidden beauty.

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

Build compost pile using lawn clippings

During this summer weather is your grass growing faster than weeds? Do you have to mow and mow and mow to have your lawn looking like a park? Don't be upset! Instead use all those lawn clippings for a compost pile.

Compost is made by decomposition of organic residues, such as grass clippings, leaves, weeds and kitchen refuse. The organic material thus composed is then used as a mulch or as a soil amendment. Organic matter is an important source of nitrogen in the soil. Its decomposition by soil micro-organisms such as fungi, bacteria, molds and earthworms releases nitrogen, a necessity for plant growth.

The condition of Florida's mineral soils is improved by the addition of organic matter. It makes clay soils more porous and sandy soils more moisture retentive. Nutrients found in complete fertilizers are released more slowly and are absorbed as needed by plants.

The compost pile should be at least 10 feet square and three to five feet high. The top should have a slight depression to hold rain. Press down a layer of leaves, grass clippings or other organic material one foot deep and add water. Spread a layer of manure four to six inches deep over this wet material. Cover with three pounds of super-phosphate and one pound of ground limestone.

Instead of the super-phosphate, five pounds of a complete fertilizer such as 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 may be used. Add a layer of topsoil. Repeat this process until the pile is three to five feet high. Compost made this way will begin to heat in two to three days. Do not allow the pile to dry out, but adding too much water will eliminate air and slow decomposition.

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hold rain.

After three or four weeks mix the dry and moist parts to insure uniformity. In warm weather, the compost should be ready for use in three to four weeks.

Leaves may be made into good compost without the addition of manure or fertilizer. Cover a lay-

er of leaves eight to 10 feet square and six inches high with a two inch layer of soil and one quarter of a super-phosphate — limestone mixture. The pile may be built up to three feet high. Apply water frequently to keep it moist. Leaves composted this way will be ready to use in six months.

Use compost as you would use manure. Broadcast over the garden at least three weeks before planting, or mix it into the soil at the rate of about 25 pounds per 100 square feet. Compost may be shredded before use to provide

uniformity and, possibly, more satisfying results.

Muscadine grape native to state

The muscadine grape is native to Florida and has been cultivated in the state for many years. In recent times varieties of bunch grapes have been developed that also do well on Central Florida's sandy soils.

Grapes are adapted to a wide range of soils including those suitable for citrus growing. Plant bunch grape vines in February eight feet apart on well-drained soil, below the level they were grown in the nursery because of susceptibility to drought. Muscadine vines should be planted 15 feet apart.

How to conserve water in the home landscape

By **Kathy Mueller**
Floral Garden Club

Water is the life blood of plants. It is needed for seed germination, plant growth, photosynthesis, transport of nutrients and control of plant temperature. The demand on Florida's water supply continues to grow. If home owners are to continue to water plants in their landscapes they need to practice water conservation. More than half of the annual normal 52 inches of rain falls from June through September. During winter and spring, lack of rainfall is a serious problem. Soils which have a low water holding capacity make irrigation essential.

Water only when plants need watering. If the soil in the root zone feels dry, additional water is needed. Lawns should be watered at night or in early morning when winds and temperatures are low to prevent loss of water from evaporation.

When watering, give the soil a good soaking. Frequent light sprinklings result in shallow root systems which are susceptible to damage in dry periods. Wetting the soil to the depth of six to eight inches allows the moisture to penetrate into the soil where roots can absorb it. Apply one inch of water every two weeks in winter and weekly in summer.

Water should be applied only as fast as the soil will absorb it. Fast-flowing water runs off, carrying soil with it and exposing roots. Efficient watering can be accomplished with soaker hoses and sprinklers.

Drip irrigation supplies plants with constant moisture through low pressure tubing installed on or below the soil surface. By watering only the root zone, water is saved, weeds are discouraged, and plant growth is accelerated.

Using drought tolerant plants is another way to conserve water. In areas of the yard too far from a hose, on sandy soil, or a terrain where water drains off quickly, drought tolerant plants are an alternative.

Tips on Conserving Water

1. Increase mowing height of lawn. This allows the grass to develop a deeper root system.
2. Control weeds. Weeds use water needed by other plants.
3. Reduce fertilizer applications. Growth increases water need.
4. Improve soil The addition of organic matter to sandy soil will increase its water retention.
5. Mulch. Use two inches of mulch on annuals, trees and shrubs.
6. Stretch the intervals between watering and soak deeply.
7. Adjust sprinklers to avoid wasting water on sidewalks, etc .

Let native plants lie where they are planted

Please resist the temptation to dig up unusual plants you may see while traveling. Whenever a species, plant, animal or insect, not native to the environment and where natural controls are not present, is introduced, big trouble may lie ahead. Under the right conditions it can spread like wildfire. Examples are the Mediterranean fruit fly, fire ants, "killer bees," and the water hyacinths now clogging the waterways. So look, admire and let them be, lest you create a monster.

Have you ever thought of the dandelion as an amazing plant? Because of its deep tap root it transports minerals, especially calcium upward from deep layers of soil and deposits them nearer the surface. The Indians and early settlers used the dandelion plant as a spring tonic. In the early spring the unopened buds were collected and cooked with leeks as a special treat. They are rich in Vitamin A. The roots were dried and ground to be used as coffee by the settlers. The Indians made pale yellow dye from the blossoms to use in their art work.

During the 1800's people planted certain sensitive flowers in "U" shape by which they could

Gardeners live longer

— it's a scientific fact.

Gardening gives relief

from tensions, fears

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tell time during the daylight hours. These flowers opened and closed one after the other from morning till night. It was thought at the sun's rising and setting controlled them, but scientists discovered that these flowers have a natural "clock" inside them. The flower clock may not have been as accurate as our digitals of today, but each one opened and closed at nearly the same chosen hour each day.

Gardeners live longer — it's a scientific fact. Gardening gives relief from tensions, fears and worries. Stresses disappear with the task of preparing soil, planting, cultivation, and harvest.

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

Garden club members distribute decorations

By Marie Jones

Lake Life correspondent

Have you noticed the Christmas decorations made and distributed by the floral garden club members? This is the first year for the project but we hope to improve and expand next year.

Have you attended a meeting of the garden club this year? Meetings are the second Friday of each month September through June at the community building next to the fire station starting at 1 p.m. We have a committee to welcome you at the door and they need to be kept busy.

I'd like to share some interesting facts and dispel a couple of myths. Weeds — the dictionary says a weed is "a plant of no value," but every plant has some redeeming features. Thick growth of weeds prevent soil erosion and their extensive root systems break up hard soil. Any plants with deep root systems lift valuable minerals and trace elements to the surface where they become available to other plants. Weeds are tough, vigorous opportunists. Before they were tamed all of our cultivated crops were so-called weeds. Weeds in some cases are sources of medicines, dyes and other useful products. Wild creatures depend on weeds for food, but humans also eat such weeds as watercress, chicory and dandelion greens. Weeds can be attractive too, their foliage delicate, their fruit fascinating and their blossoms welcome bursts of color.

*Meetings are the
second Friday of each
month September
through June at the
community building.*

Parasites — a plant that draws sustenance from others and supplies no benefit in return. Some, like Spanish moss, attach themselves to others only to gain better exposure to sunlight. They take nothing from their hosts. One of our most familiar Christmas decorations — mistletoe — is a perching plant living on branches of trees and shrubs. Its seeds reach their position through the courtesy of birds

which eat the berries, then deposit the sticky seeds on branches. The plant is able to make its own food (it has chlorophyll) but it must tap into the tree's pipeline for its water.

**GARDEN CLUB
WHAT IS IT?**

COMMUNITY LIFE

Garden clubs' are part of a large family

The Federated Garden Clubs are part of a large family! We are the Floral Garden Club, one of several garden clubs in Citrus County. Citrus County garden clubs are part of District V, just one of twelve districts within the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs.

In District V, we have two district meetings each year. Here the objectives of the National Council of State Garden Clubs are stressed and information is given to local clubs. The National Council is divided into eight regions. Florida is in the Deep South Region.

The National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc. is a service organization dedicated to the development of gardening, the betterment and beautification of the community, sharing of civic concerns and the exchange of ideas. There are Federated Garden Clubs in



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all 50 states and in the national capitol area. There are affiliate organizations all over the world.

The two magazines which each garden club member receives from the National Council and Florida Federation keep us informed about all phases of garden club work. The first garden club in the United

States was formed in Athens, Georgia in 1891! The Floral Garden Club, whose motto is "PUT THE FLORAL BACK IN FLORAL CITY," will be celebrating the centennial with further civic beautification projects.

This information was submitted by our local president, Mary Pritchard.

Floral Garden Club installs officers

By Marie Jones
Floral Garden Club

The Floral Garden Club met at the Central Motel Restaurant in Inverness for lunch on May 10. Marie Morris arranged a lovely ceremony for the installation of newly elected officers. Guiding the club for the next two years will be president Dorothy Clark, first vice president Kathy Mueller, second vice president Marcia Beasley, secretary Carolyn Gazzano, and treasurer Arlene Sokol. Although the leadership is different and there are no club meetings until September, the projects which the members are involved in will continue throughout the summer months.

Marcia Beasley has signed up members to monitor the plantings at the post office, community building, and library as to water

needs and weeding. Hopefully, June, July and August will produce an abundance of rainfall (preferably in daily showers) and the mulch we have applied will discourage weed growth.

In cooperation with the road department, wild flower seeds were planted along County Road 48 from Duval Island Road to the entrance of the Department of Transportation. Lack of moisture delayed seeing any results thus far, but now that the rainy season has arrived and taking an optimistic view the seeds will germinate and next year the roadside will be ablaze with color.

Our aim is to put "Floral" back in Floral City. As funds permit and men/women power are available we will be broadening our scope of plantings. Wouldn't it be nice to see a blanket of blossoms beneath the canopy of oaks?

The Floral Garden Club meets the second Friday of every month September through May at 1 p.m. in the Community Building (located between the fire station and library on C.R. 48 also known as Orange Ave.). We invite both men and women of the community to come to a meeting and see what we are all about. Our programs are interesting and varied; covering subjects of community interest as well as information about flora and fauna. We even have fun times — this past year we enjoyed a bus trip to Selby Gardens, a super-duper salad luncheon Christmas party and even as you are reading this plans are being formulated for our next year's programs. Won't you come join us on September 13. That is a Friday the 13th, but we guarantee to bring you nothing but good tidings.



The new officers for the Floral Garden Club for the next two years are pictured left to right: Dorothy Clark, president; Arlene Sokol, treasurer; Carolyn Gazzano, secretary; Marcia Beasley, second vice president; and Kathy Mueller, first vice president. The next club meeting will be Friday, Sept. 13.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Floral Garden Club is full of history

By Mary Jones
Floral Garden Club

In October of 1956 the first meeting of the Floral Garden Club was held. The enrollment was 15, the yearbook was hand written, and meetings were held in members homes. By 1958 the membership increased to 18, and sponsored by Mrs. G. T. Smith of Ocala, our club became a member of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs.

With the club's support a junior garden club was formed in 1959. The first flower show of the club was held in May of 1960 with an appropriate theme of, "In the Beginning." The District Five Spring Meeting was hosted by the club in 1963. The club continued to grow, community beautification became a club project and enrollment had increased to 53 members. Since 1970, the club

members have volunteered with the month of their choice, September through June, of placing an arrangement in the Floral City Library for the enjoyment of the community.

For several years the club furnished volunteers to set up and monitor the flower show at the county fair in joint collaboration with the other garden clubs in the county. When the park district requested the club take an active part in landscaping the entrance to the new park south of Floral City, plants were purchased and many hours of work were devoted to getting it ready for the dedication ceremonies. Once established the park district took over the maintenance.

Several trees have been planted over the years in celebration of Arbor Day to enhance the landscape at the park. Each year the club sponsors two students from the Floral City Elementary

School to attend Camp Wekiva for a summer session.

Myriad work shops have been enjoyed in past years covering such subjects as arranging dried material, making wreaths and door swags, contrived flowers from corn husks, containers and mechanics of flower show arrangements.

HORTICULTURE

COMMUNITY LIFE

Roses need attention during summer

As the days get longer and hotter we tend to move as quietly as possible; doing as little as possible to keep cool. We elect to remain indoors eating cool salads and sipping cool drinks. There is nothing wrong with that, but we cannot neglect our roses. They also want to be as comfortable as possible.

The rosarian should keep up a regular schedule of care if the roses are to produce. The summer blooms will be smaller but with proper care the bushes will go into Fall in a healthy condition enabling them to produce those larger, more intensely colored blooms that beg to be placed on a show table.

Frances Simpson, our rosarian, says: Working in the coolest part of the day rose growers should: (1) Keep up the weekly spraying to prevent Black Spot. The fungicide, Triforine, is a favored product. If insects become a problem, an insecticide could be used in combination with the fungicide. A water soluble fertilizer



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such as Peters, Rapid-Grow or Miracle-Gro could be added at the same time giving the bush a quick foliar feeding.

If spider mites become a problem, hook a water wand or a spray nozzle on the end of hose and drown the pesky little things. The spider mite does its dirty work before you discover him so it is a good idea to wash your bushes routinely (be sure to wash underneath the leaves) as the weather gets hotter so that the mite will not get a foot-hold. (2) After a good rain or a thorough watering the day before, apply granular fertilizer once a month. One-half the monthly allowance may be applied twice a month. Water in well after application. (3) Mulch.

Keep root zone cool, con-

serve moisture and keep down weeds with a good mulch of at least four inch thickness. Pine straw makes an excellent mulch. It doesn't break down or pack as fast as some and it allows fertilizer and water to penetrate to the soil better. A mixture of pine straw and oak leaves is good. Just make sure the ratio of straw is greater than that of leaves. (4) Water. If the rains don't come, we must water. Water well every other day during the hottest weather. Conserve water by watering early or late in the day. Do not water during heat of day as it wastes water and may actually harm the bushes. An occasional overhead showering is good if natural rains do not come.

Keep cool and if rains don't come, pray!



**Mona Belle
Turpin**

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Studying the Platycerium

Members of the Floral City Garden Club packed a brown bag lunch and went picnicking on their regular meeting day in November.

On that day I learned a new word - Platycerium. No, this is not a big, lumbering sea monster. Platycerium are ferns. Not just any ferns, but staghorn ferns and some of them grow to enormous size. The plants are native to tropical Africa, Asia, Australia and South America. In their native habitat - the rain forest - these ferns grow on trees by attaching hair-like roots to the bark. In doing so, they do not injure the tree for they are not parasitic. They are epiphytic, or air plants, like some of the bromeliads we wrote about recently. The name which comes from the Greek means "broad horn" and we know the plants as Staghorn, Elkhorn, or Moosehorn ferns.

There are 18 known species of this fascinating plant. One of the smallest (Platycerium Madagascariense) averages 9 to 12 inches wide and long, and a giant variety, the Wandii, may produce a shield frond spread of 6 to 7 feet across, and 4 to 5 feet tall, with fertile fronds that hang 5 to 6 feet long.

The Floral Garden Club was very fortunate recently to have been invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Rumore in Inverness. We found a beautiful home and grounds where we were graciously received. Mr. Rumore kindly introduced us to his many plants. Of the 18 known species mentioned earlier, he has 10 different varieties and has lost count of the number of individual plants.

Some of these he started a year or two ago, some much longer, and some gift plants are 15 and 20 years old. These last are quite huge. I wish I could introduce you to each species, as we were so privileged, but space will not permit.

All of his plants are on trees in the grounds surrounding the home. They very large plants, in hanging baskets, are

raised and lowered by means of heavy pulleys. Since the Rumore's have no greenhouse at present, all the very large plants must be left outside during our colder weather. At that time, they are lowered to the ground - thanks to the pulleys - and then covered to protect them as much as possible. He must be doing an excellent job for he has an outstanding display of these tender giants.

Members of the club who were in attendance will not forget the beautiful experience. Thank you, Joe and Rosemary.

How to care for a flowering dogwood

By Kathy Mueller
Floral City Garden Club

Flowering dogwood is native to the eastern part of the United States. The showy white bracts add brilliance to central and northern Florida.

Florida dogwoods flower during February and March. Native dogwoods require four to six years of growth before flowering. Dogwood leaves turn rusty red before falling and are accented by clusters of eight to sixteen berries.

Flowering dogwoods are usually associated with larger trees. The dogwood's primary use in the landscape is on the edge of wooded areas or to

provide background for other plants such as azaleas.

Dogwoods grow best in well-drained organic, slightly acidic soils. They require bright light for maximum flowering.

Container-grown trees can be planted at any time of the year if proper care is provided. The planting holes must be larger than the root mass and the tree should be planted at the depth at which it was grown. The tree should be watered thoroughly after planting and a two to three inch layer of mulch applied. Keep the mulch away from the trunk.

Dogwoods are not tolerant of extended drought periods. Water often during the first

week after planting and when rainfall is not adequate thereafter. This encourages a deep root system.

Little fertilization is needed the first year and over-fertilization can injure the young tree. Established dogwoods need one to one and a half pounds of 16-4-8 fertilizer annually. Distribute the fertilizer on the surface beneath the tree canopy and water thoroughly.

Staking newly planted trees and wrapping the trunks with a tree wrap material will protect the trees from injury and entry of borers. Protective sprays during the spring and summer are helpful.

There is hope for apple growers in Citrus County

By Kathy Mueller
Floral Garden Club

Have all you former northern apple growers decided you're limited to growing citrus and bananas in Florida? Well, recently apple varieties have been grown in Gainesville and Leesburg, Florida.

Anna, Ein Shemer, and Dorsett Golden apples are best adapted to these areas. They have a cold requirement in the range of 300 to 400 hours below 45 degrees F.

Anna and Ein Shemer fruit and leaf well in Central Florida. Anna is shaped like the Red Delicious and is sweet to semi-acid. Ein Shemer is yellow and has a sweet flavor. Dorsett Golden was introduced from the Bahamas and has yellow, sweet fruit.

Most apples require cross pollination and it is recommended that two cultivars, such as Anna and Dorsett Golden, are planted together. Also, growers are advised to obtain cultivars grown on suitable root stock.

Apples grow best if planted on a fertile sandy loam soil with good water and air drainage. The trees may be planted anytime during the dormant season, late Dec. to Feb. is the best planting time to allow the roots to become established before spring growth begins.

Planting holes should be large enough to accommodate the root system without crowding. The trees should be planted at the same depth they were grown in

the nursery. After planting, make a soil ring around the hole's edges and fill with water to settle the soil around the roots. Water should be applied weekly during dry periods.

An area two feet from the trunk of the tree may be mulched to control weeds. Apply 10-10-10 fertilizer evenly under the tree canopy in Jan. and June at a rate of one-half pound per year for each year of the tree's age.

Two year old trees should be pruned to develop a strong framework. Later, pruning may be necessary to maintain a desired shape and to remove dead wood.

Apple trees are susceptible to scab and bitter rot. Treat these diseases with a fungicide at weekly intervals. Spray scale insects with oil in Jan.

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

Special care needed for Florida Camellia

By Kathy Mueller
Lake Life correspondent

The Camellia, a native of the Orient, has been part of the southern landscape for 200 years. Special care in regard to exposure, soil modification, and watering is necessary to have successful growth and flowering of Camellias in Central Florida.

Camellias can be used as foundation plantings, screens, accent plants, background groupings, and hedges. Maximum benefit can be achieved by mass plantings or groupings.

Camellias flower in fall and winter. During the remainder of the year their evergreen foliage and slow growth make Camellias excellent landscape plants.

Slightly acid, fertile soils high in organic matter are preferred by Camellias. The soil must be well-drained because Camellias will not grow in wet areas.

Camellias should be located in an area that is protected from cold winds but where the air moves freely. Plantings under pine trees or on the north or west

side of buildings are usually injured less by cold temperatures.

When planting a Camellia, the hole should be eight inches deeper and 12 inches wider than the root mass of the plant. Camellias are best planted from November to February so the roots become established before the summer heat. The plants should be set into the soil at the same depth as they were grown and planted at least five feet apart. A two to three inch layer of mulch will reduce temperature fluctuations and conserve water.

Frequent and light applications of an acid-forming fertilizer such as 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 should be made to the planting bed. Applications are recommended before spring growth begins, after the first growth flush, midsummer, and early winter. Water the plants well before and after fertilizing.

Enough water should be applied in dry periods to wet the soil to a depth of 18 inches to encourage a deeper root system.

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

Pecan trees are native; can be grown in Florida

By Kathy Mueller

Lake Life correspondent

The pecan is native to America. Indians traded pecans with settlers for tools and trinkets. In this way, the traders moved the pecan from its native range in Texas and the Mississippi Valley to the eastern states. The first pecan nursery was established in 1772.

The pecan tree can be grown throughout Florida, but the best commercial production is the northern part of the state. For the homeowner, the pecan is a beautiful, large-growing shade tree. If the recommended varieties are planted, some pecans will be produced.

Pecans grow best on soil that has a sand-loam texture with a clay subsoil. The soil should be well-drained, not water-logged or subject to flooding.

Pecan trees should be planted from December to February. When pecans are transplanted, the roots should be kept moist. If the root system dries out, the tree usually dies. The trees should be planted 60 feet apart.

Dig the planting holes two feet wide and three feet deep to accommodate the pecan seedlings. Spread the roots out when planting so that they will not become matted together and inhibit growth and development. When

the hole is filled with soil, water well to remove air pockets and firm the soil around the roots. Plant the tree at the depth at which it was grown. Make a ring three feet across and six inches deep around the tree and fill it with water. Do not add fertilizer at planting time. Remove one-third to one-half of the top of the tree after planting to balance the top portion with the root system.

An area approximately three feet from the trunk of the tree should remain weed-free. Do not use weed killers. Mulch will control weeds and conserve moisture.

Pecan trees in Florida require a 10-10-10 balanced fertilizer. This should be applied in May of the first year after planting at a rate of one pound per tree. Thereafter, two pounds of fertilizer for every year of age of the tree, up to 55 pounds, should be broadcast under each tree in February every year.

Pecans have a problem with zinc deficiency and if the fertilizer does not contain zinc, four

ounces of zinc oxide per tree should be applied the first two years. Thereafter, apply one pound per tree each year, broadcast under the tree.

Irrigation is very important on newly planted trees. The water ring should remain in place for at least a year and water should be applied very week during the growing season if no rain occurs. The young tree should not be allowed to wilt.

The new tree's growth should be forced into a central leader system the first year. Cut off all other buds and force one shoot. The first limbs should be five to six feet about the ground. All sucker growth below five to six feet should be pruned off. Three or four limbs should be spread around the trunk every 18 inches. After the second or third year, little pruning should be required.

Pecans are usually harvested in October and November. The nuts can be removed from the tree or allowed to drop.

The pecan tree is alternate bearing, producing a large crop one year, a small crop the next year. In a year that the tree produces few pecans, it increases its food reserve to produce many nuts the next year.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Tips for caring for fruit trees

By Kathy Mueller
Lake Life correspondent

Most new-comers to Florida picture themselves stepping out into their yard and picking oranges for breakfast juice. However, the home citrus grower is at a disadvantage with regard to the climate in north and west Florida. It is probable that 24 degree temperature and lower will occur every year.

While a grower cannot control the climate, there are several factors which can increase the survival chances of a citrus tree in this area. Selection of the proper variety, planting site, and good maintenance will enable a tree to withstand freezing temperatures.

Citrus should be planted on the south side of the house as most freezes and winds are from the north and the house will act as a windbreak, leaving the south side warmer. The soil under a citrus tree should be completely bare in winter for maximum heat absorption. Trees should be watered well several days before a predicted freeze as moist soil absorbs more heat than dry soil.

For the first several winters young trees should have surrounding soil banked up over the bud union and lower trunk. Trees should be covered at night with blankets or other material.

Trifoliolate orange is the most cold-hardy citrus, followed by kumquat, satsuma, calamondin, sour orange mandarin, and sweet orange. Sweet oranges grown in this area are navel, Hamlin, and Parson Brown. These oranges mature early to be picked before severe freezes would be expected. Mandarins include Darcy and Robinson tangerines and Orlando tangelo. The preferred rootstock for both sweet orange and mandarin is trifoliolate orange with sour orange as second choice.

The Calamondin is most used as a houseplant. The dwarf, busy

plant is showy when covered with fruit. The satsuma tree is vigorous, medium-small, productive and cold resistant. Satsuma is adapted to regions too cold for other citrus.

Kumquat exceeds satsuma in

cold resistance. The trees bloom after other citrus, and become dormant in late fall, contributing to their cold-hardiness. The kumquat is a shrubby evergreen tree which bears large numbers of showy yellow to orange oval fruit.

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

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Hibiscus are awesome

By Kathy Mueller
Floral Garden Club

On Oct. 11 the Floral Garden Club visited the property of Henry and Viva Bolton on South Withlapopka Drive in Floral City. Mr. Bolton is a noted hibiscus grower and the sight of his 2,000 hibiscus plants was awesome.

Each of the shrubs, grown on hardy rootstock, is named. Mr. Bolton informed us of the fact that there are over 9,000 named varieties of hibiscus, some of which he originated. The thought of propagating, spraying, feeding and just worrying about 2,000 bushes is mind-boggling.

There was a veritable kaleidoscope of color. Every shade of yellow and red was in evidence, from cream and pale pink to oriental orange and maroon. My favorites were the huge white double bloom, a brilliant clear red

and a mammoth orange and yellow, named, appropriately, Florida Sunset.

In the extensive yard around the Bolton's home were a number of exotic plants of interest to the club members and their guests. Staghorn ferns and bromeliads were among the unusual species to be enjoyed, but the greatest attraction was a potato vine making its way up an enormous tree. Several "potatoes" hung high above at the top of the vine.

After viewing and purchasing the hibiscus plants, the garden club members gathered on the lawn under the trees for an outdoor luncheon meeting. An item of business discussed was the flower show to be produced in March 1992 by the Floral Garden Club in conjunction with the Citrus Garden Club.

INDOOR GARDENING

After dinner gardens with leftovers

Stop! Don't throw away those orange seeds, that avocado pit, the pineapple top. Save that milk carton, coffee can, and plastic container. Punch small holes in the bottom of each one. Assemble a supply of potting soil, humus, vermiculite and builder's sand. Now you're ready to become an after-dinner gardener.

Rinse orange seeds in tepid water and lay them in a container partially filled with a mixture of half potting soil, half humus and a handful of sand. Cover the seeds with one-half inch humus and water gently. Place on a sunny windowsill and water frequently.

Plant an avocado pit, base down, two-thirds into a mix of two-thirds potting soil, one-third humus and a handful of vermiculite. Leave the tip exposed, add tepid water, and cover with a glass to keep in the moisture. When the first sprout appears, add one-half inch humus.

Pineapple tops grow well in a mixture of one-half potting soil, one-fourth humus, and one-fourth dried coffee



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grounds. Bury the top up to the crown and water. Use one-fourth strength liquid fertilizer with added iron.

Coffee cans with a few holes punched in the bottom make good plant pots. If you paint them, be sure to keep any paint from inside surfaces. Milk cartons cut to one-third their size make excellent starting boxes. The carton can be cut away when transplanting seedlings. Juice can lids are good for screening holes in the bottom of pots and add minerals to the soil when they rust.

Always use tepid water when watering your plants and fol-

low the directions on the fertilizer containers. Gradually increase light as the newly sprouted plants mature.

After-dinner gardeners will find many fruit and vegetable seeds that can be grown in the home. Experiment with mangoes, loquats, or papayas. A pomegranate will produce a small shrub and grape seeds will become vines to surround a window.

The above was contributed by Kathy Mueller, Master Gardener. For more information, you may contact her at 726-6143.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Growing orchids on a windowsill

By Kathy Mueller
Special to Lake Life

Not too long ago, the idea of growing orchids in the home was considered as outlandish as flying to the moon. Well, the moon has been more easily than many house plants.

There are orchids which produce sprays of flowers and others with single blooms which may be purchased at prices comparable to other flowering plants.

Generally, orchids bloom once a year, though some species bloom more frequently. Orchids are almost indestructible plants, given the light, water, humidity and temperatures they need.

South and east windows are good growing areas for orchids. Give air to the roots and

provide humidity by placing the pots on a rack over a tray containing gravel and water.

Several potting mixtures may be used, such as fir bark and tree fern, but plants in osmunda fiber need less frequent watering and little or no fertilizer. Clay or plastic pots with large drainage holes are used, but orchids also do well in cedar or redwood baskets. Small orchid species may be attached to slabs of tree fern or cork bark.

Most orchids like temperatures of 60 to 80 degrees, but will tolerate occasional variations of 10 degrees warmer or cooler. Circulation of air is important to success with orchids as most of them are air plants. In hot weather a small fan directed away from the plants will provide air movement.

Artificial heat and air conditioning tend to dry the air, so plants will need more water. If a pot feels light when picked up, it generally needs water. Small pots dry out more quickly than larger ones. Always use tepid water. Misting the air around the plants will increase humidity.

Select a mature orchid plant that has flowered from a reputable orchid nursery in your area. You'll find many within your budget and, with care, the one you choose will give you pleasure for many years.

Our active garden club member and Master Gardener, Kathy Mueller, has contributed this article for our instruction. She may be reached at 726-6143 for further information on gardening problems.



**Mona Belle
Turpin**

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

Bromeliads can live inside

Earlier in this column we mentioned using various "dinner left-overs" as garden material. Pineapple tops were suggested. The top we planted last spring in regular commercial planting soil is growing rapidly. It, like the Spanish moss, is a bromeliad. A beautiful and colorful bromeliad given to me last year had "pups" this year and, in separate pots, they add four flourishing new plants.

Recently a representative group from Floral Garden Club attended the Pasco County Bromeliad Society's sale held south of New Port Richey. We felt highly rewarded. The people were very friendly and informative. From huge plants to very tiny ones were among the hundreds on display and for sale. Yes, we brought several home.

Now Kathy Mueller, our fellow clubber and Master Gardener, tells more about Bromeliads as houseplants combining brilliant bloom and ornamental foliage with the ability to live under adverse conditions in the home, bromeliads make excellent houseplants. Painted Feather, Flaming Sword, and Rainbow Plant are a few of the names given to these colorful, easy to grow plants. Two members of this large family are the pineapple and Spanish moss.

Bromeliads are composed of a rosette of leaves with an inflorescence rising from the center or vase. Some are tiny enough to fit in a dish garden and others are so large that they must be grown outdoors.

In nature, bromeliads are mainly air plants growing high in trees and do not have an extensive root system. However, grown in soil, they develop larger roots and require water

for roots as well as in the center of the plant.

Although the flower scapes are unusual and vivid, it is the unique foliage that is most attractive. Some species have variegated foliage, others stripes or spots. There are shades of green-gray, yellow, red and brown to plum and wine colored. Bromeliads will thrive at any window. Set the pots on a damp gravel-filled tray to provide drainage and humidity. A well drained porous potting mix such as osmunda or fir bark will suit them or they may be attached to pieces of bark or tree limbs. Keep their center vases filled with water and once a week give them a bath under a faucet.

A bromeliad will produce more off-shoots than most plants. It is common for one mother plant to have half-a-dozen offspring. When these have at least three leaves, cut them off and pot them individually. Keep the temperature and humidity high around the small plants. Generally, the off-shoots will flower in a year or two.

Bromeliads are inexpensive. The best buy is a medium-size plant about six months old. The plants multiply so freely that in a few years you will recover the original cost.

House plants are the best kinds of pets

By Kathy Mueller
Floral Garden Club

Would you like a pet you can talk to? One you don't have to take out and walk? A pet you can leave alone for a weekend or even a week without a care? That doesn't need feeding every day? A house plant is just the thing for you.

There is a plant for almost every home environment. Consider the light, temperature, and humidity you can provide when choosing a plant for your home. African violets and other blooming plants need full sunlight. Foliage plants, such as the philodendron, prefer indirect light.

A day temperature of 65 to 70 degrees with a 10 degree drop at night is ideal for most plants. In air-conditioned and heated houses, a two to three inch layer of wet gravel under a potted plant will supply humidity.

Water only when necessary with tepid water. Apply water until it runs out the bottom of the pot, then empty the saucer. Some plants should be watered when the soil becomes dry to the touch, while others need to be watered before the soil becomes completely dry.

A good potting soil should be dense enough to hold the plant, have good nutrient holding capacity, and the texture should allow both air and water to pass through readily. Foliage plants grow best in a mixture containing a high level of organic matter such as peat. Cacti and succulents do well in sandy soils.

Actively growing interior plants should be fertilized every two or three months. During winter months or in low light, reduce the frequency of feeding. There are many special house plant fertiliz-

ers. Always follow the directions on the container.

The foliage of indoor plants, except those with hairy leaves, should be cleaned with a moist cloth weekly. Clean foliage promotes healthy growth, controls pests, and keeps the plants looking attractive.

New plants can be grown from leaf or stem cuttings. Insert a leaf with one inch of stem or a three to six inch length of stem from a healthy plant into a rooting medium of one-half peat and one-half perlite. Water and cover the cuttings with a plastic bag. Set the container where it is exposed to indirect light. Soon, you'll have a collection of house plant "pets."

FLORAL GARDEN CLUB

Citrus seeds can make lovely plants for house

By Marie Jones
Lake Life correspondent

Welcome to our winter residents. We are back to talking about recycling and this time it is about seeds.

One does not need a green thumb to develop a nice house plant from citrus seeds. With very little care, lemon, grapefruit, orange or kumquat seeds will sprout into tiny trees which make lovely house plants.

To prepare the seeds, wash them thoroughly in water to remove any vestige of pulp. Using

small pots and moist potting soil, insert two or three seeds in each pot to a depth of about 1/2 inch. Place the pots in a warm sunny window and keep the soil moist but not wet. When the seedlings have four or more true leaves, pull out all but the sturdiest plant in each pot.

When the roots begin growing through the drainage hole in the bottom of the pot, shift it to a larger pot. In a couple of months knock the plant out of the pot to see if the soil is fairly well filled

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with roots. If it is, shift it to a larger pot, if it isn't, replace the root ball and soil back into the pot and check it again in a month. The thing to avoid is allowing them to become root bound until they are finally in the largest container you have room for or find convenient to handle.

Once the citrus is in the ultimate size pot, feed it lightly once

a month with any balanced plant food. Citrus seeds in pot develop into small bushy trees, with glossy deep green foliage. Slightly bruising a couple of leaves as you walk by will release a pleasant odor. Most potted citrus will flower but don't expect it to bear fruit unless you set it outside and let the bees and other insects pollinize it for you. If you set it outdoors when you leave for the summer, do remember that it can get badly sunburned and/or windburned unless it is well protected. Keep it on a shaded porch or in a sheltered corner.

**SOURCES FOR HELP
AND
MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS**

Extension office helps local gardeners

It's that time of year! Have you been working in your garden again now that the weather is cooler? Do you have questions? Aphids on your plants? Fleas on your pets? Ants all over the yard?

There is a place right in Inverness where all these questions and thousands of others will be answered if you ask.

As Kathy Mueller says in the following:

"If you're a Citrus County gardener, you'll discover a treasure trove of free information at the Citrus County Extension office to help you grow a lone house plant or a garden of several acres.

"You'll learn how to plant, feed, and mow your lawn. There are publications covering irrigation, turf pests and diseases, and preparing your lawn for drought. There are pamphlets about citrus and other fruit trees and vines. How to make compost, reading the fertilizer label, and using controlled-release fertilizer will be of aid with Florida's sandy soils.

"There are fact sheets on



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Turpin**

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riding mowers, lawn and garden tractors, sprinkler systems, and power spray equipment.

"The Vegetable Garden Guide will tell you which varieties of vegetable crops to grow, planting dates, seed depth and spacing, and days to harvest. There is material on garden planning, soil preparation, pests and diseases, and fact sheets about individual vegetables.

"Improve your home landscape with publications on design, maintenance, and propagation. There is material pertaining to water and energy conservation. You'll find which ornamental plants and trees are appropriate for your area and budget.

"Shrubs for shady areas, drought tolerant, and salt tol-

erant plants are the subjects of some of the bulletins. There are descriptions of native trees and ornamentals, vines, and palms. You'll find information on selection, culture, and propagation of house plants from ferns to orchids."

The Citrus County Extension office is at the Citrus County Agricultural Center on South Highway 41, next to the "jailatorium". The telephone number is 726-2141 or stop in the office and ask about your problem.

You will find a knowledgeable person at the front desk. It sounds as if the extension department will furnish all that's needed for a great lawn and garden except the plants and the sweat and elbow grease.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Some plants and seeds are good to eat

I have heard that Dr. and Mrs. Einstein were being honored at a huge banquet in a large eastern city. An orchid, ordered for the guest, arrived after the banquet had begun. Those in charge were puzzled about presenting it. Finally it was arranged on a plate and set in front of the visiting Mrs. Einstein. She, in turn, was dismayed, but after accepting graciously, she picked up knife and salad fork and prepared to eat the orchid as a salad.

Whether or not orchids are edible, I do not know. However, many blossoms are delicious. My dear grandfather used to alert me when he was sure that only the small pumpkins already on his vines would have time to ripen before frost.

Then I was allowed to harvest as many of the blossoms as I wanted. I picked them early in the day before they began to wilt, checked for insects, placed them in salt water for a short time, then drained them, dipped them in beaten eggs, then flour and cornmeal and fried them in butter. They shrivel very little when cooked.

nip." She adds a little vinegar and bacon fat. The seeds are us in bread and rolls. Amaranth grew profusely in Mexico, but Toni says, "when Cortez conquered Mexico, he tried to destroy all the plants, but didn't succeed because the plant re-seeds itself. I find several plants each year in different spots. It is used in countries where there is dry climate and poverty. Doesn't need any care." Sounds ideal for xeriscoping. Don't you agree?



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Toni Meyer, my neighbor and fellow garden clubber, uses both squash and pumpkin blossoms and declares you should pick only the male blossoms (yes, there are both male and female blossoms on the same vine) not only because they taste better, but the male blossom will not bear fruit. She dips hers in egg, crumbs or batter and fries in bacon fat. Toni says, "I like them stuffed with bread dressing (add leftover meat or crisp bacon for flavor.) For a nice tasty hors d'oeuvre, tuck in the top of the blossom after stuffing - to make a heart shape. Then fry. Always makes for conversation. Elderberry blossoms may also be dipped in batter and fried."

Toni makes this Touboli Salade: Chop several fresh tomatoes, add snipped mint and

parsley, chopped green onion, a few tablespoons of wheat germ, lemon juice to taste and a little salad oil. Sounds good, doesn't it?

"Chives, garlic leaves, and/or parsley, chopped or snipped can be added to most green salads. Mint can be used in your own tea, either hot or cold. Comfry and mint make good iced teas. Purslane leaves stripped from the stems may be added to tossed salad or used as an individual salad with Italian dressing," she said.

Toni has Amaranth growing in her garden which she says "not only a showy plant, but its maroon blossoms and leaves are edible. Leaves cooked like turnip greens are more tender and tasty than tur-

Did you ever try nasturtium blossoms in salad? Or its seeds pickled? Did you ever candy rose petals or violets? We from the North miss our spring dandelions for greens, either cooked or in salads. The heads may be fried or used in wine. Many plants are fun to use. Just be sure the one you use is not poisonous. Good eating!!

Any receptacle can become a flower vase

By Marie Jones

Lake Life correspondent

A vase is a vase is a vase! You can turn any receptacle into a flower container. If it is not waterproof, line it with a jar or plastic container, anything that will hold water and can be concealed inside the receptacle itself.

To straighten the bent stem of a heavy headed bloom, insert a toothpick through the center of the bloom and into the stem. To keep the bottom petals of large blooms like chrysanthemums from falling off, drip hot candle wax on the back at the base of the bloom. Snip off all pollen bearing stamen from flowers such as lilies.

If flowers have heavy blooms, carry them head down from the garden to prevent blooms from snapping.

Here are a few hints to help you enjoy your cut flowers longer. If flowers have heavy blooms, carry them head down from the garden to prevent blooms from snapping off. Cut stems under water and at an angle so no air bubbles can stop the flow of water into the stems. Leave entire stem emerged in water for several hours or over night to condition them.

There are some exceptions to the above and must be handled a little differently. Flowers such as dahlias and other hallowed stem flowers must have the ends of the stems seared right after cutting to prevent wilt. To insure lavish intake of water by woody stemmed flowers like gardenias, mash the bottom two inches of the stemmed flowers with a hammer before plunging in the water.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Florida master gardeners

The articles appearing in this column are written by various members of the Floral Garden Club. My name and picture serve only as a logo to identify the series. The last article on "Butterfly Gardening" was written by Kathleen Mueller whose name was accidentally omitted when the column was printed. We apologize to Kathy.

Miss Mueller (pronounced Miller) is an officer of the Floral Garden Club and an active home gardener. She is nearing the end of the Master Gardener course which she describes in the following article.

FLORIDA MASTER GARDENERS

Every Friday morning for a total of 10 weeks, a group of



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twenty adult students pick up their books and converge on the Citrus County Agricultural Center. These people are future Florida Master Gardeners being taught by Mr. Tim Johnston, Citrus County Horticulturist.

Master Gardeners are adult volunteers trained at the county level by IFAS co-op extension service personnel. IFAS is the Institute of Food and Agri-

cultural Sciences of the University of Florida and these personnel are, in effect, teachers of the university. Upon completion of their intensive instruction the unpaid volunteers are certified Master Gardeners qualified to perform 50 hours of community service in return for their free education.

The state of Florida began its

plant clinics and give demonstrations or exhibitions.

Master Gardener program in 1979. The first counties participating in the program were Brevard, Dade and Manatee. Florida's program is based on the Master Gardener program of the state of Washington where it originated in 1972. Since its inception in Florida, one half of all the counties have trained and graduated classes of Master Gardeners, until today there are over 1,000 Master Gardeners statewide.

After serving one year, Master Gardeners may enlist for further one year terms. They may answer gardening questions and solve plant problems of Citrus County residents who come to the Extension office or over the telephone. Master Gardeners may also conduct

The course of study to obtain the Master Gardener certification includes the cultivation of fruits and vegetables and the proper installation and care of turf grasses. Most important in growing plants in Florida, and Citrus County in particular, is a knowledge of the various types of soils in Central Florida's plant hardiness zone 9 in which we live. Plant pathology and entomology, or plant diseases and pests, are courses which help answer gardening questions throughout the year. Master Gardeners must be able to create a landscape plan and know the proper plants to use in it.

If you want to learn more about plants and gardening contact the Citrus County Extension Service at 726-2141.



**Mona Belle
Turpin**

FLORAL CITY GARDEN CLUB

Florida's flora unique; includes many species

EDITOR'S NOTE: This week's column is written by Kathy Mueller.

The diverse flora of Florida is unique in that it includes species found only in Florida, plus extensions of northern and southern species that reach their extreme distribution limits in the state. A minor proportion of these plants is poisonous or irritating to humans or animals. The percentage is small but the actual number of plants is large because of the favorable climate. There are more than 500 toxic and irritant plants, native and introduced, growing in Florida.

Children are most frequently poisoned by toxic plant materials. Parents should emphasize the risks of eating or touching unknown leaves, nuts and berries. With the increased interest in the use of natural plants and weeds for food and medicinal purposes, adults are also at risk. Remember that most of the world's biologically produced drugs are plant products.

To reduce the probability of accidental poisoning, learn to identify plants yourself and be cautious in handling unknown plants. There are plant identification courses and various agencies to assist you, such as your county agricultural agent. Wild plants should not be used in cooking and medicines if they are not known with certainty to be non-poisonous. Harmless plants are sometimes not easily distinguishable from similar poisonous species.

An example of a plant with potentially fatal toxins in all parts is the rosary pea. The black-spotted red seeds are attractive to children who eat them or string them into necklaces. The poison may be absorbed through a cut in the skin when being handled. The melaleuca, or cajuput tree, has flowers and foliage that emit an aromatic substance which causes respiratory difficulties. Some persons may suffer a rash from contact with the bark of the tree or with the leaves.

Most people know of the toxic property of oleander and of the effects of touching poison ivy.

However, it is not commonly known that inhaling smoke when either of these plants are being burned has caused serious poisoning. (Passing through the smoke with bare arms and legs may also result in severe poisoning.) Using oleander stems to roast food has resulted in

deaths. Even our common potato, tomato, and eggplant are members of the solanum or nightshade family. The fruits of these plants are safe and nutritious, but the leaves, stems and roots have caused poisoning in humans and animals.

If you suspect a case of plant poisoning, call your doctor or

the Poison Control Center of your local hospital immediately. Take a sample of the plant to the place of treatment so that it may be identified and the proper treatment given. Try to take the entire plant, including leaves, stems, roots and flowers or fruits. If the toxic plant is too large, as a tree or shrub, take a large branch with leaves, flowers and fruit. Note if the plant appears to be cultivated or wild. It's better to have a too large specimen than one insufficient for the purpose.

A STEP BEYOND GARDENING

COMMUNITY LIFE

Cultivate a different type of garden

Today I'm going to digress from our usual line of thought and talk about a DIFFERENT GARDEN.

Everyone has a garden to tend if you consider your mind as a kind of garden. All gardeners know that the soil knows how to take a seed and make a plant from it. If you plant a tomato seed, you will harvest a tomato, not a turnip or a potato. But have you ever stopped to think that the soil doesn't know whether it is making a tomato or a potato? The soil works in an impersonal way.

Only mankind has the ability to think and therefore, to choose.

Someone has observed that if the seed is the same, but the soils are different, you will get varying yields and quality of products in accordance with the quality of the soil. The same is true of an idea. Planted in the minds of different peo-



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ple, the results of the same idea will differ greatly.

"We plant ideas just as we plant seeds in a garden. The law of cause and effect, like soil, does not differentiate between positive or negative ideas. It takes what we give it and reproduces in kind. This law, too is impersonal.

"One of the nice things about gardening is that if we do not like what we see growing, we can remove it. We can do the same thing with our mind. Should we find ourselves in a negative situation, resignation

to it will not help. Instead we need to remove unwanted thought patterns and replace them with new ideas of wholeness and harmony. We take charge of our lives by first taking charge of our thoughts. What we plant is what we get!"

These thoughts were brought to my attention by Norma A. Hawkins a student of philosophy. I believe her observances are worth our consideration. Do you agree? As gardeners, we all know that our gardens look better and grow better after we destroy the weeds.

Sixty days after Mona Belle Turpin shared these thoughts with our community, she passed through the Last Garden Gate at age 83. However, the Floral Garden Club continues the Lake Life column that she initiated.