

# The Bloomin' News

APRIL, 2019, Vol. VI,137

Alan Howland, Chairperson

Thomas Perez, Editor

Member of FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS



## Chairman's Message

At our last monthly meeting the Club elected it's officers for the next year. I know I speak for the club in extending our appreciation to all the officers stepping down for their time and effort in performing the duties of their respective positions. They are Buck Cowen president, Joannie Opperman vice president, Alan Howland treasurer, and Rose Tysdal secretary. I particularly extend the Clubs gratitude to Buck for his many years at the helm as president. Our new elected officers are Michael Myjak secretary, Buck Cowen treasurer, Tom Perez vice president and Alan Howland president. I look forward to another great year for the Club as we continue to improve the Farm. I look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting.  
Alan Howland

## New Members, YOU Are Welcome

We are always looking for new members and have great opportunities for learning at our monthly meetings, at the Tree Farm. We have facilities to start plants from seeds/clippings. We meet at 7:00p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at the Garden Center on Sisson. For information, call Joanie @ 480-8807.

## APRIL IN THE GARDEN

April is a busy month in the garden. Most plants are growing well. By mid-month, day temperatures will be up in the 80's and most nights will be above 65 degrees.

Replenish mulches to conserve moisture and keep weeds down.



AZALEAS have about finished blooming. Now is the time to continue a care program to assure good blooms next year. Feed each AZALEA with a good, acid-forming fertilizer at the

rate of ½ cup per plant per month. Prune and trim large AZALEAS, and pinch back branch ends until mid-June. AZALEAS, unlike most other plants, will branch wherever you cut them.

DAY LILIES are ready to start blooming. ROSES are growing rapidly. ROSES are heavy feeders and require frequent watering. Regular fertilizing every 2 weeks in our sandy soils is not excessive.

CRAPE MYRTLES already have extensive new growth. An application of a Bloomer fertilizer every 2 weeks will assure more and larger blooms. Mildew is a common problem on both leaves and blossoms, even in full sun.

LAWNS should be fertilized now if you did not fertilize in March. Plug sod or seed to fill in bare areas in your lawn or to start new lawns. Provide sufficient irrigation, within water restrictions, to give your lawn an inch of

water in any week your lawn gets less than an inch of rain. Cut Bahia and St. Augustine grasses 3 to 4 inches high. If grass clippings are left on the lawn, the grass should be mowed more frequently than when clippings are removed.

Move ORCHIDS to shady outdoor locations and feed every 2 weeks. Move tropical plants outdoors. Feed all container-grown plants.

Bulbs for April planting include ACHIMINES, AMARYLLIS, AGAPANTHUS, BLOOD LILIES, CANNAS, CALADIUMS, CRINUMS, DAHLIAS, GLADIOLI, GLORIOSA, GINGER and RAIN LILIES.

Warm season plants that will perk up flowerbeds include AGERTUM, ASTER, BEGONIA, BLUE DAZE, COLEUS, COSMOS, DAY LILIES, IMPATIENS, MARIGOLDS, PENTAS, PERIWINKLE, SALVIA, VERBENA and ZINNIA.

## Garden Club Web Sites

National Garden Club: [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)

Florida Federation of GC: [www.ffgc.org](http://www.ffgc.org)

TGC site: <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/tgc/>

TMGC site: <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/tmgc>

## THE PINEAPPLE – Steve Korpacz

Have you ever tasted homegrown PINEAPPLE? It is usually very sweet, much better than grocery store fruit. You can start by cutting the top off a PINEAPPLE, wait a day or two for it to harden off, then plant an inch or two deep in a rich, slightly acidic organic soil. You can leave some of the fruit on the edges of the top; the plant can use this for food until it becomes established. I like to start with a 6" x 6" pot, since the roots are not deep. I fertilize lightly and monthly with a liquid fertilizer like Miracle Grow or Peter's. Just pour onto plant and in crown too. Once the plant has become established, you can move it to a 3-gallon size pot, after 6-7 months.

In a 3-gallon size, you can fruit the plant once it has some size (18" – 24"). At 1 year old, I like to take a small piece of apple or banana and force it into the crown. As this decomposes, it emits ethylene gas and forces the plant to fruit. You can harvest your first PINEAPPLE a few months later. You will know it's ready when you can smell it from 2 – 3 feet away. Just twist the fruit and it will detach from the plant, then you can start all over again. The PINEAPPLE can be propagated several other ways: slips, suckers, rations and crowns (described above). Slips arise from just below the fruit, suckers from the axils of the leaves and rations, which grow from the base. Slips and suckers are the preferred method of propagation.

A 5-gallon is all the plant will ever require as they don't have deep root systems. I like container growing mine; it's easier to weed and to protect from cold weather. The PINEAPPLE is not cold tolerant at all. They will need protection. Give growing PINEAPPLES a try. The flavor of a homegrown PINEAPPLE can't be beat. **Keep it Green.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Review of "The Mini-farming Guide To Composting" by Brett L. Markham**

If you are trying to garden in Florida, you MUST understand the value of making and utilizing compost. Your soil can, and does, vary biologically immensely from one spot to the next in your backyard garden. This one fact alone dictates the value of raised beds where you as the gardener can mix your soil for maximum nutrients. By consistently adding organic matter, you will build the soil season after season, thus requiring less and less fertilizer, fungicides, and pesticides.

Nature is on your side. It's really hard to mess up compost so badly that you will get no compost at all. Nature loves compost and will turn anything that was once alive into compost all by itself.

So, while most books only cover "aerobic" composting made at relatively high temperatures (thermophilic), Mr. Markham has chapters on anaerobic (without oxygen), aerobic (using oxygen), indoor mesophyll composting, vermicomposting, biochar, and more. This book is chock full of references from many sources for those who seek more in depth information.

In chapter 2 entitled " Starting With The Soil" he states "counting earthworms is the easiest and least expensive method of assessing your soil's biological activity." We have, therefore, been devoting a good bit of time and energy to raising red wiggler earthworms. By utilizing the castings to produce "worm tea" for use as a foliar spray or as a drench, we feel we have seen a significant improvement in our garden. The worm castings can also

be spread in the beds for a wonderful organic fertilizer. By feeding the worms our kitchen compost materials, we also reduce the amount going to a landfill. For information on making your worm bin and raising earthworms, there are many videos on U-tube, or you can contact us and we will share the information we have accumulated. We have a large number of ornamental and vegetable starts to trade or share. What do you have? We hope you will look forward to future articles about other aspects of our garden experiences such as Keyhole Gardening, Chokedamp, Living Walls, ideas for more sustainable living, and Hydroponics or Aquaponics.

### **TREE FARM NEWS -**

Thanks again to all the folks who help weed and tend to plants trees and landscaping on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Some time ago Buck built two raised beds for vegetable planting in Tony's honor. Tony planted peppers, stringbeans, tomatoes, kale & red beets for us to enjoy. Recently we harvested sweet potatoes from those same beds for our members.

We have also been propagating in the mist house, and request cuttings from your home; plants that we could be planting vs. buying. Mulberries are almost ready to enjoy! Try some!

### **"Looking Back" - Rosie**

We have been given the opportunity to spend wonderful hours at the Tree Farm alongside friends who share the common interest of learning to grow and nurture plants. Everyone seems to put all social media behind them as they enjoy the fresh, plant-scented air, when the pollens aren't being a problem. The birds make the music and the cool breezes are so welcome to the sweat on our brows. I am very grateful for the fellowship I enjoy with each member as I get to know them. I don't think a price can be placed on this wonderful opportunity to get to know and appreciate our fellow gardeners and friends.



### **Florida Native Plant Society- Sea Rocket Chapter**

The Sea Rocket Chapter's meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month; 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Enchanted Forest, 444 Columbia Blvd (Hwy 405). The public is welcome. For info: 264-5185 <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/SeaRocket/>

## **COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**April 6 (9-5pm) & April 7 (11am to 4pm)**

**Downtown Winter Garden, "Spring Fever in the Garden", pet friendly & free event, food, kids' zone, workshops, auctions, farm mkt.**

<http://www.springfeveringarden.com/>

**April 12 – 13 Men's Garden Club Plant Sale**

**Friday, April 12th -- 9:00a.m. to 6:00p.m.**

**Saturday, April 13th -- 9:00a.m. to 2:00p.m.**

**April 20th - Brevard Tropical Fruit Club – Fruit Tree Sale. (8am to 4pm) at Melbourne Auditorium, South-East lawn**

**625 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne**

**April 21- Native Plant Society Plant Sale**

**10am-3pm... Enchanted Forest (S.R. 405)**

**444 Columbia Blvd, Titusville (264-5185)**

**Come celebrate "Earth Day Festival"!!**

**May 3, 4, 5 – Merritt Island**

**55<sup>th</sup> Annual Orchid Sale (608-575-6005)**

**Kiwanis Island Park – lectures, orchid exhibits, orchid plants for sale, supplies, frequent drawings (321-626-0686)**

[www.platinumcoastorchidsociety.org](http://www.platinumcoastorchidsociety.org)

**For more information on local events this month see: <http://nbbd.com/events/>**

### **Titusville Men's Garden Club**

**Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 9 am.**

**"At the Tree Farm" next to Stuart Park**

**1230 Thoreau St**

**The public is welcome to join us.**

**Our next meeting will be**

**April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**Just a Friendly Reminder!!!**

**Our yearly Membership Dues are**

**Due by April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019!**

**Please give to Treasurer**

**At the Tree Farm on Tues or Thurs or**

**At April's meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup>!!**

**\*\*\*\*\***

*The Bloomin' News*

*Titusville Men's Garden Club*

**Tom Perez, Editor; 240-285-6189**

**Email: [Tomp@MountAiryAlpacas.com](mailto:Tomp@MountAiryAlpacas.com)**

**Please send your articles to Tom at [tomp@mountairyalpacas.com](mailto:tomp@mountairyalpacas.com) to be included in next month's Bloomin' News.**



# The Titusville Men's Garden Club

Meetings are on the Second Tuesday of the Month at 9:30 a.m.

**Location: "At the Tree Farm" next to Stuart Park, 1230 Thoreau St**

## INVITATION TO JOIN THE TITUSVILLE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB

**Who We Are:** A non-profit club that enjoys gardening and contributing to our City's beautification and our environment.

**What we Are:** As a part of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, we are a partner of the Titusville Garden Club.

**What We Do:** We educate and help each other to enjoy gardening, teach and learn to enjoy plants. We assist others to propagate, grow and distribute trees and plants to non-profit organizations. We participate in voluntary efforts to help Titusville's "Tree City" initiative to plant 2,000 trees per year.

**Where We Meet:** We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 p.m. at "the Tree Farm" next to Stuart Park, 1230 Thoreau St. near the Titusville Water Maintenance Facility. The Tree Farm is open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, our workdays.

**How We Operate:** We presently sponsor an April and an October Tree and Plant Sale. The sales receipts are used to support the Club, purchase materials, and donate plants to the City and other worthy non-profit causes. Some members grow plants to landscape their own homes (all are welcome to do so). With permission from a plant's adoptee, members may take plants for personal use. Members adopt trees and plants to grow and have fun. Dues are \$25.00 annually, due in April.

**Send application below to Titusville Men's Garden Club, P. O. Box 1783, Titusville, FL 32780.**

**Phone Joanie @ 321-480-8807.**

-----  
**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_