



Contents

A Changed Landscape	1
St. Anthony's Hospital Garden, Blossoming Wellness and Cultivating Care	1
Folly Faire at Folly Farm	3
Interpretive Engagement and Education at the Florida Botanical Gardens	5
Post Hurricanes Helene and Milton Garden Photos	7
Submit Your Articles and Pictures to The Dirt	9

A Changed Landscape

I do hope you are all recovering from the back-to-back hurricanes. I'm sure everyone was affected in some way, and some of you may have lost not just your gardens, but your homes. Wind and water and fallen trees took a huge toll on many areas of Pinellas County. I am mourning the loss of so much of the tree canopy in my neighborhood. As Master Gardeners you know that nature is resilient, but losing a favorite tree or garden takes a long time to heal.

Take time to do what you can, plant some seeds, prop up a shrub, or just watch and listen as nature lifts us up from the mud. At right, new growth on my bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea spectabilis*).



Enjoy this issue of The Dirt. Thank you to our contributors.

Susan Ladwig, Master Gardener Volunteer, editor of The Dirt

St. Anthony's Hospital Garden, Blossoming Wellness and Cultivating Care

By Rebeca Prado, Coordinator of Mission, St. Anthony's Hospital. Photo credits: Rebeca Prado

At St. Anthony's Hospital, our garden has flourished into a sanctuary of beauty and tranquility thanks to the extraordinary contributions of Master Gardeners Marianne Sabadish and Pat Cooke. Since 2021, their partnership has profoundly transformed our garden and community.

Marianne and Pat's expertise has been instrumental in transforming our garden into a vibrant space that offers solace and joy to team members, community members, and visitors alike. Their extensive knowledge and hands-on involvement have significantly enhanced the garden's productivity and aesthetic appeal.





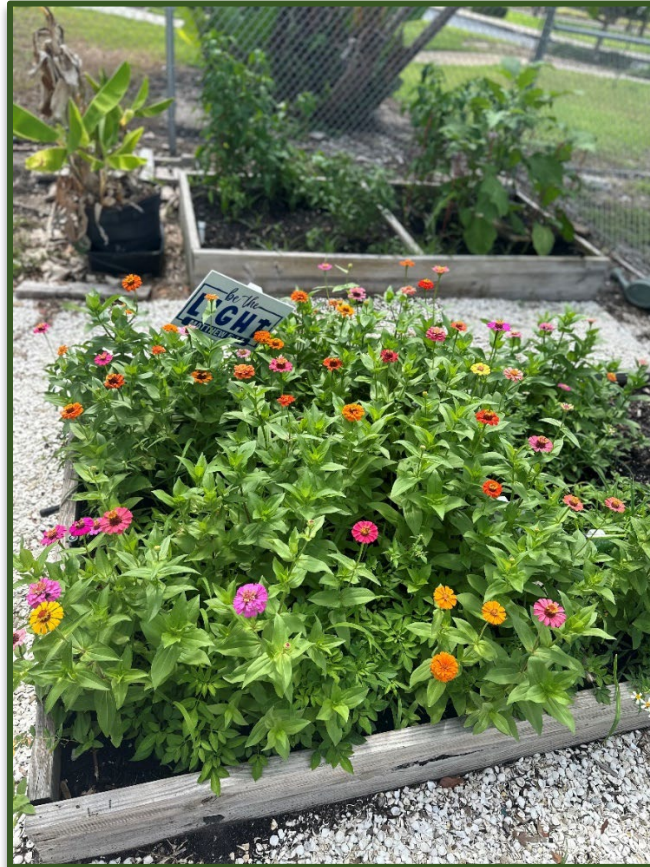
Although Pat Cooke recently passed away, her passion and dedication continue to inspire us. Her legacy lives on through the flourishing garden and the skills she imparted to our team. Marianne Sabadish remains a steadfast supporter, frequently attending our events and addressing any garden-related questions with enthusiasm and expertise. Together, Marianne and Pat have provided invaluable resources and support, nurturing a thriving garden and empowering our team with essential skills.

Our garden at St. Anthony's Hospital stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and the profound impact of dedicated individuals. We are deeply grateful for the time and expertise that Marianne and Pat have invested in us. Their contributions have not only enriched our environment but also uplifted the spirits of everyone who interacts with our garden.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the future growth and improvements in our garden, guided by Pat's enduring legacy and Marianne's continued support. We extend our heartfelt thanks to these remarkable individuals. Their impact will be felt for years to come, and we are honored to continue this journey together.



The garden at Saint Anthony's Hospital



Zinnias (Zinnia elegans) in bloom at St. Anthony's garden

Folly Faire at Folly Farm

By Carol Zieres, Master Gardener Volunteer. Photo credits: Carol Zieres

The picture below was taken at the Folly Faire on August 10th at Folly Farm Nature Preserve in Safety Harbor. Attending the Pollinator Pathway exhibit is MGV Lorraine Pydeski. Lorraine helped the Safety Harbor Garden Club as Ambassador for the Florida Pollinator Pathway program, handing out literature to the public and explaining how to register their home address and list the pollinator plants in their yard for the Florida Pollinator Pathway map registry. Also, seated behind the table are Master Gardener Volunteers Carol Zieres and Eoin Leary, for the North Pinellas County Plant Clinic/Help Desk. The Plant Clinic is held every second Saturday of the month (near the plant nursery) from 9 am until noon, in conjunction with the Safety Harbor Garden Club plant sale at Folly Farm. Anyone who needs help with plant identification, garden pest questions, or has general gardening and landscape questions is welcome to stop by our table to chat with a Master Gardener. We also offer handouts on all sorts of native and Florida friendly plants and other helpful reference material.



If you are an MGV and would like to be added to our volunteer list for either the Pollinator Pathway Display or Plant Clinic tables, please contact me at carolzieres@gmail.com or just stop by and say "hello" on a second Saturday!



Loraine Pydeski, Carol Zieres, and Eoin Leary volunteer at the Folly Faire on August 10th.



Interpretive Engagement and Education at the Florida Botanical Gardens

By Interpretive Engagement and Education Committee co-chairs Margaret Gates and Alison Nourse-Miller. Photo credits: Margaret Gates

Have you ever been on a tour you considered recreational only to have too many facts and figures causing your eyes to glaze over? Most everyone has! Good use of interpretative techniques can prevent this tuning out glazed effect and keep an audience engaged and curious.

So, what is Interpretation? It is simply communication that helps the audience relate to the subject matter. The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation's Interpretive Plan Committee, made up mainly of Master Gardeners, enjoyed learning about interpretive techniques and their value as applied to nature. However, it soon became evident that there was a substantial overlap between the Interpretive Plan and the Education Committees. The obvious solution was to merge the two into the IEE Committee – the Interpretive Engagement and Education Committee. A mouthful, to be sure, but it is important that interpretation, engagement and education all be represented!

The IEE Committee has ten members, six of whom are Master Gardeners. We are busy completing our Action Plan for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year and featured on the plan are:

- Interpretive walks
- The use of Interpretive Discovery Carts
- Welcome signage for major garden areas
- Interpretive engagement activities
- The Florida Native Plant Symposium (*we are ambitious!*)

The goal of all of these is to increase environmental awareness and stewardship of nature, something we know Master Gardeners hold dear to their hearts. Any MG who would like to sit in on one of our “spirited” meetings is very welcome to attend.

Stay tuned for information regarding our endeavors!



Interpretive Walk



Interpretive Discovery Cart



Post Hurricanes Helene and Milton Garden Photos

By Susan Ladwig, Master Gardener Volunteer. Photo credits: Paul Waton

The images below are from the garden of a home that has stood on the water on Blind Pass since 1974. The garden has been subject to numerous salt water incursions, but the storm surge from Hurricane Helene and the wind from Hurricane Milton took down trees planted decades ago. Here are some surviving and recovering plants.



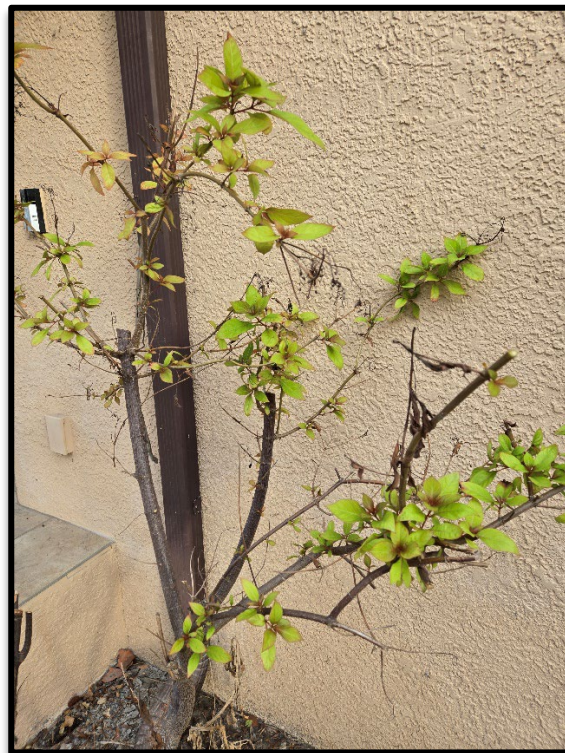
Sunshine mimosa (Mimosa strigillosa) is sprouting from the wreckage.



Sea grape (Coccoloba uvifera) lived up to its name, looking untouched after two hurricanes.



*The railroad vine (*Ipomoea pes-caprae*) is looking pretty good. The dock, not so much.*



*Firebush (*Hamelia patens*) is coming back, despite total inundation with salt water.*



Submit Your Articles and Pictures to The Dirt

The Dirt is published January, April, June, and October for Master Gardeners by Master Gardeners. The deadline for the next issue is **January 20**. If you would like to submit an article or photo feature, see the following guidelines:

- Articles should be 250 to 300 words.
- NOTE! All images must be open source – i.e., your own work, photos from UF IFAS, or an image for which you have been granted permission.
- The topic can be anything you would like to share to educate your fellow gardeners.
- You may send pictures, poetry, or garden-related articles.
- Submit only Word documents, not PDF, so that edits are possible.
- Send tips or information about a community or Master Gardener project for a potential article.
- Include proper attribution for photos/images.
- Send submissions to Susan Ladwig at ladwig.susan@gmail.com

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