



October 2026

Volume 36, Issue 2

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GCD Book Club

October 15th
in the
Clubhouse at 1pm

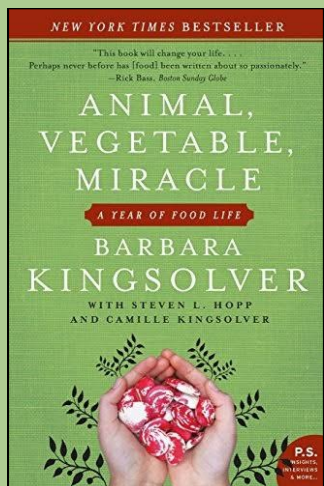


Photo by Shanda Hebert

The Gabby Gardener

President - Casey King

Hi All,

Well, another Garden Club year has begun and this year proves to be filled with fun. Our September meeting was terrific – such great food thanks to the Magnolias and Pat LeClaire, a master gardener and expert on heirloom roses spoke. We also had some new members join us at the meeting. Under Rosie's expert guidance and the work of the dedicated corner gardeners, the downtown planters were rejuvenated to last until our next full replant. We have also begun a new way to participate in the downtown planters – the fourth Wednesday of every month around 4:30pm members are asked to help maintain the planters at our monthly **Snip and Sip**. Our first one was so much fun, and after the work was done members congregated at the Elusive Grape to relax and enjoy each other's company. Everyone is invited and the **next Snip and Sip will be Wednesday, October 28th** – hope to see you there (not much work but a lot of fun).

Our next big event is the **plant sale on Saturday, October 3rd**. Lupita and Norma have done a great job of planning this. Don't forget, like last year we will have a treasure sale and bakery attached to this so it's never too late to donate. Many thanks to all of you who have been growing plants for the sale – your work really helps with this fundraiser. Contact Lupita if you need more information.

Our plaque commemorating 100 years of service to the community and 100 years of federation with the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs is almost ready, and once 2027 rolls around we will have a celebration and a kickoff for the next 100 years!

We now have a committee formed for the Garden Tour we are hosting this spring. If you are interested in joining this group reach out, I know they would love to have more helping hands!

Our **next meeting is an evening meeting** which Rose Circle is hosting. The speaker is our own Jenna Workman and she will speak to us about container gardening. I hope everyone can make it on **Thursday, October 1st**.

A decorative header featuring two seed packets labeled 'SEEDS' with illustrations of a flower and a chili pepper, and a set of garden tools including a trowel, a fork, and a shovel. The entire scene is framed by a green leafy border.

PLANT SALE

A yellow five-pointed star.

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026

8AM – 3 PM

The Garden Club of DeLand

We will have native plants, shrubs, fall vegetables, herbs, and ornamentals. There will also be a Botanical Treasures area as well as a great Bakery area.



865 South Alabama Avenue, DeLand
(386) 624-6960 | www.gardenclubofdeland.org

Invasives in Our Gardens by [Dorothy Caldwell](#)

There is a growing movement of many residents of Florida to try to grow their own food and trying different food varieties. Sometimes those experiments work out great and are not invasive in the environment, and then sometimes it results in disasters. Surinam cherry (*Eugenia uniflora*), also called Brazilian cherry and Pitanga, is one of those disasters.

Surinam cherry is a Category 1 invasive. Native to South America. The seeds of Surinam cherry are readily dispersed by birds and mammals, as the fruits are highly edible. It invades hammocks in the central and southern peninsula of Florida, where it forms dense thickets that displace native plants and prevents their regeneration.

A few years ago, a new plant nursery opened up locally and I went to visit them. There in the back row were about 2 dozen Surinam cherry seedlings. I found the owner and asked about them. He said they were native and really good tasting. I have never shopped at his plant nursery since.

As a Florida native alternative look at the **Persimmon Tree (*Diospyros virginiana*)**. It is a fast-growing tree that has white blooms in the Spring. It can get 35-60 feet tall and 15-35 ft wide, is hurricane wind resistant and has beautiful fall color

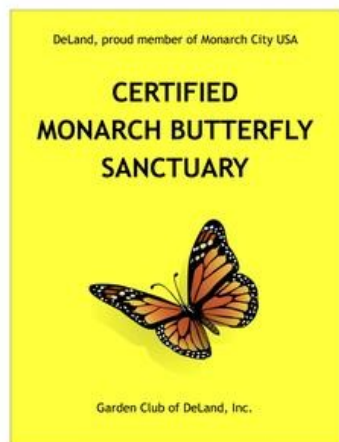


Surinam cherry(*Eugenia uniflora*)



Persimmon Tree (*Diospyros virginiana*)

Update on the Starke School Butterfly Garden



What a transformation!! This spring, a team of Milkweed gardeners took to the rough and bumpy, newly-placed, straggly grass turf with cardboard, soil, fertilizer, compost, measuring tape, edging and an assortment of garden tools, to transform a little slice of school ground between two play areas, into a butterfly and pollinator sanctuary. With several different varieties of host and nectar plants newly planted by the end of May, we all sent out positive energy that each one would flower and entice worms, bugs and all sorts of butterflies to come visit! Over the summer, twice weekly, the garden was watered, weeds were pulled, and summer school students would pop over to look for caterpillars and other insects, telling stories of what they had in their garden, too. They were the ones who first noticed cocoons of swallowtails attached to the playground fences. And the garden flourished! By the end of summer, with the fennel and parsley decimated, most of the milkweed gone, goldenrod and narrow leaf sunflowers towering above the fence, it is time to prune and replace exhausted plants with flowering native fall ones and put the decorative rocks the children painted into the garden. **This is all to get ready to have the garden certified as a butterfly sanctuary, which will take place on October 9, Friday, at 9 a.m. at the Starke Elementary School.** Thank yous will be "officially" offered to all those who donated garden supplies and monetary donations, our team of volunteer gardeners and positive energy wishers, plus the supportive team at the school! We would love to have you be part of the celebration as the Sanctuary sign is placed!

*** If this is your first time at the school, please bring your ID which has to be shown at the front desk, where you'll receive a visitor badge.**

Date: October 15th - Time: 6:30 - 8:30 PM

Location: Garden Club of DeLand - 1865 S Alabama Ave, DeLand



**Thursday, October 15,
6:30 to 8:30pm Play
bingo, win plants!**

Join your hosts, the Firecracker Circle, for an evening of fun fundraising. **Tickets are \$20.00** cash per person at the door; a bottle of water is included. Soft drinks and snacks will be available for purchase, **cash only**.

An opportunity drawing will be held to win a grand plant prize as well as prizes throughout the evening. More details will be announced.

You are invited to our FL Federation of Garden Clubs



District VI Fall Meeting Native Plants Rock!

Thursday, October 22, 2026, 9 am - 2 pm

The Anderson-Price Memorial Building
42 N Beach St, Ormond Beach, FL 32174

Hosted by Ormond Beach Garden Club, Inc.

9am Registration, Hospitality, and Shopping
10 am - 2 pm Meeting

Early Registration - Closes October 5, 2026

Deadline: Friday, October 14, 2026.

No refund will be given after October 15, 2026

Speaker: Cammie Donaldson

Executive Director Native Plant Horticulture Foundation

**"Helping Gardeners and their Communities
Acquire More Native Plants"**

 www.NativePlantHort.org

Please wear your club's name tags

Handicapped Entrance is at the
rear of the building



Garden Club of DeLand

Holiday Happenings

*Join us in kicking off
the holiday season!*

Saturday, November 21, 2026

9am-4pm

**865 South Alabama Avenue
DeLand, FL**

Join us in kicking off the holiday season
with magically decorated trees, wreaths,
baked goods, silent auction and gifts!
Bring your family and friends, choose
your favorite holiday decorations and
help us fund youth programs, education
and beautification,



*Handmade
Wreaths*



The Garden Club of DeLand

865 South Alabama
DeLand Florida 32724
(386) 624-6960 - The Garden Club of DeLand
gcdeland@gmail.com (General)
gcdvpres4members@gmail.com (Membership)

(386) 279-1241 Rental Information
rentalsgardenclubofdeland@gmail.com

Social Links: [FaceBook](#)
The Garden Club of DeLand's [Website](#)

Gary and Eunice Maris Veterans' House

A heartfelt thank you to the **The Garden Club of DeLand** for spending their time planting and beautifying the grounds at our new Gary and Eunice Maris Veterans' House! We also extend our gratitude to **Lowe's Home Improvement** of DeLand for donating beautiful plants to brighten the space and **Flowing Well Tree Farm** in Pierson for donating the tree that will stand as a symbol of growth and strength for years to come.

They have officially open the doors to the **Gary and Eunice Maris Veterans' House** at the open house! This transitional home will provide a safe, supportive environment for up to five veterans as they heal, rebuild, and work toward stability and permanent housing.

This special home is being dedicated in loving memory of Gary and Eunice Maris, whose generosity, compassion, and commitment touched countless lives. Gary was one of the original founding members of The Neighborhood Center more than 55 years ago, helping lay the foundation for our mission. As a Vietnam veteran, Gary deeply understood the importance of honoring those who served our country.

**Dedicating this home is a fitting tribute to
carry Gary and Eunice's legacy of
service forward.**

Smokey Bear/Woodsey Owl Poster Contest

Jill Anderson, FFGC Chair: jillandersn@aol.com (727) 798-1970 (c)

Deadline: January 15

Write entrant details on back of poster

- Only children from first through fifth grade can participate. You can reach out to schools, scout troops, after school programs, youth programs, and similar groups.
- Students should be reminded to check spelling as posters with spelling errors will be disqualified.
- The following information must be written on the back of each poster: The student's name, grade level, garden club name, garden club contact name address, phone number, school, teacher's name, school name, parent or guardian name and address, phone number and email. (Should school policy preclude giving students' addresses and phone numbers, please include the school address and phone number.)



"Only You Can Prevent Wildfires"

Since 1944, Smokey Bear has served as a national symbol of wildfire prevention. In 1977, Woodsey Owl ("Lend a Hand Care for the Land") joined the effort, encouraging environmental stewardship and conservation. Together, these beloved icons remind us that each of us plays a role in protecting our natural resources, wildlife, and public lands. Locate a Garden Club in your area to learn more about sponsorship opportunities and the poster contest entry process.