



Your MONTHLY Garden Gnome News! "with a little help from my friends!"

Volume 2, Issue 1

HOME OF THE GNOME!

January 2017

HAPPY NEW YEAR ~~ 2017!!!



This month's background photo.. beautiful, isn't it?



This is what I wish for the new year: So much more happiness and friendships.. none of us here are enemies.. and totally no reason for it.. we are all so special for finding our way here.

The grounds are totally beautiful! Sure there are miniscule 'fixes' that could happen, but when I had my magazines, I'd gift full page advertising to any yard person who'd keep my yard breathlessly gorgeous.

I wish all of us the best of health and healthy mind. Prosperity doesn't always have to be financial. I'm so rich in the knowledge I'm surrounded by amazing people both here in the compound as well as those who I've included into my close and trusted friendships.

The happiest of all good things to everyone! ~

Bekki

Gardening in Paradise: SWFL Gardening Tips

By Kate Buckley

My northern garden is very pretty, but none of the plants growing in my NH yard would be good choices for Fort Myers. The US Department of Agriculture designates our corner of paradise an agricultural zone 10a. We are in a very temperate growing zone and have an endless variety of tropical plants to choose from. Yes there are several "Plant Geeks" living here at SG and we really enjoy being able to grow things in our yards that would require a heated greenhouse "up north".

For many of us from up there the thought of having a garden filled with orchids, exotics and stuff that won't grow at the North Pole is more joy than we can bear.

Often though we rush out, buy plants and then realize that we won't be here in the summer months to take care of them. Or, we rush out and buy plants without researching how big they will grow or how fast they can get out of control. When preparing to plant your flower bed here in Florida, our local extension service (located right at Terry Park out on Palm Beach Boulevard) suggests we take a long walk around our neighborhood with a camera (or just your phone!).



Whenever you spot a plant, tree or shrub you like the looks of, and if it looks healthy, take a photo, then bring the photo to a garden center to find one like it. Our neighbors over on East River Drive have beautifully landscaped yards with dozens of gorgeous plant specimens. If you enjoy public gardens, there are many within an easy drive where you can see and learn about hundreds of plants that will do well here in zone 10a.

Finally, don't hesitate to visit a locally owned nursery. **Riverland** is my personal favorite with really healthy plants and very knowledgeable staff who really



This is an Eastern Lubber Grasshopper; we have rather a large community of them living here in the rock garden in the south driveway and a few over on the north side of the property. Much information can be found at the University web site: entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/orn/lubber.htm ~ Kate Buckley, your gardening girl on the beat.

Caution from the Editor: I'm not fully certain, but this photo maybe a shot of grasshopper-us interruptus.. in which case, this is insect porn and I advise those with weak hearts not to look too closely.. or these are cowboy-hoppers and the one behind is saddled-up to ride the wild range of gardens.. not sure..

Footnote from Kate: Read a bit about the Eastern Lubber Grasshopper in this same issue....this creature is scary looking, very large as far as bugs go, and is tough to get rid of. When you see one you will recognize it immediately.. professional advice is to keep a bucket of soapy water with olive oil in it and pick the icky things up and drown them. Or crunch them underfoot - I personally find this a little harsh, but if you're having a bad day it might help?

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Gardening in Paradise, continued

enjoy sharing information about their plants. They've also a wealth of information about fertilizing, pest control, mulching, watering, and have a couple of classes each month touching on timely topics.

For those of you who would like to learn more, you can sign up at Terry Park at the Lee County Extension Office for their Master Gardener Program. It's an in-depth, several month long education about zone 10a gardening. There is a long waiting list, so you must be patient, but these classes are well worth the wait.

The best advice for every gardener new to tropical gardening is: Please wait. Wait one full season before you plant. If you must have plants NOW, put in a



Gardening in Paradise, continued

few annuals like impatiens, begonias, or other inexpensive fillers to color up your dooryard. Then you can see how they fare over the summer months, which are very tough on plants here. A lovely, pretty little four inch potted plant can grow half way up the side of a house over four months time! Or on the other hand, the summer rains might rot the roots and drown the plant. Or when the sun is very high in the summer, the shade is less and plants can burn.

One thing you can be sure of: if you loved gardening "up north", you will love it here in zone 10a. From ornamental bananas, to wild ginger, to hibiscus, to bird of paradise, to growing orchids on the sides of palm trees, if you plan your garden well, it can be very nearly self sustaining.

We are fortunate here to have ample well water four our sprinkler system to augment rain watering and often, a kind neighbor will feed your garden once or twice if you will be away longer than a few weeks.



Listed below are some wonderful websites that will give you even more information about tropical gardening. There is also a Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's 2015 List of Invasive Plant Species; avoid planting any of these bullies and thugs. They are nearly impossible to eradicate once established in the landscape and as the Brazilian Pepperbush proved, invasives in Florida affect more than just the landscape.

You can download and print your own Florida Exotic Pest Plant list at www.fleppc.org; it's very interesting and is updated on a regular basis.

Florida Friendly Plants
<http://FloridaYards.org>

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University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension
<http://lee.ufl.edu>

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Lee County Government
<http://www.lee-county.com>

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University of Florida
<http://ifas.ufl.edu>

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Featured Creatures (insects)
<http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/creatures/>

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Gardening in Paradise, continued

Other useful information: University of Florida IFAS
Lee County Extension, 3410 Palm Beach Boulevard,
Fort Myers, 239-533-4327 and
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Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic, Monday through
Friday, 9AM to 12 Noon and 1PM through 4PM,
239-533-7504 or 7505



Photos by Kate Buckley, our eye on the gardens

Tice Church Suppers!

Third saturday of every month
\$10 in advance, \$12 at the door.

Contact Ann Palmer in C3 for advance tickets!

Tice Church gift shop open every saturday and tuesday from 9am to noon



George Douglass, on a rare cool morning, wearing his
1994 Fort Myers race day shirt. He ran the 5K!

Daily Mojo

By Janey Hesche

Greetings and Salutations to the New Year! The holidays are behind us and the hips remind us of the wonderful food we enjoyed at the Thanksgiving and Christmas feasts.

It is all good. Life is meant to be enjoyed.

We continue to be very active in the Clubhouse. The winter crew has arrived and are joining Janet and I for our morning workouts. We are still disciplined and focused and moving forward



with good health. Morning walks and runs continue and many of us are enjoying the benefits of Tai Chi and Yoga at the library. The icing on the cake is an evening stroll to watch the sunset at the pier.

I look back and think of my first year here at Seminole Gardens and smile at the memories. I will share a couple in particular.

On one of my morning runs I was dead heading home on Palm Beach Blvd. at 6:30 in the morning and my foot caught the railroad tracks and down I went, full body faceplant. My knees and arms took the brunt of the fall but I wasn't quite sure about my hip. As I laid there I looked up and there was the city bus stopped at the tracks with all eyes on me! I jumped up, black from the tracks, and started running. When I got to the corner I assessed my injuries and did a slow hobble home. I guess only my pride was hurt. My daughter, who came for Thanksgiving, insisted on going by the "accident scene" several times, it put a smile on her face to hear me retell the story!

On another dark morning, Janet and Jack were going to meet me at the pier after I got my three miles in. Somehow, I arrived first and waited for them. Jack saw me waiting from a block away and started running like a jack rabbit with Janet in tow. Janet, who wears running tights with shorts pulled on over them, was running like the wind to keep up with Jack. Suddenly she stopped as her shorts had slipped down to her ankles. Janet looked at me, Jack looked at Janet, I looked at both of them and then the laughter started until we couldn't laugh anymore! Every day is wonderful.

We have had quite a year. We have improved physically, mentally and emotionally. Daily Mojo is going to continue. The alternative would be to stagnate or go backwards...NOT A CHANCE.

So, on a positive, powerful, purposeful note I will close with something the great musician Paul Simon once said:

ALL I'VE GOT TO DO TODAY IS SMILE.

namaste



Ingredients

- Prep time: 10 minutes
- Cook time: 1 hour
- Total time: 70 minutes
- 2 lbs. organic grass-fed ground beef
- 1/2 medium organic onion, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 large organic carrot, finely chopped
- 1 organic celery stalk, finely chopped
- 1/2 organic green paepper, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup coconut flour
- 1 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. Himalayan salt
- 2 organic pastured eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup homemade ketc

Procedure:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Grease loaf pan with coconut oil.

In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients except for the ketchup and mix gently by hand.

Place meatloaf mixture into the greased loaf pan and **bake** for 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes, remove meatloaf from the oven and top with the ketchup.

Place back into the oven for an additional 30 minutes or until no longer pink.

Cool for 15 minutes before slicing.

From Denise

Registration for DO NOT CALL for all your phones (home and cell): www.fldnc.com. This is offered for free for residential & cell telephone numbers.

USAA is one of top 3 insurance companies for service, prompt payments, and policy cost. Membership is now open to all military active duty, retirees, and all who have honorably separated. It's worth a few minutes to check them out. USAA.com or 800-531-8722 ~ **Tony Vervena**

Downtown Fort Myers

EVENTS

Art Walk:

- October 7/8
- Novem ber 4 /5
- December 2/3
- January 6/7
- February 3 /4
- March 3/4
- April 7/8
- May 5/6
- June 2/ 3
- July 7 /8
- August 4/ 5
- Septem ber 1/2

Creative Arts Market:

- November 11-12
- Decem ber 9-10

Downtown Countdown:

- Decem ber 31

Freedom Fest:

- July 4

Holiday Stroll:

- Decem ber 2

Bike Night (4):

- Novem ber 12
- January 14
- March 11
- May 13

Music Walk:

- October 21
- Novem ber 18
- Decem ber 16
- January 20
- February 17
- March 17
- April 21
- May 19
- June 16
- July 21
- August 18
- Septem ber 15

Car Cruise-In:

- October 22
- Novem ber 26
- Decem ber 24
- January 28
- February 25
- March 25
- April 22
- May 27

Mystery Walk:

- October 14
- Novem ber 11
- Decem ber 9
- January 13
- February 10
- March 10
- April 14
- May 12

Pet Walk:

- October 28
- Novem ber 25
- Decem ber 23
- January 27
- February 24
- March 24
- April 28
- May 26

St. Patty's Day:

- March 17

Veterans Day Parade:

- Novem ber 12

The events listed above are brought to you by the River District Alliance with support of our partners, sponsors, and members. All RDA events are free & family friendly for you to enjoy and explore the one-of-a-kind historic downtown Fort Myers River District.

Event changes in times/dates may periodically occur. Please be sure to visit our website prior to attending:

www.fortmyersriverdistrictalliance.com

The River District Alliance would like to thank our sponsors, volunteers and event donors who make Downtown Fort Myers rock!



Tech In A Flash
Matthew Rebstock & Bekki Shanklin at your service!

