

VISTA Matters is the weekly community newsletter for garden members. Included are key dates and communications necessary for all members to know and be involved.



VISTA Gardens News - March 1, 2017

Members Ask, How Can I Help?

As a follow up to members asking for clear communication regarding how they can pitch in to help, Corinna made up a sign to be placed at the point of needed work and another we pinned on the VISTA community board located on the west side of the shed.

We decided one simple but urgent task that benefits all plot owners. In the mulched roadways between and around plots: "Pull up any weeds and Add more mulch".

Turned out to be pretty effective as the section where we placed the sign was done in short time. Now just need this done for all the rows until the mulch pile is gone!!

Ok Tom Sawyer, tell me why adding mulch to the plot roads will benefit all plot owners?

Aside from weed prevention and making the garden look awesome, this mulch will become your future free soil! But I can't just let anyone do this, Nickel please!

Over time your plants use up your soil, but mostly the sandy Florida dirt does not hold the soil and it washes away despite the wooden boundaries. Everyone will need to add soil to their plots and the compost gold produced by our industrious compost group is really a super soil amendment for topping off and not for filling up your plot.

The more mulch added the more that will break down and become your excellent composted soil next fall. The research is showing that adding even a chunky composted wood chipped material promotes a healthy garden by:

- preventing compaction and maintaining needed air pockets,
- holding water so your soil does not dry out as quickly,
- providing microbes your plants need to access nutrients.
- Promoting proper drainage by removing this newly formed soil from around your plots which helps ward off the dreaded nematodes.

We started this practice late last summer in many plots, including mine, with great



Bill West, VISTA CIEIO

success. One plot, where the owner even added more of the chunky wood chips, flourished despite the owners 3-4 month unavoidable absence.

At my house I built a fairly large garden from a large truckload of a neighbors ground up stump- which is a combination of finely chopped wood and dirt. This sat for about 6 months. The results where excellent, despite adding absolutely no amendments.

Or maybe a better sign: New VISTA fitness class, anytime, \$.05! (wheelbarrow, pitchfork and mulch provided at no charge).

See you at your Garden!

Bill West
CIEIO



VISTA Insect Control Seminar

For those of you who could not make the VISTA Insect Control Seminar held the 18th at the Urban Roots Open House, attached is the presentation compilation.

Soon all those bugs hiding out in the soil will be emerging this spring, so start preparing. The research/information I found for this presentation was quite excellent. Controlling insects the right way without harm is actually easier than you

think, fun and doable! - like playing chess against a formidable opponent.

VISTA Insect Pest Control.

Send any questions you may have.

Good Hunting (insects),
Bill West
CIEIO, President

Member Spotlight: MJ Wentzl

#4 Cantelope. Began at the beginning of Vista Gardens in our current location.

I LOVE being outdoors. Have always been interested in gardening around my condo. I have about 50 orchids inside my screened patio. But too much shade for a veggie garden.

I've grown a little of just about everything. As each season passes, I get a little more selective. Lots of tomatoes, lettuce, onions, kale, cucumbers, radishes, bok Choy.

I have a couple of different favorite times at the garden. I look forward to 'Compost Fit' on Thursday mornings. We have a great group of people and have a lot of fun playing in the dirt AND talking dirty..... I also enjoy early mornings with my classical music and Harry the hawks company.

Back in the 70's I joined the Women's Army Corp. I came from a family of 9 kids. I wanted "to see the world ".....HAAAHEEEEE. It was a positive experience for me. It was only for 2 years, I did a lot of growing up.





Botanical Gardens
presents the

2017 Spring Plant Festival

April 8 & 9

Saturday 10:00-4:00

Sunday 10:00-3:00

\$5 admission; children under 12 & USF

Botanical Garden members are admitted free.



Free Parking

This event supports
USF Botanical Gardens,
a nonprofit facility

12210 USF Pine Drive
Tampa, FL 33612
Website:
<http://gardens.usf.edu>
(813) 974-2329

Sunday Beekeeping
Talk at Noon

Talks every hour on
Saturday

**Organic Vegetable Gardening
Workshop, Saturday at 11:00**

**“Native Plants in your Landscape”
Saturday at Noon**

Find orchids, begonias, bonsai, cactus,
Crotons, butterfly plants, camellias, bamboo,
tropical fruit, citrus, gingers,
Plumeria, palms, bromeliads, carnivorous plants, African
violets, native plants, herbs, ferns, & lots more.



Ongoing Activities

Saturday Work Parties

Fulfill your community volunteer requirement by joining fellow gardeners on Saturday mornings to tackle the maintenance needs of the garden at large. It's a fun time and you get some exercise and the garden stays looking great. Keeping the garden regularly maintained prevents us from major intermittent workload. The party starts at 9 a.m. every weekend, weather permitting.

Compost Thursdays

Committee members meet at the garden Thursday's at 8 a.m. to turn the compost. Please join the team if you would like to learn more about composting.

Compost Materials Needed

General reminder: To produce high quality input the community needs to provide a steady supply of material. This includes leaves, shredded paper and vegetable

waste (garden or kitchen). Please bring your waste to the garden, don't let it go to the landfill!

Keep in touch with VISTA

We are working hard to streamline communications to ensure you receive the right content in the right place when you need it.

1. Facebook: Like "VISTA Gardens" to receive updates on key activities throughout the week

If you do NOT use Facebook please reply to this email and you will be added to a separate email distribution list. The team will do its best to email any time sensitive updates requiring community attention to this list when a post is made to Facebook.

2. Tuesday email: Summarizes key activity and news for the upcoming week

3. Monthly newsletter: More detail into topics of interest and education (see link above!)

4. Web site: Our address is vistagardentampa.org (note: no 's' in garden). A repository of membership information, detailed education, links to articles on shared topics of interest. Plus much, much more.

VISTA Gardens | comms@vistagarden.org | vistagardentampa.org

STAY CONNECTED:

