



VISTA MATTERS

-April 2024 Edition-

10th Anniversary Celebration

Join Us to Celebrate!
Saturday, April 13, 10am-2pm



10th Anniversary

*Hands-on activities for all ages

*Meet Founder Bill West and County Commissioner Ken Hagan

*Educational opportunities:

woodlands tour, garden tour, and more

*Learn how to grow your own food and herbs

*Tastings from the gardens

*Silent Auction

*Plant new trees in celebration of Arbor Day



13572 South Village Dr, Tampa, 33618

April 13 is almost here. Just a reminder, the 10th anniversary celebration planning committee needs your support. Yes, it takes the resources and assistance of every one of our members to make this a memorable occasion.

Take just a moment **now** to contact Committee Co-Chair **Marcy Biller** to tell her what you plan to contribute/lend to help make this event a huge success:

- Folding tables (6-8 ft) and card tables.
- 6 vendor type tents.

• Click cards for the silent auction

- Clipboards for the silent auction.
- Donations of new items for the silent auction. Ideas: Unopened seed packets, healthy seedlings. Nature/food/cooking items. Plants. Artsy-crafty items. Garden tools. Children's gardening items.
- Donations of gift cards for the silent auction (ask your favorite restaurants, retailers, area nurseries, and garden centers).
- Cash donations to cover expenses.
- Someone to coordinate taking photos/video during the event and assembling afterwards.

Remember that as a non profit 501(c)(3) organization, all donations to VISTA are tax deductible to the extent of the law and we will provide you with a letter of thanks for each donation.



April 3rd is the 90th birthday of Dr. Jane Goodall, renowned conservationist. Bonnie Eaton, VISTA gardener and local coordinator for Jane Goodall Institute's Roots & Shoots youth program, says that "people frequently approach me with an anecdote about how Jane Goodall inspired them as a child. Her passion and perseverance are very influential to budding young scientists." [Read More](#)





Plant Feature

Live Oak tree

Live Oak trees, *Quercus virginiana*, are ideal shade trees for locations large enough to accommodate their massive size of 60-80 feet tall and up to 60-120 feet wide. Live Oaks provide many ecosystem services and are sturdy, wind-resistant trees. [Read More](#)

Did you know?

Large leafy tree canopies intercept rainfall, transpire water back into the atmosphere and complete the water cycle, while removing pollutants and increasing the infiltration of rainfall into surrounding soils. Stormwater management can be greatly improved by promoting tree canopy covers in communities.



Meet Our Gardeners

Tim Spearman gardens in B6E and is seen here helping construct the mulch and soil stalls. [Read More](#)

Events and VISTA Committee Updates

Mark Your Calendars

April Calendar of Events

Friday, April 5 8-10a

Join volunteers maintaining the new native plant garden at Carrollwood Village Park.

Saturdays, April 6 and 27 8a-11a

Volunteer to work alongside Sickles HS National Honor Society members as they complete planned projects at VISTA.

Saturday, April 13 10a-2p

VISTA's 10th Anniversary Celebration

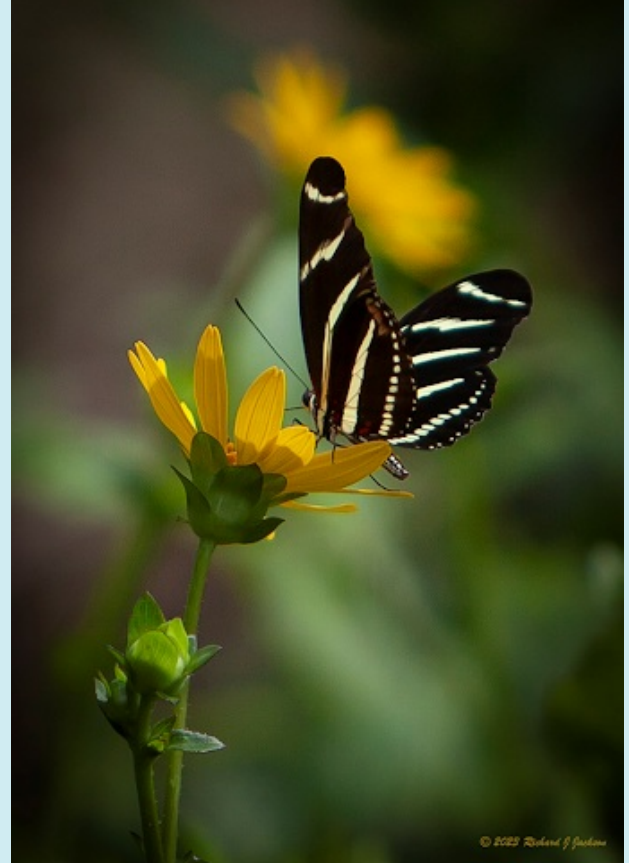
Sunday, April 7 and 21 8:30a-11a

Volunteer to work alongside USF Rotaract members as they complete planned projects at VISTA



In the Herb Garden, Spring is here, and that means the beginning of warmer weather here in Florida! Over in the herb garden, we still have plenty of lemon balm and sage growing in the full-sun areas, as well as chives and culantro (similar to cilantro) growing under the pergola. Get these and other herbs while you still can. When temperatures rise in the summer months, some of the more delicate herbs will flower, go to seed, and die off. But fear not! With plenty of preservation techniques, you can still enjoy the taste of delicious herbs from VISTA's very own herb garden all year long. Fresh herbs can easily be chopped fine and frozen in ice cube trays with a little bit of water or olive oil. This has the added bonus of getting the chopping out of the way ahead of time, so you can throw fresh herbs into any recipe in a snap! Check out [this tutorial on how to freeze fresh herbs in an ice cube tray](#). Frozen herb cubes made with oil are great in soups, stews, and pasta dishes. Herbs that are frozen in water taste great when added to mixed drinks!

If you're looking for some fun and exciting herbs for your ice cube tray at home, reach out to Rita or Kathy, and we'll find a way to add it to the garden so you can add it to your freezer!



In the Wildflower Garden, we are watching for this season's first Zebra Longwing, *Heliconius charithonia*. Rick Jackson took this photograph of Florida's state butterfly nectaring on the vibrant yellow flower of a Starry rosinweed, *Silphium asteriscus*, last spring. Each member of VISTA's Wildflower Garden Committee tends specific plant varieties, and we are grateful to Janet Stanko, our expert on the showy Starry Rosinweed, as well as the Giant Ironweed, *Vernonia gigantea*, plants. In the months to come, enjoy the splashes of purple the Giant Ironweeds provide throughout the Wildflower Garden.





Strange Spots on Your Plant's Leaves?



Stop the spread! Remove that leaf from the gardens immediately.
Grow plants upward. Cucumbers, melons, squash, and pole beans that grow on trellises have better airflow and drier leaves.
Prune plants to ensure good air circulation and to keep foliage from touching wet soil.

Water wisely. "Low and slow" watering keeps water at the soil level and off the plant's leaves.
Reduce watering by mulching your soil.
Apply OMRI-listed biofungicide at 7-10 day intervals.

Remove badly infected plants.
Take home diseased leaves and plants. Please do not compost them or leave them at VISTA.

VISTA Question & Answer

Q: I know of a restaurant owner who may be interested in hosting a community event to raise money for VISTA Gardens. Who do I pass this information along to?

A: Great! We are always looking for community partners. Please send your ideas to our President Jennifer Grebenschikoff at 813-842-2772.



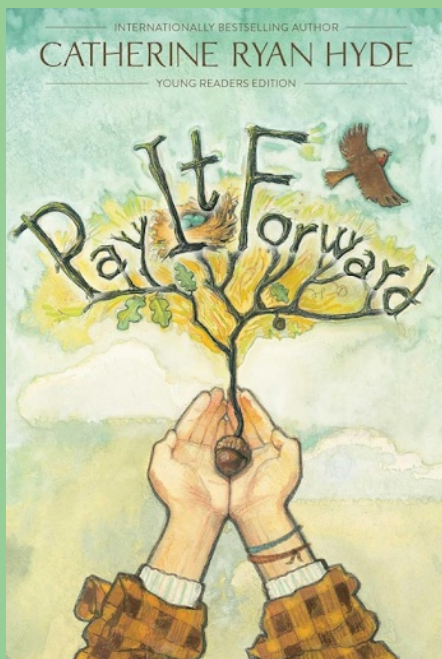
Our appreciation for a generous

donation from Ibbey Bailey, a longtime VISTA friend, that supported the construction and completion of concrete block stalls to more efficiently store mulch and soil at VISTA Gardens. Our Garden Chair, Eric Christoffersen, expertly designed and, along with his brother, Drew, masterfully constructed the new stalls. Tim Spearman generously volunteered his time to assist with the construction. We are grateful to Eric, Drew, and Tim who leveraged Ibbey's donation with their talent, time and hard work. Thank you, Ibbey! And our gratitude to Eric, Drew, and Tim! [See More](#)



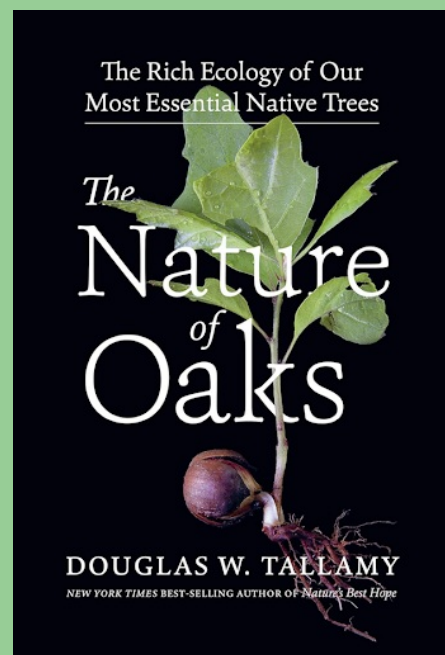
New in the Little Free Library

VISTA and our community appreciate Forever Friends for the grant to purchase books for the Little Free Library



An uplifting novel for middle grade readers. Trevor McKinney, a twelve-year-old boy in a small California town, accepts his teacher's challenge to earn extra credit by coming up with a plan to change the world. Trevor's idea is simple: do a good deed for three people, and instead of asking them to return the favor, ask them to "pay it forward" to three others who need help. He envisions goodwill spreading across the world, and Trevor's actions change his community forever.

[READ MORE](#)



Read what happens in oak trees, month by month, including the web of wildlife from woodpeckers who collect and store hundreds of acorns for sustenance to the beauty of jewel caterpillars - wonders that occur right in our own backyards. Practical advice about how to plant and care for an oak, along with information about the best oak species for our region. Inspiration to treasure these trees and to act to nurture and protect them. [READ MORE](#)

In his characteristic heartwarming style, Patrick McDonnell tells the story of the young Jane Goodall and her special childhood toy chimpanzee named Jubilee. As the young Jane observes the natural world around her with wonder, she dreams of "a life living with and helping all animals," until one day she finds that her dream has come true. With anecdotes taken directly from Jane Goodall's autobiography, McDonnell makes this very true story accessible for the very young—and young at heart.

[READ MORE](#)



Trees are poems the earth writes upon the sky. – *Kahlil Gibran*

[Click here](#) to submit your photos and stories for future editions of VISTA Matters.

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Connect with us



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