



Estates Area Voice

The Official Newsletter of the Golden Gate Estates Area Civic Association Inc.

P.O. Box 990596, Naples, FL 34116-6002

www.estates-civic.org

May



Come to the
Dinner!
Wednesday
May 20th
2009
7:00 P.M.
Golden
Gate Estates
Fire Station
#71
13th St. SW
Please Join Us!

Spring Dinner

With things slowing down a bit and summer just around the corner, GGEACA members will come together this month for a *Spring Fling Party!* The party will be held in place of our regular May meeting on Wednesday, May 20th. All members, neighbors, guests, and friends are invited to gather at the regular meeting location, Fire Station #71, at 7:00PM and share an evening and spring meal together.

There will be no formal agenda and no speaker, just a light-hearted evening of Friendship and Fun!! Of course children are always welcome. This annual spring party always features some great food and fun, and is not to be missed!! We will also invite the firefighters and EMS staff at Station #71 to join us as a small way of thanking them for their service to our community.

The Association will provide the main course meat and refreshments.

Members should bring their favorite side dish, salad, or desert to share and enjoy. Come join your neighbors and friends for a fun evening! See you all at the Party!!

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**Jim Flanagan's Famous Chocolate
Chip Cookies will be in attendance!**



For all Dates, Times, and Information regarding Important County Meetings, Please refer to:

<http://www.estates-civic.org/Calendar.html>

Presidents Message

This month our drought index in Collier County has sky-rocketed into the 700's. The result of an exceptionally low average rainfall. I have heard of some residents having problems with their wells drying up. I shall be interested to see any reports that the SFWMD gives us as to the success of the water restrictions that they put in place. There is also a strict burning ban in effect. So far the few local fires that have sprung up have been quickly contained by our excellent fire department and there have been no homes or lives lost. Kudos to the firemen at our Fire Station #17 on 13th Street (where we have our monthly meetings).

On a lighter note don't forget the Spring Fling party that we are having instead of this month's regular meeting. Bring your family, friends and neighbors, children are particularly welcome. This is one of the times that the whole family can really come together and enjoy the company of neighbors, good food, fun and prizes. Bring one of your favorite side dishes to share.

We talked about Code Enforcement planning an educational sweep of selected areas of the Estates at last months meeting. Apparently they have already started and are looking for code violations on your properties. Some of these violations may have been left by a previous owner; unfortunately you are responsible for that infraction. If the previous owner did not pull a permit when a permit was required you as current owner will be required to correct the violations. If you are interested in learning more, attend the Estates Task Force meeting 9:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the Fire Station at 13250 Immokalee Road.

Don't forget "Open Mike" time at our monthly meetings, when any member is invited to spend a few minutes sharing their experience of living in the Estates. We hope from these sessions that we will get to know our neighbors better and enrich our own living enjoyment.

Neighborhood Watch training is coming. If you and your neighbors would like to start a Neighborhood Watch group, July's meeting will be a Neighborhood Watch training meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the party on Wednesday night at the firehouse.

Peggy Whitbeck

Encyclia tampensis "Butterfly Orchid"

Alphabet Soup – Or Everything You Needed to Know About Growth Management

What will Collier County look like in 20 years? Has Growth Management been successful in Collier County? In order to find out you first need to learn the lingo, a veritable alphabet concoction of acronyms. We all know that learning a foreign language can be very difficult, but please don't despair, because by the time you finish reading this article you will be an expert in AUIR, DCA, DHS, GZ, BEBR, BS, LDR, LDC, FLOP, BCC, LOSS, CTB, CATA, SDI, PIP, PS, OE, CIP, TIP, CCP, and TAX.

Each year the County Commission (BCC) is required to file an Annual Update and Inventory Report (AUIR) with the State Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The DCA is supposed to be in control of Florida's growth management, a super agency like the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The idea is to prevent overbuilding, urban sprawl, promote development, and protect our natural environment (LDR and LDC). Just as no one is seriously opposed to apple pie and ice cream everyone is in favor of good growth practices. For these reasons, the AUIR is a very important document and required by State Law.

Unfortunately for us residents, most experts have concluded that growth management in Florida has been a colossal flop (FLOP). Counted among those experts is Tom Pelham, the director of our Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Any doubt that the planning experts have been dead wrong was laid to rest with the bursting of the housing bubble, and the subsequent collapse of America's banking industry after mortgages and building permits were given away like candy on Halloween night. Of all the 50 States, Florida turned out to be the ground zero (GZ) of the deepest recession our country has experienced in modern times.

Our AUIR contains projections of population growth, current and anticipated land use patterns, an inventory of natural resources to be exploited and/or preserved, and how the county will finance the capital improvements necessary to support our burgeoning population. This document gives a once a year opportunity for us to grade our local officials proficiency in the science of growth management. The current AUIR is referred to as the 2008 AUIR, it was approved in October of last year by the Commissioners (BCC). An updated AUIR will be due in about October of 2009. Here is what our local experts have decided:

(continued on page 4)

Encyclia cochleatum "Clamshell Orchid"

(continued from page 3)

The previous population projections were wrong, according to the Bureau of Economic Business Research (BEBR). Our local experts opine: *“Over the past two year’s, with the reduction in population... the capital improvements and infrastructure that looked so needed while in the prior year planning stages, are no longer necessary within the time frame originally projected.”* Restating the obvious, while being backed up by a bureau, is always a good idea; it makes you look smarter than you really are (BS).

Even with reduced population projections the County cannot afford to provide critical infrastructure for so-called “Category A” (CATA) public infrastructure projects (PIP). These are the roads, bridges, utility extensions, and schools that need to be in place to Service the Development Industry (SDI). To get around this problem took real creativity on the part of our local experts. Their numerous suggestions fall into three categories: a) reduce the current level of service standard (LOSS)-this means we really don’t need as much, water, sewer, transportation, etc. as we thought; or b) find new sources of funding-this means raise taxes (TAX); or c) Adjust our Capital Improvement Plan (CIP or TIP) by changing our bookkeeping to reflect a short term deficit while balancing the books in later years-this means cooking the books (CTB).

Finally, our experts have concluded that the idea that “Growth must pay for Growth” (GMPFG) must be abandoned. I quote directly from the report: *“The recognition that impact fees cannot cover the cost of future improvements and the ramifications that fact has upon general revenue funds must be acknowledged.”* Translated from Planner Speak (PS) into ordinary English (OE), this means raise taxes (TAX).

OK, as I promised in the opening paragraph, you now know the lingo, and it’s time for you to grade our local officials on the AUIR. Pick an appropriate grade level for the authors of this monumental document. Feel free to pick any individual letter or combination thereof from the alphabet. In accord with strict long standing Collier County Policy (CCP) all results will be kept secret, confidential, and reposed to a location unaffected by sunlight. What you need to know will be made available to you when you need to know it.

The AUIR may be found in it’s entirety at the following intuitive web address:
<http://www.colliergov.net/Index.aspx?page=1581>

Encyclia cordigera

Privatization of Public Roads and Infrastructure –

Gina Downs

On behalf of Citizens Transportation Coalition (CTC), I attended a private meeting in Washington, DC. March 30-31. The meeting brought together representatives from across the United States to communicate and to combine their concerns about federal and state efforts toward privatization.

In shaping the contention of CTC that roadways and bridges ought not to be leased or sold to private corporations, we encounter privatization attempts in many other sectors of public infrastructure. Those many other sectors were present at this meeting. All were equally knowledgeable and passionate about their apprehensions toward the current privatization trend by our government.

Our objective was to develop a cohesive framework to encase and direct all of our information and experiences. As we shared facts and figures around the conference table, a deeper sense of concern prevailed. A few mega corporations who are well financed and very politically connected are shaping policy not only in the United States, but worldwide.

While third world and developing nations are incapable of providing basic infrastructure to their citizens, developed nations are capable and experienced at providing public infrastructure and services. These mega corporations are not acting out of altruism to provide our population with more efficient and cost effective services, they are eager to purchase publicly owned infrastructure for a profit making opportunity – pure and simple. It is ‘the tail wagging the dog syndrome’. Corporations, through extraordinarily generous political and campaign contributions, win the ear of legislators. After several years of listening to their well-orchestrated pitch, elected officials are heeding the message. “Lease your infrastructure and your public service sector to a private contractor” is the proposal. “Increase efficiency and lower costs” is the promise.

Legislators, in turn, lay the framework for legitimizing and encouraging privatization. They pass bills allowing the previously questionable practice of leasing public assets. They approve legislation enabling low or zero interest loans to become available to corporations and consortiums. They pave the way for generous tax relief arrangements.

Corporate lawyers and lobbyists willingly guide our elected officials along the path to privatization. Each bill introduced is tweaked to perfection, in harmony with the persistent tune being played by those standing to reap profit from privatization. In the worst of cases, elected officials often create the scenario leading to the urgency for privatization. Spending on previously unessential projects becomes commonplace. Overhead expands due to layers of bureaucracy added in numerous divisions. Overblown spending coupled with a bloated organizational chart will quickly strain the healthiest of financial models. Moreover, that assumes a healthy financial model existed in the first place. Nevertheless, does privatization offer an advantage to the public? Is there, indeed, a cost savings that is passed along to the citizens? Alternatively, are standards trimmed, regulations lowered and wages reduced in order to enable that cost savings to be paid out to corporate executives and shareholders? Are those cost savings ever realized by the citizens?

When leasing roads and bridges, there is no simultaneous reduction in our gas tax to offset the increased toll for our road usage. In essence, drivers are taxed twice. The only benefit offered for turning a public asset over to a profit seeking entity is the ability to allocate the proceeds from the contract agreement. This is the equivalent of deeply discounting and spending tomorrow’s revenue today.

According to Progressive States Network, “there is little reliable data on the benefits or costs of privatization as most studies are anecdotal due to the overall lack of data on privatization.” While the Council on State Governments report states, “There appears to be no consensus as to the effectiveness of privatization in part due to the lack of empirical data as well as the complexity of the issue.”

(continued on page 6)

Cyrtopodium punctatum “Cow Horn Orchid”

(continued from page 5)

Little reliable data, anecdotal reports, lack of empirical data – all combine to make comprehensive analysis difficult at best. This was perhaps the biggest shared frustration around the meeting table in D.C. The lack of transparency and accountability surrounding the prelude to privatization projects makes it nearly impossible to apply rational assessment let alone reliable cost/benefit analysis.

If those of us, deeply imbedded in the issue of privatization cannot carefully scrutinize and evaluate proposed privatization undertakings, how much thoughtful and objective analysis can we expect to be exercised by our elected officials? Those are the same officials dizzy from the din in both ears from well-heeled and charitable corporate lobbyists.

The best way to drown out the corporate buzzing is to replace it with a full and congruent symphony from their electorate. The question is, at what point will the public cry foul? Will it take the leasing of two or three major roadways or forty? Will they speak out after one airport is leased, or four or five airports are leased? Will it take one water system lease or the combination of the water system and the waste water system to elicit a strong response? Do they wait until the privatization trend takes hold in their hometown or do they get involved when privatization shapes their state?

We were unable to answer those questions. We can, however, help shape and deliver significant information about privatization. The more daunting task is in rallying a seemingly listless public. The mega-corporations and the politicians are well aware of the public 'mood'. They help shape it. They measure it. They count on it to stay lethargic.

However, that mood consistently turns sour when the full scope of consequences from privatization is revealed. Revelation and full disclosure is what we plan to provide to the public. It is also, coincidentally, what we seek from our government. When the government considers entering into contractual agreements, often lasting several generations, we ought to be entitled to candid and forthright disclosure at the very least.

Gina Downs, Director
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Epidendrum magnoliae

GGEACA Scholarships to be Awarded May 18th

Our Golden Gate Estates Area Civic Association Student Scholarships for 2008-09 will be awarded on Monday, May 18th at Palmetto Ridge High School. The annual Awards Ceremony will be held in the High School Auditorium beginning at 7:00pm and is open to the public. All interested Association members are invited to attend.

This year, GGEACA is pleased to grant two \$1000 scholarships to deserving seniors Kimberly Milne and Matshia Laleau. Both students have high scholastic achievement and records of outstanding community service. Kimberly will be attending the University of Florida and Matshia will also attend a Florida college but has yet to make her final selection.

As in years past, the funding for GGEACA student scholarships is generated primarily by our work at the *Golden Gate Frontier Days Festival*. A special thanks to the many members that volunteered and worked at this years Festival and made it such a success, even under the difficult economic times. Community Spirit runs high in the Estates Area!! For our part as a community charity, there is no better contribution than to the continued education of our students and future community leaders. Thank you to all members for your continued generosity in donating your time and hard earned money for a very worthy cause.

We extend our sincerest Congratulations! to this years recipients, Kimberly and Matshia, and wish them the very best in continuing their education.

Family Fun Night at the Library Well Attended

Dozens of children and families enjoyed the activities at the Family Fun Night held at the Estates Branch Library this past April 16th. GGEACA members joined 4-H members, library staff, and representatives from Parks and other area agencies for an entertaining evening. Animals seemed to be the big hit of the event, with the 4-H Club bringing a cow, sheep, chickens, and rabbits. Roger the cockatoo and several other parrots were also there to be photographed and interact with the kids. The children enjoyed hotdogs and hamburgers and took many pictures.

The great GGEACA Website was demonstrated, and Association members passed out lollypops and glow sticks. This program was an excellent opportunity to extend information to the community and we met many Estates Area residents. Our thanks to Estates Branch Librarian Marilyn McKay for inviting us to participate and a special thanks to all GGEACA members who donated treats for the children and served so well as ambassadors for the GGEACA. These events help build the great community spirit shared by Estates Area citizens! Well Done and Thanks!!

Polyrrhiza lindenii (Ghost Orchid)

Thanks for Your Service Rick!

Long time GGEACA secretary, Rick Haylock, has recently taken a position requiring night working hours and will have difficulty attending evening meetings. Due to his work commitment he has resigned as our Association Secretary. Rick has been a civic activist in the Estates Area for many years and has served the Association as a volunteer in numerous capacities. All Association members thank Rick for his dedicated service and hard work in our behalf. We hope to see Rick and Milly as their schedule allows. Thanks, Rick!!

To take Rick's place on the Board as Secretary, we welcome Deana Bess. Deana brings a special enthusiasm to the Estates Area community and has a keen interest in gardening. In addition to volunteering to serve as our Association Secretary, Deana will write gardening related articles for the *Estates Area Voice* during the year. Our warm welcome and thanks to Deana!

Opening November 2009 *At Naples Botanical Garden*

Naples Botanical Garden is seeking people who enjoy learning and interacting with the public. These prospective volunteers will choose one of three Gardens - the *Vicky C. and David Byron Smith Children's Garden*, the *Brazilian Garden*, and the *Kathleen and Scott Kapnick Caribbean Garden* - where they will share stories and plant knowledge with visitors. Training will be provided. The public and current volunteers are invited to a general information session to see what is involved and how they can become a part of the soon-to-be world-class tropical and subtropical botanical garden in Naples, Florida. Additional more specific training will be offered with dates to be announced.

Please call **Sally Richardson** at **239-643-7275 extension 28** to register for one of these free sessions or if you would like additional information.

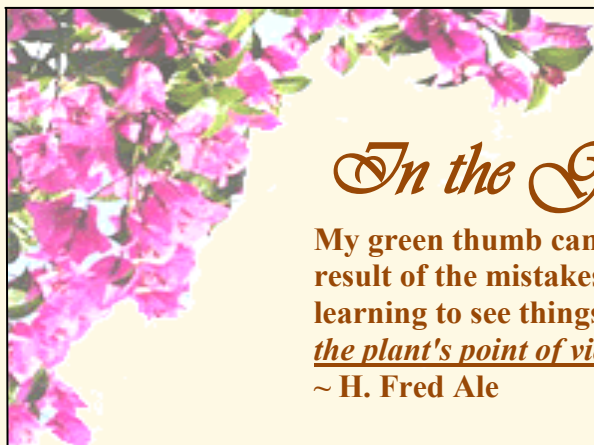
All sessions will be held from 10 AM – 12 Noon

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Thursday – May 7 | Thursday – July 23 |
| Wednesday – May 20 | Wednesday – August 12 |
| Monday – June 8 | Friday – August 28 |
| Saturday – June 20 | Monday – September 14 |
| Tuesday – July 14 | Tuesday – September 22 |

CHECK US OUT AT WWW.NAPLESGARDEN.ORG

Passiflora manicata

May 2009



In the Garden with Deana

**My green thumb came only as a result of the mistakes I made while learning to see things from-
the plant's point of view.**

~ H. Fred Ale

In the Garden is a new section in our newsletter and its purpose is to build a self-sustaining garden community through sharing information. Home grown organic food tastes so wonderful, contains much higher nutritional value, and gives many of us personal satisfaction. With our present economic challenges, learning to become more self-sustaining seems wise and cost efficient. Despite the advantages of gardening, our climate presents us with unique challenges and gardening can be discouraging without the tips and tricks from those who are in the know! Readers are encouraged to submit gardening tips and share their wisdom with our community via our monthly newsletter; send correspondence to Deana at deanabess@comcast.net

Web site review: Visit <http://gardenersindex.ning.com/> for an online interactive gardening experience. Share your opinions and ideas.

WIPE OUT CATERPILLARS WITH WORMWOOD:

To protect your tender plants from hungry caterpillars, propagate and grow an herb called wormwood throughout your garden and landscaping areas. It will withstand the heat of summer if it is in partial shade. If the herb doesn't completely detour caterpillars by just growing near your plants, you can also take a nice harvest of wormwood (about two cups of the leaves and stems) and make a nice anti-caterpillar spray. Steep wormwood stems and leaves in about three cups of water for 30 minutes. I always cover the sauce pan to keep every drop! Then strain the liquid through a coffee filter into a quart size glass canning jar. Add two tablespoons of Murphy's oil soap and an additional cup of water. Add 1 Tbsp of this solution per 16 oz of water (usually a spray bottle) or you can put the mixture in a hose end sprayer and dowse your plants with it. The whole quart of solution will make 6 gallons of treatment. This also works for lawn grubs! Just take care to either spray the leaves in the early evening after heat of sun has passed or early morning before the sun hits the leaves. If you treat in the morning, you will need to rinse off the treatment after about 30 minutes; the soap may cause the sun to burn tender leaves. I usually purchase my open pollinated wormwood seeds online at www.seedsofchange.com, www.territorialseed.com, www.johnnyseeds.com, or www.bountifulgardens.org.



Wormwood Plant – Morning shade, about three hours of afternoon sun.



The "Wind"sors



*Clearly Her Majesty was not amused...
Prince Philip thought it was a real "gas"!*

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[Tim Nance](#) Past President

[Deanna Bess](#) Secretary

[Kathleen Raimondi](#) Treasurer

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