



LEAF NEWSLETTER

Apollo Beach Garden Club, Inc. 2017

March 2025 - Edition #63

"Just Keep on Planting"



President's Message Paula Olesen

President's Musings

Here we are in beautiful March, one of the best growing months. Temperatures are still easy to work in especially in the mornings. The crops are rewarding in production, sometimes with extra to share. The Community Forest Garden looks amazing. From the devastation of our 4' surge to then the 100+ winds in October, Mother Nature and the dedication of our garden members and the volunteers have shown the resiliency of the garden, the trees and its members. If you have not been by in a while, do stop in to visit. It warms the heart.

The meetings continue to provide the education for members and guests that meets one of our mission objectives. We would like to see increased attendance, please bring a friend as guests are always welcome and may become a prospective member. Sarah & Adam El-Ali have developed a Proposal for Strategic Growth for the Club and Garden. The Board will review the plan at the **March 18th Board Meeting at 10 in the Garden, weather permitting**. Otherwise inside the first building. Our meetings are always open meetings.

The Plant Sale was a great success, thank you to everyone who participated in propagating, growing repotting, advertising, prepping for the sale, volunteering at the sale, clean up and buying. Then we did it all over again at Jen's Market in Apollo Beach on Sunday February 16th. Sold most of the remaining plants. What an awesome group of members!!

We have Josh Jamison speaking at this Month's meeting. (**March 18th at 6:30 PM**) He operates Cody Cove Organic Farm and will talk about some unusual plants and fruit trees. **He will have plants to sell.**
Hope to see you all with a guest.

A special thank you to Annie & Raleigh who were able, from their vast experience, to present last month when our planned speakers had to cancel the day of their presentation. I think all present can attest we learned a lot about creating an edible landscape and the answering of questions was invaluable. Being in the process of turning Bill's backyard into an edible landscape, it was just what I needed. The bonus for me - irrigation is already in place! All in the process of keeping my bluebird box safe. Have 3 eggs so far.

"If you'd like some true peace of mind, grow plants"

Best, Paula



Paula Olesen, President



APOLLO BEACH GARDEN CLUB, INC.

Teresa Hall, Committee Chair - ABGC Plant Sale Market & Marketing

The month of February was quite a blur in the best possible way. Club members and volunteers came together cohesively and had an absolute blast on the final push into our Spring Plant Sale on Feb 8th. All in all, our club members and volunteers accomplished a huge feat of creating literally thousands of plants for our plant sale to be ready for market by the target due date. Mother nature didn't quite cooperate as well as we would have liked and slowed down a few plants that didn't quite make the "ready" cut on time. However, in the end so many amazingly robust & healthy 4" potted food plants were ready for proud display that it took over 12 huge banquet tables to display them all. Better yet, people bought them!

I am truly awe struck by how well everyone came together and worked together. For me personally, it

Hello - fellow gardeners and garden club members.

felt magical to work together like a well-oiled machine. In just a little over 2 months, our team of garden loving volunteers created and ultimately sold over \$2,600 in plants (with more still trickling in) that are perfect to help our fellow gardeners succeed. All of this because we focused on creating the right heirloom varieties and cultivars for our unique growing region that no one else sells and marketed the available rarity. With the exception of a few landscaping plants, what people took home was food plants. On Feb 8th, gardeners waiting to storm the gate with wagons in tow took home over 100 rare and specialty tomato plants that were sourced for the sale, generating over \$700 in revenue with just those tomatoes alone before noon. It is fascinating to hone in on which plants can command the greater investments from customers.



Although we avoided offering plants like bell peppers and cucumbers or summer squashes because of pest, heat and disease tolerance, people really wanted those plants, and I heard it when they asked. When our customers speak, I listen and then I need to often times deliver unwanted news back to committees. Then I go search out how to provide what the customer wants in a way that might have a chance at success in our area. I immediately searched out 4 different cucumber varieties that might have a chance here with both heat tolerance and high disease resistance. Two of the four varieties were planted into one of our show/demonstration beds at the garden and one was planted in my home garden. Paula Olesen was eager to try one of each. If anyone would like to give the cucumbers a test run and report back your success, I'd be happy to share a few seeds with you, if you share your success back.

One week and one day after the Spring Plant Sale, we did Jen's Market. Although attendance seemed to be a tad light on a windy day that claimed at least one pop-up tent into a crumpled mess, we experienced great interactions with patrons and in finding new vendors to add to our own vendor list for our events. A goat farm that creates goat milk products and provides fresh eggs wants to

participate in our Fall Plant Sale on November 8th. All of us fell in love with the Empanada and Pad Thai purveyors who would also like to participate.

There are still a few plants left behind that are coming along at the garden in an unused garden bed. Each week someone comes in and offers to buy them and now we have an "in-garden" way for patrons to do just that with cash or check. A lock box has been installed, and further instruction will be provided to our garden members so that people can still continue to take home our great plants and financially support our garden in the process. This gives us such a great opportunity to keep moving forward with the fun momentum that was built by creating plants together. Each month a different crop is more important to start or transplant. From the last sale, we now have a timeline of sorts for a 9-week plan of sow to market for Spring, but coming into the Fall Sale, we will need to start a few plants quite a bit sooner; 12 or 16 weeks sooner. Having the available resources and ability to bring plants along for longer increases their value and our ability to generate more revenue for the same effort.

What stood out at the Spring Plant Sale is that customers took home the special/rare, larger, greener, more robust plants. And they were willing



to pay more to do so. The forward momentum into getting our own little mini-nursery going is exciting to be a part of so we can continue to start plants, pot them on, grow them up and reap the financial rewards of being just a little bit more patient while ALL of it is a teaching moment at the same time. One action ticks three boxes of why our garden exists; be self-funded, teach, give back to community.

When the bulk of the funds to operate the garden come from only two plant sales a year, it's quite difficult to provide enough revenue moving \$1 plants in only a few hours. Yes, there is an important factor of having plants at all price points accessible, but I would greatly love to shift our vision to creating items of greater value while still offering lower price point products. My proposed solution to generating more revenue at each event is focusing on providing great looking plants that are particularly special. People are not just willing but eager to pay more for the kind of special that works in our area and helps home gardeners find more success.

Lastly, the customer feedback I want to share the least with our garden group that seems to get me shot as a messenger is that people need us to get

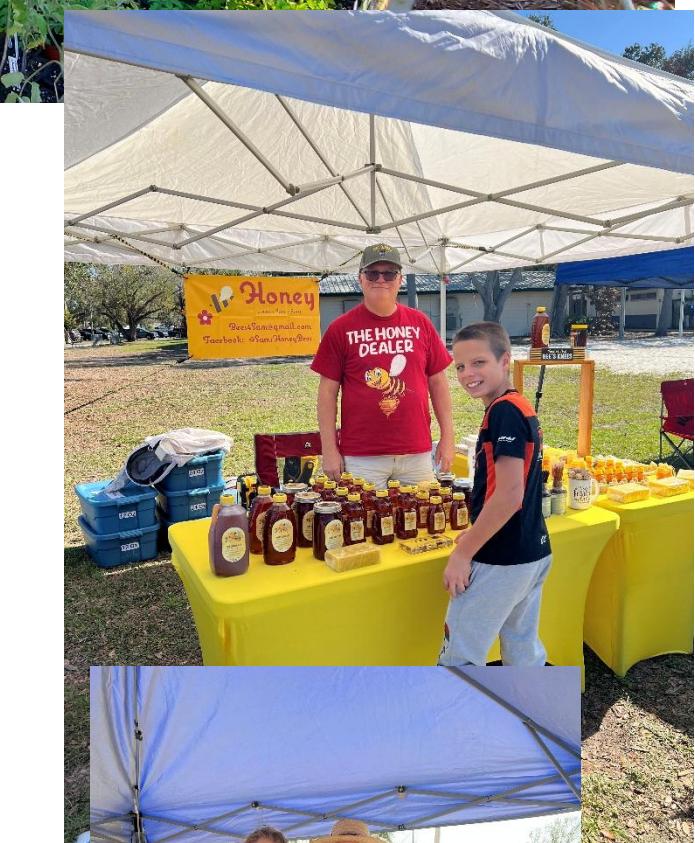
into the 21st century. We need to give them other ways to pay besides cash and check. Failure to do so is shooting ourselves in our own foot. People seriously do not have checkbooks these days or walk around with them. They don't carry around cash. We are missing impulse buys. I hate seeing someone excited to be a new plant parent walk away from a \$30+ sale because they can't pay with a card. My "two cents" is that we need to focus on finding the right path forward to meet the customer demands and get past whatever barrier to access is happening. It's not my realm or lane to pipe in on, but we need to do it and it needs to be done no matter how painful the process. Failure to do so is showing itself to be incredibly limiting. If we fail to evolve, we are leaving revenue behind for the same exact effort that could earn us so much more. We work hard for all of this. Let's claim the value.

We all have goals for this club. What are yours? Please let us know of our facebook page.

Sincerely,

~ teresa hall ~







Nan Major, Secretary

APOLO BEACH GARDEN CLUB, INC.
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday – February 18, 2025
6:36 PM – 7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 at the Apollo Beach Rec Center by Paula Olesen, President. In attendance: Paula Olesen, Teresa Hall, Annie Jimenez, Jeanette Doyle, Janie Barnes, Ev Barnes, Raleigh Barnes, Annie Jimenez, Suzanne Baron, Bill Baron, Ann Hickland, Andres Rammez.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Paula Olesen for Nan Major (absent), Secretary

The minutes from January 21 were available in the newsletter. Ev made a motion to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Jeanette. The minutes were approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ev Barnes

FEBRUARY:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Beginning balance | \$ 5,699.68 |
| Income | \$ 2,754.00 |
| Expenses | \$ 902.41 |
| Ending Balance | \$ 7,551.27 |

Raleigh made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, seconded by Teresa. The treasurer's report was accepted unanimously.

COMMUNITY FOREST GARDEN COORDINATOR:

Annie Jimenez

We planted a lot of new trees, they look good, the rebuild of the forest complete. It is warmer and drier so we need to water plants and trees more often. Hand water so we don't damage leaves. The weeds are growing faster so we need to keep after them. We are responsible for maintaining the plants by the sidewalk to avoid issues with the county. There are a lot of trees already blooming and fruiting because of the salt water stress. We can't

plant Gaillardia or anything else on the outside of the fence per the county. There will likely be 2 more planting days for trees we have grants for.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Raleigh Barnes

Chairs: Kudos to Teresa for the plant sale, thanks to Jeanette for the newsletter and thank you, Chris. Programs: Josh Jameson in March on unique Central Florida plants Bob on earth boxes in April. Adam will be managing the website.

Scholarships:

Scholarship information and application are on website if you know anyone interested in applying, send them to the website.

Grants

Raleigh presented the numerous grants we have received and applied for. We will use the grants to rebuild the dragon fruit trellis, buy supplies and galvanized beds, fix the irrigation systems and get children's tools. He was asked why we get these grants from other Garden Clubs and the answer is because we had so much damage. It was also noted that we get them because Raleigh applies for them.

MEMBERSHIP: Paula Olesen

We have a new member, Andres Rammez and a guest, Ann Hickland, who introduced themselves and were welcomed to the club. We have 24 members, 12 who have gardens.

EVENTS AND MARKETING: Teresa Hall

Plant sale was awesome. Teresa thanked everyone who volunteered. The planting parties were very successful and resulted in members being invested in the sale and everyone was very excited about them. We are in the planning phase for plants for the fall sale. Teresa ordered several extra catalogs from Southern Exchange seed company so we can pick plants we want to include. Among the requested plants were cucumbers, sweet (bell) peppers and squash. We try to find varieties that are tolerant of our conditions. Jen's market was fantastic. To date over \$2,500 has trickled in. The hope is to be over \$3k next sale.

NEWSLETTER and PROGRAMS: Paula Olesen for Chris Deno (absent)

Jeanette wants things by month end, please send pictures. The Kim Chee party was great and the Kim Chee is excellent. Annie has jars for anyone who would like one.

NB:

Raleigh indicated the Lakeland plant sale is coming up. They have a butterfly garden but do not have a community garden and focus on flowers.

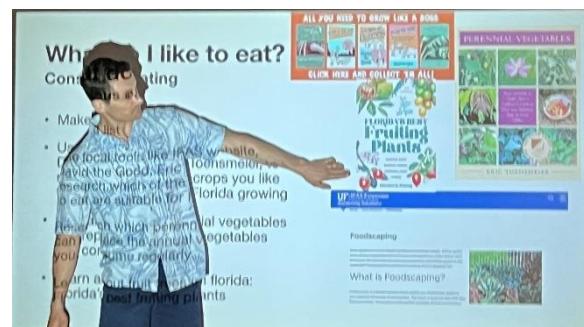
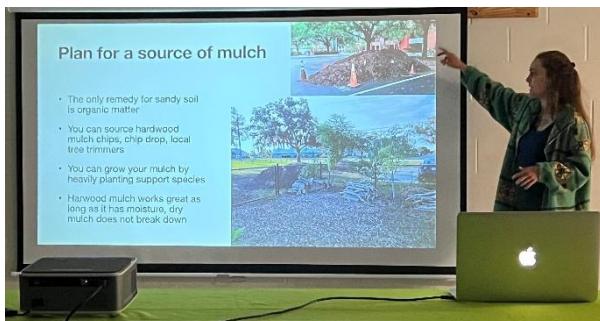
Motion to adjourn was made by Ev, seconded by Abby. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by: Nan Major, Secretary with thanks to Paula Olesen for recording



Chris Deno, Program Chair

February's ABGC Membership meeting was impromptu because of a program cancellation. Annie & Raleigh helped us learn a lot about creating an edible landscape.



March Speaker:

Josh Jamison



Josh is the primary farmer at Cody Cove Farm and Nursery which hosts a large collection of Florida-adapted edible plants. The operation features a small in person nursery as well as a shipping business of seeds, live plants and plant material. The farm also hosts tropical fruit plantings for fruit production. Guided tours are offered for people who want to learn more about Florida gardening and edible landscaping.

Josh will be speaking about ongoing experiments with lesser known crops at Cody Cove Farm and Nursery.

**Apollo Beach Garden Club
March 18th, 2025 @ 6:30pm
664 Golf and Sea Blvd,
Apollo Beach FL 33572**



Flyer submitted by Annie



Apollo Beach Community Forest Garden updates:

By Annie Jimenez, Forest Garden Coordinator
apollobeachgardenclub@gmail.com



Meet a plant from our garden!

Kwai Muk

- Scientific Name: *Artocarpus hypargyraeus*
Family: Moraceae
Origin: Native to Southeast Asia, particularly found in, China, Thailand and Malaysia.
- Characteristics:
Tree Size: A medium to large evergreen tree, typically reaching heights of 10–15 meters.
Leaves: Large, simple, and glossy with a leathery texture. They are usually ovate to elliptic in shape.
Fruit: The fruit resembles a jackfruit but is smaller and yellow when ripe. The flesh of the fruit is sweet, with a taste similar to jackfruit but distinct, often described as tangy and less fibrous.
Flowers: Like other members of the Moraceae family, the flowers are small and clustered, typically hidden within the tree's structure.
Bark: The tree's bark is rough and grayish-brown in color.
- Uses:
Edible: The fruit is eaten fresh, and its flesh is used in making jams, jellies, or desserts. It is valued for its sweet and flavorful taste.
Wood: The wood is used for timber and other construction purposes, as it is strong and durable.
Traditional Medicine: In some areas, various parts of the plant, like the bark and leaves, have been used in traditional medicine for their supposed health benefits.



- Growth and Cultivation:
Climate: **Kwai Muk** thrives in tropical climates, preferring warm, humid conditions, however it has proven to be quite cold hardy in Florida.
Soil: It prefers well-drained, fertile soil, though it is relatively adaptable.
Propagation: Typically propagated through seeds or grafting. Seeds usually germinate quickly under the right conditions.
Kwai Muk is often grown in home gardens and orchards due to its tasty fruit and versatility. Its resilience and relatively low maintenance make it a good choice for tropical horticulture.

Best, Annie J.



Apollo Beach Garden Club Calendar

| Event | Date | Notes |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Volunteer Work Days at the Community Forest Garden | Tuesdays and Saturdays 9A-11A | Location: ABCFG, 664 Golf and Sea Blvd |
| Board meeting | March 18th, 10:00am | Location: ABCFG, 664 Golf and Sea Blvd. |
| Monthly meeting: Josh Jamison from Cody Cove Farm and Nursery will speak about ongoing experiments with lesser known crops. | March 18th, 6:30pm | Location: Apollo Beach Recreation center, 664 Golf and Sea Blvd |

EDIBLES TO PLANT IN

March

North



Arugula, Boniato, Eggplant, Kohlrabi, Peppers, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes



Spinach, Sweet Potatoes



Beans (bush, lima, pole), Cantaloupes, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Onions (bunching), Peanuts, Peas (English, southern), Radish, Squashes, Watermelon

Central

Boniato, Chinese Cabbage, Gingers, Kohlrabi, Peppers, Roselle, Sugarcane, Tropical Spinaches

South

Boniato, Chinese Cabbage, Endive, Gingers, Roselle, Sugarcane, Tropical Spinaches



Review of Raised Bed Lease process

Many approach members during Volunteer Work Days inquiring about the rental of a raised bed. Here is a refresher of the simple 3 step process!

Step 1.

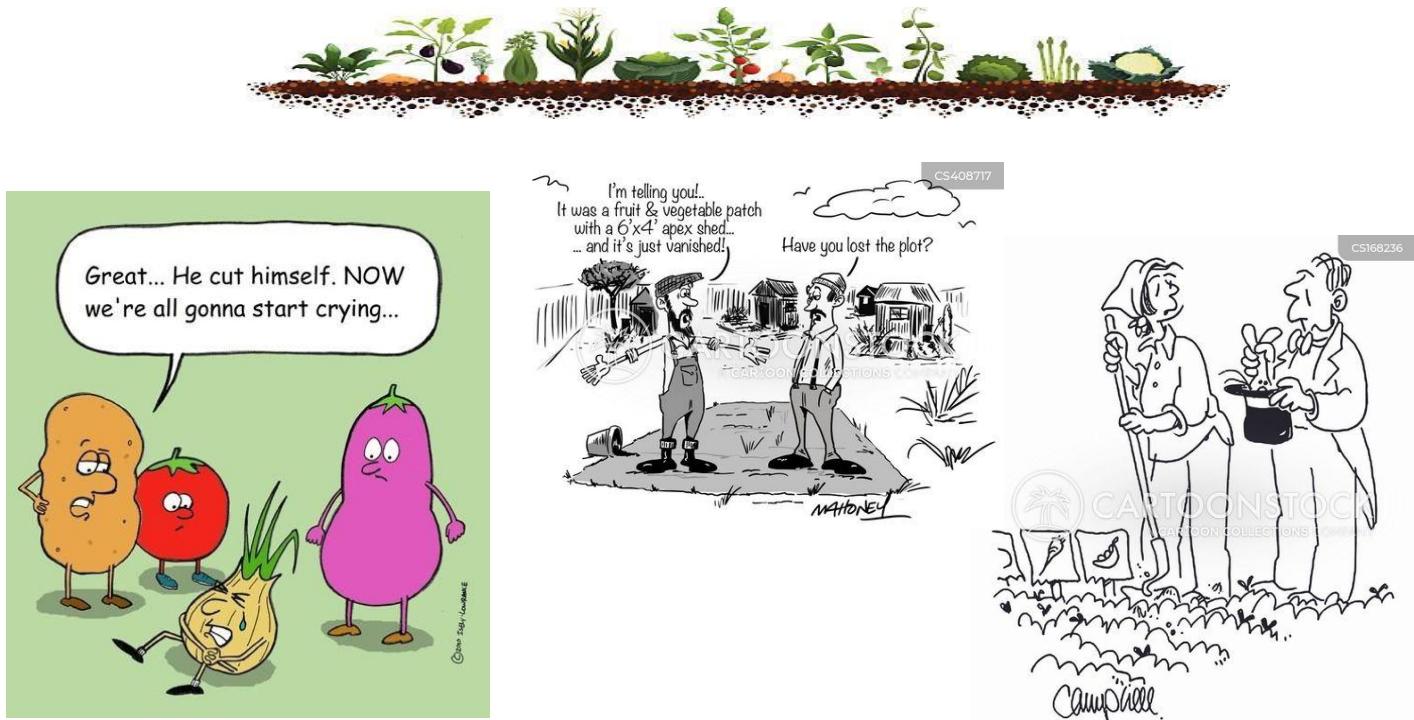
Volunteer at least 10 hours on Tuesday and/or Saturday mornings. This will help us get to know each other and coach you on the basics of how the garden operates, where tools are and how to use them. During this time you will also learn a bit about the [Lease Agreement](#) which you can download on the website. It is your responsibility to be familiar with its contents before you are assigned a raised bed. **Don't forget to sign-in the White Binder every time you come to volunteer so we can track your hours together.

Step 2.

Once the 10 hours have been completed, you are ready to fill out a [Membership Form](#) which can be downloaded from the website. You will bring this form together with corresponding payment to the following *Membership Meeting* on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm.

Step 3.

At the Membership Meeting, you will be assigned a raised bed after a brief quiz on the Lease Agreement. You are ready to garden away!



"Not here, Fred."

Membership - Annie Jimenez

Apollo Beach Garden Club Membership Form



- Annual Garden Club dues are due in SEPTEMBER.
- Community Forest Garden raised bed rentals run from SEPTEMBER or the date of lease start until the following 31st of AUGUST, regardless if they start mid season.
- Leasing a raised garden bed at the Apollo Beach Community Forest Garden is an ad-on to being a member of the Apollo Beach Garden Club. It is required that you join the Apollo Beach Garden Club and pay the dues stated below to opt in to renting a raised garden bed. Before an available raised bed is assigned to you we ask that you donate 10 hours of your time by actively participating at volunteer days (Tuesdays and Saturday mornings from 9am-12:00pm); and are familiar with the *Raised Bed Lease Agreement* posted online at <https://apollobeachgardenclub.com/member-information/>. The *Raised Bed Lease Agreement* document acts as a binding contract which you will have to sign for below when renting a raised bed from the Apollo Beach Garden Club.

Please mark the boxes () with an X where it applies.

OPTION 1 - ABGC Dues

Apollo Beach Garden Club Dues: \$15.00 single, \$25 couple

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs: \$12.00 per household (Joining the federation is optional)

Name: _____

e-mail: _____ Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Membership total \$ _____ paid on ____/____/____, by CASH or CHECK # _____

Member's signature _____

OPTION 2 - ABGC Dues + Raised bed rental

Apollo Beach Garden Club Dues: \$15.00 single, \$25 couple

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs: \$12.00 per household (Joining the federation is optional)

Yearly Raised Bed Rental: \$50

Name: _____

e-mail: _____ Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Leasing raised bed: # _____ (to be assigned by ABGC board member)

Membership total \$ _____ paid on ____/____/____, by CASH or CHECK # _____

Member's signature _____

By signing here you agree to comply with the Rules and Regulations Stated in the Document "Raised Bed Lease Agreement" made available to you online at <https://apollobeachgardenclub.com/member-information/>. Failure to abide by these rules can result in early termination of your lease.

To pay and finalize, fill out this form and bring it to the next Garden Club meeting (3rd Tuesday of the month at the Recreation Center, 664 Golf and Sea Blvd, Apollo Beach, FL 33572), payments will not be accepted outside this time.



Making Kimchi in the Community Garden: A Taste of Tradition and Innovation

In the heart of the community garden, a unique and flavorful event took place – the making of kimchi using Chinese cabbage grown right in the garden beds. This special project not only celebrated local agriculture but also brought together members to explore the rich tradition of fermentation in a fresh, collaborative way.

Kimchi, a staple in Korean cuisine, is traditionally made by fermenting vegetables like napa cabbage with a mix of spices. However, in this garden-inspired version, the base was Chinese cabbage, an ingredient with a slightly different texture and flavor, making for a slightly altered but still delicious result. The process began with brining the cabbage to help soften it and draw out excess moisture, a crucial step in any successful fermentation.

As the cabbage brined, the seasoning mixture came together. A blend of garlic, onion, chili powder, apple, coconut aminos, coconut sugar, ginger, and green onions created a vibrant, spicy, and slightly sweet flavor profile. The addition of apple provided a hint of freshness, while the coconut aminos and sugar brought depth and balance to the mix. The ingredients came together harmoniously, creating a seasoning paste that was then massaged into the cabbage, ready for fermentation.

The wild fermentation process, where naturally occurring bacteria work their magic, is one of the most fascinating aspects of kimchi-making. At the end of the session, everyone got to take home their very own jar of freshly made kimchi. The jars were left to ferment at home by each member for an average of 3 days, transforming the vegetables into tangy, probiotic-rich kimchi. This method allows the kimchi to develop unique flavors, depending on the environment and the microbes at play.

It was a rewarding experience not only for the palate but also for the sense of community and shared learning. We enjoyed putting the term "krautchi" – a playful fusion of "kraut" (as in sauerkraut) and "kimchi" in action, reflecting the blend of traditions in this fun, garden-based workshop. It was a morning full of good food, good company, and a deep dive into the wonders of fermentation.

See pictures below for fun krautchi!

Thank you!
Raleigh Barnes, ABGC Director of Committees







The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies." - Gertrude Jekyll

Places to visit



University of South Florida

<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/.ecore/where-we-are> Botanical Gardens | ECORE | College of Arts and Sciences

PLANT FESTIVALS

SPRING PLANT FESTIVAL

April 12th-13th, 9am- 3pm
Open to members at 8:30am

- \$10 Admission
- Free for Members & USF ID
- Children under 12 are free!



Volunteer to help always needed!!

Garden Visitor Hours -

Open to the Public

Tuesday and Saturday from 9 to 11

Garden is closed on Holidays

To schedule a tour outside regular hours email
apollobeachgardenclub@gmail.com



Object and Mission of the Apollo Beach Garden Club, Inc.:

The Object of the corporation is to enrich outdoor garden experiences through education programs, public awareness, and oversight of the Apollo Beach Community Forest Garden.

The Mission is for residents of Apollo Beach and the South Shore Community to learn about various common edible and Florida-friendly plants; and to also understand the significance of local environmental issues, opportunities and regenerative efforts.

2024-2025 Elected Board



President: Paula Olesen

Secretary: Nan Major

Treasurer: Ev Barnes

Community Forest Garden Coordinator: Annie Jiménez

Director of Committees: Raleigh Barnes

Past President: N/A



Committee Chairs

ABGC Leaf Newsletter Editor Chair: Jeanette Doyle

Marketing and Plant Sale Event Chair: Teresa Hall

Membership Chair: Annie Jiménez

Webmaster: Adam El-Ali

Program Chair: Chris Deno

Scholarship Chair: Raleigh Barnes



All inquiries to be sent to: apollobeachgardenclub@gmail.com

