

# St Marys Garden Club Newsletter

## December 2020

### **Dates and Events** (events are free unless noted)

Christmas events are all cancelled in St. Marys, but Kingsland is having holiday festivities from 5:30-7:30 pm on Thursday, Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> in downtown Kingsland. Santa, lights, cocoa, cookies, and SNOW!

**Wild Amelia Virtual Wild Nite—Tuesday, Dec. 8, 7 pm.** Topic is the North Florida Land Trust. Go to the Wild Amelia website and click on Wild Nites to get the Zoom codes.

### **Announcements**

Look for an email coming soon about our Garden Club December meeting. We may hold it at the park, weather permitting.

**Please bring any items for the Coastal Assisted Living** to give to Joan. If you can't make it, bring to Angel at the Episcopal church or to Joan at her house. Clothing, nonskid socks, slippers, personal care items.

### **Garden to-dos for December**

Late December is the time to transplant plants if the weather has turned cold. Keep them well watered for the next few months. If it is still warm, wait till they go dormant before moving them. Annuals for winter are carnations, digitalis, pansies, petunias, dianthus, and snapdragons. Plant vegetables such as broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, green peas, onions, and radishes. Water plants during dry spells, especially if it is cold and windy. Purchase frost blankets or round up the old sheets and be prepared to mulch and cover tender plants for winter protection. Spanish moss makes a good protective mulch for plants. After the holidays, plant poinsettias outside, but protect from freezing.

### **The Garden Maven's Advice to the "Floralorn"**

**Dear Garden Maven,**

I have some Satsuma oranges and lemons that aren't ripe enough to pick yet, and we are supposed to be getting a frost. What can I do to protect them?

**Not a frozen lemonade fan**

**Dear Fan,**

You can cover the trees with sheets if they are small enough. Use clothespins to help keep them in place. Or if you are worried mostly about the fruit ( a few hours of freezing weather shouldn't hurt the tree) you can use clothespins and paper lunch bags around the fruit. Some people swear by Christmas lights to help keep things just warm enough. Spanish moss is also a good insulator, it has all those little air spaces and dries out fairly fast. I once put it on my lemon tree for most of the winter. Don't use plastic sheeting because it conducts cold. If the winter gets really cold and you are worried about the tree, you can loosely (you don't want wet cardboard right on it all winter) staple some corrugated cardboard around the trunk. But it usually doesn't get that cold here.

**The Maven**

### **Plant Hero of the Month:**

My sleeping hibiscus is in full bloom like bright red Santa hats. Night blooming jasmine is finishing up this round of blooms and the bleeding heart vine is starting to bloom. Yesterday, today and tomorrow is blooming well, and the shrimp plant is continuing to put out the flowers. Bolivian Sunset is extra early this year. If it wasn't so chilly I'd think it was summer! Oh, and start sniffing around for those shy tea olives. What a beautiful smell! Joyce sometimes cuts a few sprigs and puts them among the Christmas greens in the house and it smells wonderful.