

# The Villagers wow crowds with Garden Tour venues



The Villagers knocked it out of the park again with this year's "Tropical Oasis" Garden Tour that featured gardens in High Pines and Coral Gables, one more beautiful than the next.

This always is an educational tour as well because The Villagers have knowledgeable people at each location to help answer questions and share information on the plants and the property.

Aside from the tour of gardens, The Villagers' Boutique at St. Thomas was especially fun where guests shopped for unique art, vintage jewelry, garden-related gift items, plants and more. Of course, **Rita Tennyson's** pop-up café on-site again this year was a hit with lots of delicious food for purchase. Most everyone also left with lots



Rotary Club of Coral Gables president Frank Sexton presents Zoo Miami's Ron Magill, a recent meeting's guest speaker, with a certificate for polio vaccines donated by the club in his name.

of plants, this writer included, and some great baked goods like **Susan Medina's** amazing poppy seed loaf.

Kudos to event chair **Carmen Diaz-Padron**, co-chair **Molly Gail Kiely**, along with so many other members playing an instrumental part in making the affair a success including **Sheila Revell**, **Lillian Walby**, **Kelley Schild**, **Sweet Pea Eliman**, **Karen Buchsbaum**, **Bonnie Hutton** and **Renee Betancourt**. Proceeds from this event support the organization's historic preservation projects and university scholarships for students studying historic preservation.

In other news, South Miami Rotary

Club's SoMi Art Festival took place the weekend of Feb. 24-25. This popular "free" event, produced by a dedicated group of South Miami Rotary volunteers, grows every year with ongoing support from the 1st National Bank of South Miami and, this year, additional support from the City of South Miami allowing them to add a second stage in Sunset Drive near US1.

Proceeds from the event help the club provide scholarships and donate to other charitable outreach efforts. One of the many event co-chairs, **Laurie Kahn**, was a recent guest on *Gloria's Gab LIVE* to promote the event. To view, go to <https://youtube.com/live/MyaAEn3RRnw?feature=share>.

The Rotary Club of Coral Gables attracts amazing guest speakers to its weekly Thursday luncheons at the Hyatt Regency Coral Gables. Recent guests included Miami-Dade Mayor **Daniella Levine Cava** and Zoo Miami's **Ron Magill**.

Program chair **Felix Pardo** does an outstanding job of inviting speakers who are both educational and entertaining which adds so much to any Rotary meeting. The Rotary Club of Coral Gables meets every Tuesday, noon, at the Hyatt Regency Coral Gables. For more information on this club, visit <https://www.facebook.com/RotaryCoralGables>.

District Rotarians are all about environmental sustainability and have ongoing projects

**Robert Bull** encourages all to get involved with the 42nd anniversary of Baynanza, that will have 33 locations across the county to clean up Biscayne Bay, to take place on Saturday, Apr. 13, 9 a.m. to noon. To participate, go to the Baynanza registration site and select two locations where you want to clean the beaches.

On the cultural front, the Tony-nominated *Caroline, or Change* will run at Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre from Mar. 27 through Apr. 14. The musical features a wonderful score by **Jeanine Tesori** (*Shrek The Musical*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*), blending blues, gospel and traditional Jewish melodies, while creating a musical backdrop for Pulitzer Prize-winner **Tony Kushner's** (*Angels in America*) provocative and personal story. For info and tickets, go to [www.actorsplayhouse.org](http://www.actorsplayhouse.org).

Finally, Mar. 20 is the date for a Coral Gables Woman's Club Bunco Night fundraiser at the clubhouse, 1001 E. Ponce de Leon Blvd. President's Project chair **Meredeth McKissick** is coordinating the event with proceeds benefitting Camp Boggy Creek.

On Saturday, May 11, the club's fundraising chair, **Rita Tennyson**, is planning the club's annual Mother's Day Tea with an *Alice in Wonderland* theme where you will find this writer as the Queen of Hearts. For more information on the club and its events, visit [gfccoralgableswomensclub.org](http://gfccoralgableswomensclub.org).

Until next time, share your time and talents, count your blessings, and make a difference.



Pictured at Rotary Club of South Miami's SoMi Art Festival are (l-r) Linda Hartwell, artist Ernesto Rodrigues Corris, Susana Milhem, and Gloria Burns.



Enjoying The Villagers Garden Tour are (l-r) Ruth Martinez, John and Susan Medina, and Meredith McKissick.



Stephanie and Carmen Montoya enjoy the beach at Maison Romantique, one of the many amazing venues on the 2024 Villagers Garden Tour.