



VISTA MATTERS

- July Edition -

Time to Renew Your Membership!

Attention gardeners! VISTA membership terms extend to July 31, and the new membership season begins August 1. For the **2022-23 season**, VISTA will be doing annual memberships only, retiring the semi-annual memberships.

If you didn't attend the June 18 meeting, please attend the **All Gardeners Meeting on Saturday, July 9 at 8:30 a.m.** You'll learn about renewing your membership, how to operate the new automatic gate and how to order seedlings for fall.

We'll begin renewing memberships on July 1, and you'll be able to do it online. (Watch for an email with renewal links.) **Please renew and pay your dues by August 1.** VISTA's membership team looks forward to another great gardening year with the VISTA garden community.

Events

VISTA Fundraiser

Monday, June 27, 11:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. **Terra Sur**

Mention VISTA Gardens and 10% of your lunch, dinner or carry out purchase will be donated to VISTA.

All Gardeners Meeting

Saturday, July 9, 8:30 a.m. VISTA Pavilion

Please attend to learn about new gate, membership renewal, fall seedlings

Seeding Next Season's Plants

Join HRS volunteers at the pavilion to create soil blocks, sow seeds and do up-planting. Email [Deb Ramos](#) to volunteer.

- Saturday, July 23, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Seeding eggplants and peppers
- Saturday, Aug 6, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Seeding tomatoes and up-planting eggplants and peppers
- Tuesday, Aug 16, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Up-planting tomatoes
- Saturday, Aug 20, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Seeding broccoli, collards, kale
- Tuesday, Sept 6, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Up-plant broccoli, collards, kale

Got Gate Guidelines?

VISTA has a new gate system, and it will become **active on Monday, July 11.**

There is a gate **orientation on Saturday, July 9, at 8:30 a.m.** During the orientation, you'll learn how to use the keypad and program your car's door opener (for those who have newer model cars). Should you have flexibility or mobility challenges, please email [Jennifer](#). We have a few remote gate opening devices to lend to members who have special needs.



Marty explains gate operation

[READ MORE](#)

Reserve Your Fall Seedlings

VISTA's House of the Rising Seeds (HRS) Committee is preparing to plant and tend seedlings for gardeners to transplant in the Fall 2022 growing season.



Seedlings growing in the HRS

More heat tolerant peppers, eggplants and tomatoes will be ready for your gardens on September 17. **Vegetables that thrive in cooler weather**, such as broccoli, collards and kale, will be ready to transplant October 8. Of course, dates will adjust based on seasonal temperatures.

Place your seedling orders by July 20, so that the HRS Committee raises the number of seedlings gardeners need. Seasonal Garden members with raised garden beds have priority. We ask our Social members to email [Deb Ramos](#), HRS Chair, about seedlings before ordering. **Deb will answer questions about seedling orders at the July 9, All Gardeners Meeting.**

To order your seedlings, check out the [Fall Seedling webpage](#) and click on an item photo to go to the online store.

- It's fun to sow seeds! See Events in this newsletter for the dates, mark your calendar, and **join the planting with HRS volunteers.**
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The Compost Committee Needs Volunteers

Every day, except Saturday, VISTA volunteers stop by the Food Pantry at the nearby Presbyterian church and pick up discarded fruits and veggies. That produce makes up a big part of our compost system. Also, on Thursday and Saturday mornings, volunteers help turn the compost in VISTA's compost shed. During the summer, we need folks to fill in when regular volunteers are on vacation.

As gardeners, we all appreciate VISTA's "black gold" compost that helps our gardens become more robust. We need your help in continuing to make that happen. If you are available to help, please email [Rolfe](#).

A Heartfelt Thank You to the Queen of Compost

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart." – Elizabeth Andrew

As she steps out of her role as Compost Chair, the VISTA Gardens family wants to express our sincere thanks to M.J. Wentzel for her years of dedication.

During her tenure, she blazed a trail, working tirelessly to update the compost area with a large shade covering, new bins, new sifting stations and so many other improvements. Her energy, lively music and sheer love of vermicomposting kept volunteers engaged, and fellow volunteers like Jim Foley praised her tenacity and commitment.



For years, M.J. led the charge for all things compost related. "M.J. developed the Food Pantry pickup process that's been so successful," said Jim. That success helped VISTA compost about 16 tons of food waste last year.

M.J. educated children—and anyone else who would stand still long enough—about vermiculture and her beloved Red Wigglers. Rolfe Evenson said, "Everything we have at the garden related to vermiculture is really from the work and research M.J. has done." Here is a **tribute in pictures to the Queen of Compost.**

Introducing scouts to
Red Wigglers



A buffet for worms



Harvesting
vermicompost from
well-fed worms



The leaf gatherer

M.J. and Jim sift
through world problems



M.J. and Rolfe celebrate
the composter's palace

Say Hello to VISTA's New Committee Chairs

VISTA's Board is pleased to announce that **Rolfe Evenson** (AE1,2) and **Becca Petrilak** (AW6) will co-chair the Compost Committee (taking M.J. Wentzel's place). **Mike Arnold** (CW7) also has agreed to serve as Chair of the Volunteers Committee (taking **Lauren Kremenova's** place; thank you Lauren for all your work in getting that newer committee up and running!).

It surely does take a village to keep VISTA going, and we very much appreciate all of our members who step up to volunteer their time and expertise.

VISTA Membership Committee

At VISTA Gardens, our members are our top priority. To support both our Social Members and our Seasonal Gardener Members, VISTA established a dedicated **Membership Committee**. This committee ensures all garden members understand general garden operations, are connected to a VISTA committee for volunteer participation, and are on the list for a garden bed, if desired.



Rolfe giving a tour to prospective members

Currently, the Membership Committee is excitedly focused on **preparing for the 2022/2023 garden season**. At VISTA, we have 65 garden plots. To fill these plots for the upcoming season, the Membership Committee will invite current bed owners to join the next season, and any free beds will be available to our Social Members.

As mentioned in this newsletter's lead story, **please attend the All Gardeners Meeting on July 9 at 8:30** if you did not attend the meeting on June 18.

Our current Membership Committee members include **Rolfe Evenson** who is our Welcome Liaison, **Vivian Fernandez** who leads new member orientations, **Holli Mejia** who leads the newsletter coordination, and **Keshia Arlinghaus** who is the Membership Committee Chair. The Membership Committee is **looking for additional volunteer members** to support membership operations, so if you're interested, please contact [Keshia](#). Here's to a flourishing 2022/2023 season!

Prepare Your Garden Bed for Summer

Florida summers are the hottest and wettest months of the year and the time to prepare for the fall growing season.

Most gardeners will bed-rest their plot or grow a cover crop to allow the soil to renourish, while some gardeners may continue to grow a limited summer crop. Keeping up with your maintenance during this time will ensure the health of your garden through the summer and a better harvest next season.



An Artist in the Garden



Jada with her painting of VISTA

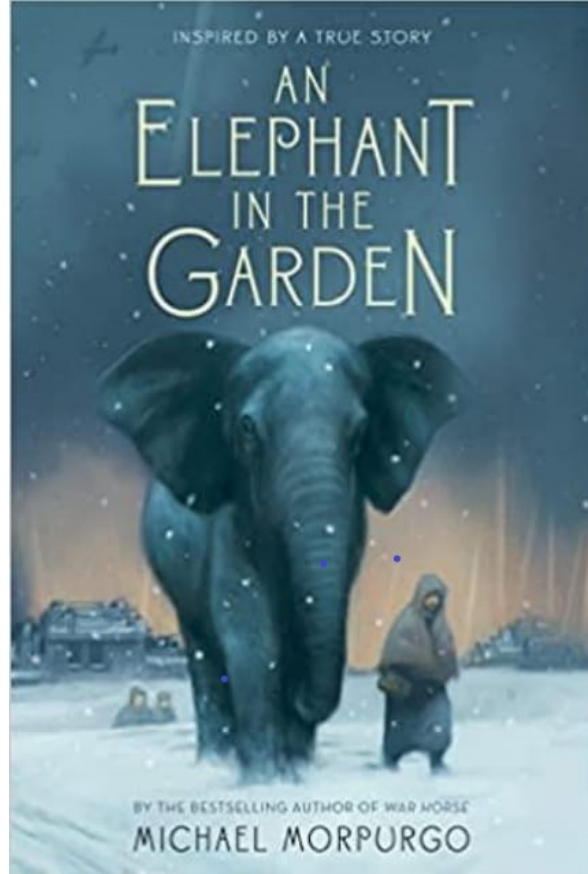
Nature has been inspiring artists throughout human history. Recently, Jada, a young Carrollwood Village resident, found her muse in the verdant surrounds of the garden.

“One day after school my mom took me to see VISTA Gardens, as I had never been there before,” said Jada. “As soon as I got there, I noticed the abundance of beautiful flowers and the placidity of the pond area.”

Jada said, "A few days prior, I was assigned to pick an artist and create an artwork in their style for art class. I already knew my artist would be Claude Monet, who is one of my favorite artists, but I didn't know what I would paint. Well... that was until I went to VISTA Gardens. I started scrolling through scenic photos I had taken on my phone from my visit and came across a photo of the bridge and lantern, and I just loved everything about it. The small river of water under the bridge almost looked like it could be part of a small village, and the vibrant color of the red lantern made it the perfect subject for my painting."

New in the Little Free Library

An Elephant in the Garden
by Michael Morpurgo



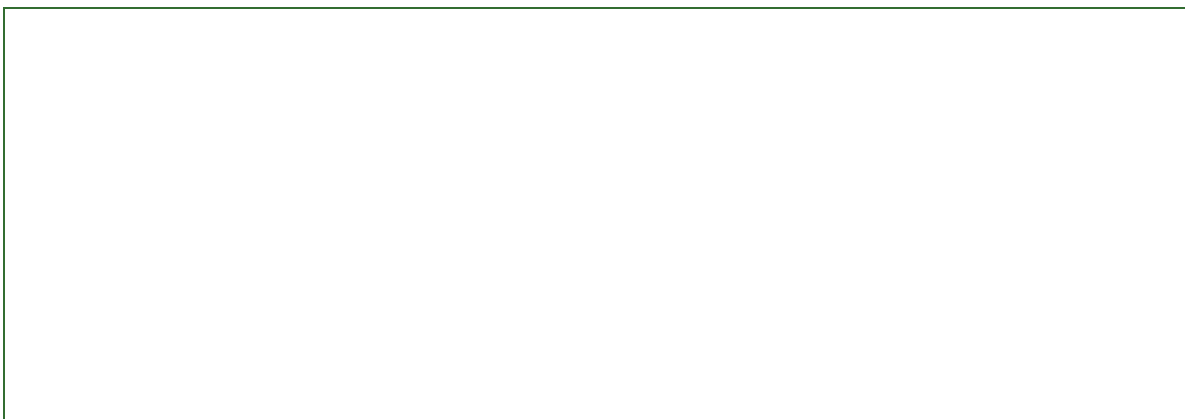
Read more about this book by clicking on the book image.

Both VISTA and our community appreciate [Forever Friends](#) for the grant to purchase books for the Little Free Library.

Florida Native Plant of the Month

Did you know that there is more than one **Tall elephantsfoot** in VISTA's Wildflower Garden? Curious? You can find them along the pathway west of the arbor. Ours are about to bloom and you'll see that they are in the daisy family!

According to the Florida Wildflower Foundation, this plant received its common name due to "the rosette of flat basal leaves that, with a bit of imagination, bear a tiny resemblance to the shape of an elephant's footprint."





Tall elephantsfoot - Florida Wildflower Foundation

Pictured above: Tall elephantsfoot (*Elephantopus elatus*) by Mary Keim. Click on terms for botanical definitions. View post as a PDF. You'd probably expect an elephant-sized flower from a plant called Tall elephantsfoot(*Elephantopus elatus*), but ...

[Read more](#)

www.flawildflowers.org

Click here to submit your photos and stories for future editions of VISTA Matters.

VISTA Gardens
13572 South Village Drive
Tampa, Florida 33618

Connect with us

