

EDISON
and
FORD
winter
ESTATES

HOMES · GARDENS · MUSEUM
LABORATORY



LEARN HOW TO CREATE A BUTTERFLY GARDEN ON SEPTEMBER 10.

MEMBER MAGAZINE
SEPTEMBER 2022

EDISON and FORD winter ESTATES

2350 McGregor Boulevard
Fort Myers, FL 33901
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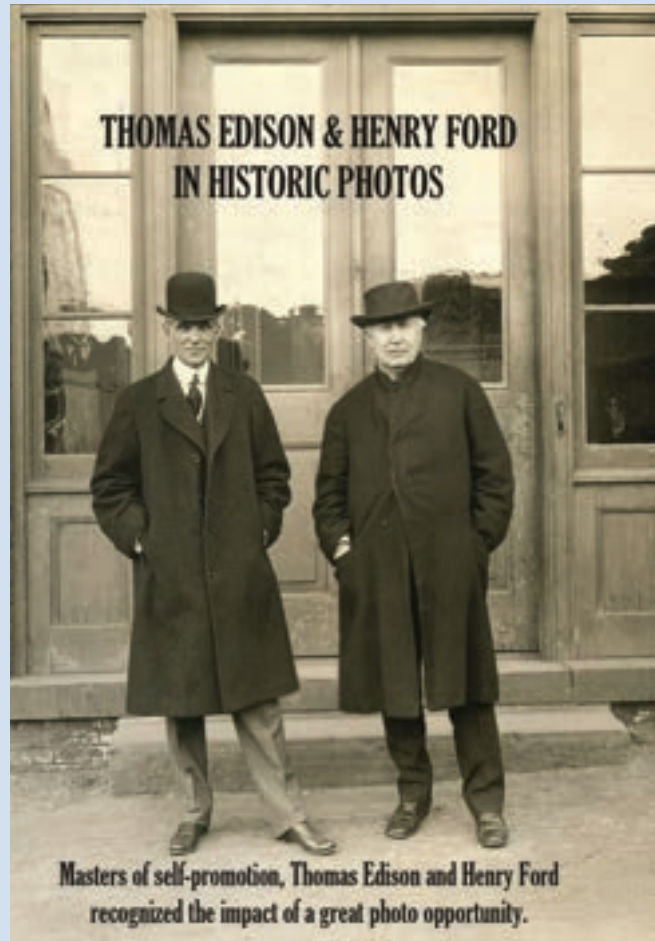
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To become a member of Edison Ford,
apply at **edisonford.org/membership**

CONNECT WITH US



"Famous Friends" Photography Exhibit

This time of year is always hot; however, there are a few areas around the site that are air-conditioned: the Museum and Store, Edison's Caretaker's House, and the Ford Cottage Shoppe. To stay cool, drink lots of water and spend some time in each location as you meander around the gardens.

Edison's Caretaker's House is one of the oldest standing structures in Southwest Florida. The central portion of the home existed when Edison purchased the property in 1885. Today, it is used to house art exhibits and where Santa has his workshop during Holiday Nights.

From now until spring, visitors can take a glimpse into the lives of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford through the eyes of photographers. The black and white photography exhibit features photos of the men at work, including Ford with his Model T and Edison standing in his research gardens.

Included with admission.

SEPTEMBER

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE:

More details on each event and program are included in the following pages and on the website.

EdisonFord.org

September 7, 14, 21, 28	Yoga by the River
September 6	Emerging Inventors
September 10	Garden Talk
September 20	Digital Discussion

GENERAL HOURS

Open Daily
9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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ADMISSION

Guided Tour:

Edison Ford Members: \$5
Adults: \$30
Teens: (ages 13-19) \$25
Children: (ages 6-12) \$18
Children: (ages 5 and under) FREE

Self-Guided Tour:

Edison Ford Members: FREE
Adults: \$25
Teens: (ages 13-19) \$20
Children: (ages 6-12) \$15
Children: (ages 5 and under) FREE

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ON THE COVER:

A Monarch butterfly sips sweet nectar from a Zinnia in our new butterfly garden.

VIP TOUR TO DADE CITY

Heritage & Cultural Museum, Historic Downtown Tour, Lunch and Pioneer Florida Museum and Village

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29 • 7 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

COST: Edison Ford members: \$155 Per Person; Non-Members: \$175

JOIN US FOR THE FIRST VIP TOUR OF THE SEASON!

On this tour, guests will experience authentic Dade City within the rolling hills of Florida as we travel back to the pioneer times of the 1880s. Prior to 1880, Dade City was known as Fort Dade and it was an Army Post during the second Seminole War. When the railroad bypassed Fort Dade by a few miles to the east, the whole town packed up and moved east to be next to the railroad. In 1884, the new town was incorporated as Dade City.

Our first location on this step back in history will be the Dade City Heritage and Cultural Museum, the 1912 train depot. Here you will learn about early train travel, view related artifacts and if you like trains, you will definitely want to check out the model train room. Next, we will head to downtown for a historic walking tour, with Pasco County experts to learn about early Dade City historic landmarks, including the Pasco County Courthouse.

Lunch will be provided in a private dining room at Kafe Kokopelli. This Kafe is housed in a building that was built in 1916 by the Ford Motor Company for Model T sales and service. Ford built a new location in the late 1970s and the location hosted multiple businesses until 1996 when it was renovated to a 150-seat restaurant. The rooms have murals depicting Florida life in East Pasco County and many photos from the dealership. The name Kafe Kokopelli comes from the southwest Native American Indian god. There are many Kokopelli gods, but the most popular, a flute player, was considered the god of Mischief and Fertility.

Our final destination of the day will be to the Pioneer Florida Museum and Village, with 16 acres of land and many historic buildings including a train depot, locomotive, schoolhouse, church and the Overstreet House. Pioneer living was not easy, but the people were essentially just





like us. They wanted shelter, food and to improve their way of life. At the Pioneer Florida Museum and Village, they believe “through history we can better understand where we have been, where we are now and how we can do better.” This village and museum “depict pioneer village life and recalls the simple value of our forebears, asserts the dignity of labor and emphasizes the value of craftsmanship.”

There also will be a special presentation on Florida’s Seminole Wars. This living history presentation will include a battle and skirmish, primitive skills demonstrations and a private talk and tour to round out the day. You may want to bring a foldable lawn-type chair or towel to sit on during the outdoor presentation.

For questions or to make a reservation for this tour, please contact Sherri Muske at 239-335-3677 or smuske@edisonford.org. Tours fill up quickly, so please reserve your space early.

Times are approximate and are at the discretion of staff. Please note that all tours include a lot of walking, bus stairs and sometimes maneuvering in tight spaces. Please plan accordingly.



CANCELLATION POLICY – Cancellations must be made 14 days prior to the tour date to receive a full refund, unless the vacancy can be filled. Cancellations made by Edison and Ford due to unforeseen circumstances will warrant a full refund or credit for another tour in the same season.

DIGITAL DISCUSSION: WHO IS GETTYSBURG EDDIE?

SEPTEMBER 20 • 10:30 a.m.

Eddie Plank was a Hall of Fame baseball player from the Philadelphia Athletics who held two baseball records. He was a left-handed pitcher with the most complete games and he had more shutouts than any other southpaw. After retiring from baseball, he returned to his hometown of Gettysburg where he passed away at the age of 50.

Join us for this free digital discussion on the story of Eddie Plank, AKA "Gettysburg Eddie."

Registration is required at EdisonFord.org
(go to the *September calendar*).



YOGA BY THE RIVER

EVERY WEDNESDAY • 10-11 A.M.

Yoga offers us a deeper connection to our inner self, nature and to the community. This one-hour yoga class allows you to step away from all the 21st century gadgets and focus on the moment. Yoga helps to recharge the body, mind, and spirit. Class will be held in the River Pavilion during the summer months. All skill levels welcome. The class is taught by Bonnie D'Angelo, a certified yoga instructor. Bonnie started her journey as a yoga teacher to further support her own spiritual growth. She is RYT200 certified with Yoga Alliance and working toward RYT300. She is certified in Reiki 1 and Reiki 2 and will continue the path toward Reiki Master & Energy Worker.



COST: Edison Ford members: \$15; non-members: \$20 per class (Tickets may be purchased online or at the ticket counter). **Bring a yoga mat, water and towel.** Admission to the site is not included.



PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

For children ages 18 months to five years, the Emerging Inventors program includes socializing with other children, educational activities, science experiments, and exploration of the Edison and Ford Winter Estates. The program runs September through May and is based out of the new Wizard's Workshop gallery space. Become a family member of Edison Ford and receive discounted registration! Programs take place the first Tuesday of every month from 9-10 a.m.

COST: members: \$10 each class or \$70 for the series; non-members: \$15 each class or \$105 for the series.

Cost includes one adult and one child. Space is limited.

K-8 PROGRAMS

In addition to monthly classes for preschoolers and homeschoolers, Edison Ford offers a variety of special-interest programs for children in grades K-8. When school is out, the Wild Wizards are in! Explore topics in STEAM, history, and nature from 9 am to 4 pm daily.

SPOOKY SCIENCE SCHOOL BREAK CAMP (GRADES 1-6)

OCTOBER 14 • 9 A.M.-4 P.M.

An October tradition at Edison Ford; get into the spirit with mad science experiments during this one-day camp.

COST: members \$45; non-members \$50 • **Register at EdisonFord.org**

Charles and Emma Sibley

By Alexandria Edwards, Marketing & Public Relations Coordinator

Charles and Emma Sibley were close acquaintances of the Edison family, and they made a lasting impact in many cities through their charitable work. Mr. Sibley was born near Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1868 and moved to Madison to study telegraphy. After relocating, Charles worked as a night operator at the old Lake Shore Railroad Company in Appleton. In 1889, Mr. Sibley left the Lake Shore Company and opened a new telegraph station at Kimberly; however, he was fascinated by paper mills, so he stepped away from his career as a telegrapher and accepted a job at the Kimberly Mill.

In Appleton, Charles met Emma Lehman, the daughter of a well-known local family, and the couple was married on June 22, 1892, at her parent's home. Following their marriage, Sibley became a scaler for the Appleton Pulp Wood Supply company until 1897, when he was offered a bookkeeping position at the Thilmany Pulp and Paper Company. The couple continued to live in Appleton when Charles started at the paper company, so he often traveled to work by train, which left the station at 6:30 a.m. and returned at 9:45 p.m.

Mr. Sibley made great efforts to know every employee by their first name and always checked on the entire plant to make sure everything was okay at the end of the day. Throughout his time at the company, he was very valuable in growing the business by focusing on sales and developing new products. Through his hard work and dedication, Sibley took on more responsibilities and was made manager of the company two years later. Some of Sibley's notable contributions to the paper industry included a perfected process of making wax paper and water marking checks. In 1901, Sibley was invited to become a member of the Board of Directors and stayed with the company until he passed away in 1941.

The following year, the Sibley family moved to Kaukauna and designed a home with the help of the Van Ryn and DeGelleke architects. The three-story, red brick home was built along the Fox River facing Wisconsin Avenue and was considered one of the largest, most elegant residential

structures in Kaukauna. Several rooms in the mansion were finished in mahogany; however, the second story was designed with oak and birch, and the third-floor ballroom featured California redwood. The interior was filled with many fine materials and furnishings, including oriental rugs and antique oak chairs. Among the interior decorations, the famed "Lion Table" with a rectangular top containing a mosaic of colored wood and legs shaped into a lion's head that Sibley purchased in Germany stood out. Other unique features in this early twentieth century house included a central vacuum, an intercom telephone line, and closets with automatic lights that turned on when the door was opened.

When Charles and Emma were not working, they spent time socializing with individuals in the community and were members of many organizations. Mrs. Sibley was a leader in the Red Cross during World War I and was passionate about teaching individuals about gardening. She frequently hosted garden teas at her home, as well as dinners at the Conway Hotel in Appleton. She also participated in the annual Fargo's Furniture Store Flower Show and usually won prizes for her floral displays. Charles belonged to hunting, fishing, and other clubs in Kaukauna, where he made efforts to improve the community, such as donating land for the Outagamie County Teachers College.

Not only did the Sibleys spend their free time giving back to the community, but they were both avid trapshooters, and were part of the Kaukauna Gun Club, the Northeastern Wisconsin Trapshooting League, as well as other clubs in Florida. The couple entered many shooting matches in Wisconsin and often placed at the top in competitions. In 1925, the couple placed well in a trapshooting event at Lake Park in Milwaukee with Charles scoring 92 hits out of 100, and Emma 80 out of 100. The Kaukauna Times reported, "KAW Marksmen Rest in Honor. Place in loop. Winning squad were Mrs. C.W. Sibley, Joseph Jansen, Clem Hilgenberg, and C.W. Sibley." The following year, Emma set a record at Sheboygan when she scored 98 out of 100. Throughout the winter months, they continued

entering tournaments in Florida and Emma won the Ladies' Florida State Trapshooting championship with a score of 98 out of 100 in 1927, 1928, and 1930.

After dedicating numerous hours to the war efforts, the Sibleys decided to take a vacation to Fort Myers in 1918 after seeing a fishing advertisement in a sportsman's magazine. They liked the area so much that after staying at the Bradford Hotel a couple times, they decided to build a home there, adjacent to Henry Ford's estate. The large Mediterranean-style house was 5,044 square feet and completed in 1926. Inside, the villa contained five bedrooms, 6.5 bathrooms, a kitchen, dining, and a large living room, plus a four-car airconditioned garage. The property faced the Caloosahatchee River and the grounds totaled roughly five acres, featuring a plethora of grapefruit and orange trees.

Throughout their visits, Mrs. Sibley took an active role in garden beautification projects with her close friend and neighbor, Mina Edison. On one special occasion, the Fort Myers Branch of the National Plant, Flower and Fruit Guild held their fifth annual flower show at the downtown exhibition hall. Visitors had the opportunity to see many rare and beautiful flowers on display, remarking that the show was worthy of being held in a much larger city and the collection of Florida flowers was especially fine. Mrs. Thomas A. Edison exhibited various designs of place cards and cups fashioned out of shells that were so intricate a magnifying glass had to be used to appreciate the details. Mina shared that her arrangements would be used at an upcoming dinner party, marking the 15th wedding anniversary of Mrs. Edison's son, Charles and his wife Carolyn.

Along with shows, Emma Sibley conducted garden group education classes throughout Fort Myers and taught members of the community about nature. She also served as president of the local Music Club, created to demonstrate the positive impacts that music can have on daily life and bring the community together. The Club hosted numerous musicales throughout the town, including one at the Seminole Lodge, attended by 150 members and their guests. Many people reported the setting of the tropical gardens throughout the Edison's estate added to the performances.

In 1922, Henry Ford decided to buy additional land adjacent to his property from the Sibleys to add to his winter estate. With the addition, Mr. Ford's property extended 300 feet



along the Caloosahatchee River. After selling this part of the property to Ford, Mr. Sibley purchased a little portion of Harvie Heitman's Fort Myers home and drafted plans for a new seawall. A unique feature of this improvement was a 40 x 50-foot boat basin that extended into the Sibley's property.

Several years later in 1929, the Sibleys were on the reception committee that welcomed President-elect, Herbert Hoover, his wife, and son to Thomas Edison's Fort Myers estate to celebrate Edison's birthday. During the celebration, the group toured the City of Fort Myers in a procession of cars, stopping at each of the city's schools. The American Legion trumpet and drum corps played Hoover's favorite march as he passed their station at the corner of First and Broadway Street. Following the conclusion of the parade, the party returned to Edison's home, where they held a birthday luncheon. A major feature of the celebration was a large pound cake with white icing topped with a single candle.

The couple continued to spend the rest of their life vacationing in Fort Myers and the ownership of the house was transferred to Mr. Sibley's sister-in-law, Nathalie Matthes, until her death. The villa was later sold and placed on the National Register of Historic Homes as the Casa Rio Villa in 1996. In 2001, John A. Carbona, AveXis founder and biotechnology executive purchased the home.

When you visit Edison and Ford Winter Estates, be sure to stroll the historic district around the site for an unforgettable experience that you will remember for years to come.

NEW FUN & FESTIVE EVENTS

WINE & CHEESE PAIRING

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7 • 5:30-7 P.M.

We're partnering with The Wine Room and Grazing Haus to offer visitors the opportunity to sample wine and cheese at the historic site. The event will take place in the river pavilion, along the Caloosahatchee River. Guests are invited to sip wine, enjoy relaxing music and have a chance to see a beautiful sunset. Each participant will receive two red wine tastings and two white from different regions, paired with four cheese samples. Instructors from The Wine Room and Grazing Haus will discuss the pairings and will have additional wine and cheese available for purchase.



TICKETS: \$75 for non-members and \$65 for Edison Ford members.

Advance, online registration is required by 5 p.m. on Monday, October 3.

Space is limited. Register at EdisonFord.org.





Fall Festival

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29 • 9 A.M.-4 P.M.

JOIN US for our first ever family-friendly Fall Festival! Come spend the day with us as you stroll along and shop craft vendor booths, get something to eat and drink and listen to music!
Open to the public.

Activities:

Banyan Tree Climb Sponsored by FNGLA (\$45 for non-members; \$35 for Edison Ford members); pre-registration encouraged as space fills up quickly.

Additional fee for each vendor:

- Pumpkin Patch (*cash preferred to purchase pumpkins*) with the option to paint pumpkins
- Axe throwing
- Archery
- Face Painting
- Balloon Art
- Fairy Hair
- Science Experiments



SAVE THE DATE:

Decorate Christmas

**DECEMBER 19, 20, 21, or 22
6-8 P.M.**

Decorate cookies, drink cocoa and see the Holiday Nights lights! This new event provides families with a night out to see the lights and still get the cookies made! Save the date for this new fun event!

Tickets are \$125 for a family of 4 (includes entry to Holiday Nights).

More information will be available soon!

COOKIES





Tours and Programs

Historian-led guided tours and self-guided tours of the site are offered daily. Through the app, narration is available in English, French, German, and Spanish. A web-based version is also available, which does not require downloading the app. Site maps are available in English, French, German, Spanish and Chinese.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11 a.m., special presentations are offered in the museum.

Guided tours in German are available on Wednesdays at 11 a.m.

Cost: \$30 per person



Automotive Tour

MONDAYS • 10:30 A.M.

Join Automotive Curator James Moss, for a new perspective on the evolution of the automobile. Learn about production and how to operate a vehicle. From the Model T to the Model A, gasoline to electric, the Ford Motor Company and beyond, the Automotive Tour promises to offer a new way to connect with one of our most popular collections. Reservations are not required for this tour.

Cost: Edison Ford Members: \$15; non-members: Adults \$40, Teens (13-19) \$30, Children (6-12) \$16.



Inside-the-Homes Tours

TUESDAYS • 10:00 A.M. (first come, first served)

THURSDAYS • 10:00 A.M. (pre-registration required)

This tour is a unique opportunity to take a sneak peek inside normally-closed areas of Thomas Edison's "Seminole Lodge" and Henry Ford's "The Mangoes." Approximate tour time is 90 minutes to two hours. (Allow additional time to view the museum, laboratory, and gardens.)

Limited reservations available for this tour, pre-registration required by calling **239-335-3674**. Tours on Tuesdays offered on a first-come, first served basis.

Cost: Edison Ford members: free (one time); non-members: Adults \$50, Teens (13-19) \$35, Children (6-12) \$20.



Karen Maxwell, Horticultural Specialist, giving a garden tour.

Guided Garden Tour

Available by appointment for groups of 5 or more.

The Edison and Ford Winter Estates botanical gardens contain more than 1,700 plants from six continents including flowering plants and trees, fruit trees, palms, bamboo, cycads, vines, roses, orchids, and Florida natives. On this tour, an experienced horticulturist leads visitors through the 20-acre site and highlights the different types of plants and their importance to the Edison and Ford families. Visitors will see the Moonlight Garden, many rare plants and get to go behind-the-scenes in the propagating nursery. Some of the plants in the gardens are available for sale in the on-site Garden Shoppe. Call today to book your tour 239-334-7419.

Cost: \$40 per person.

Private Guided Tour

Available By Appointment for groups with a maximum of 15 people.

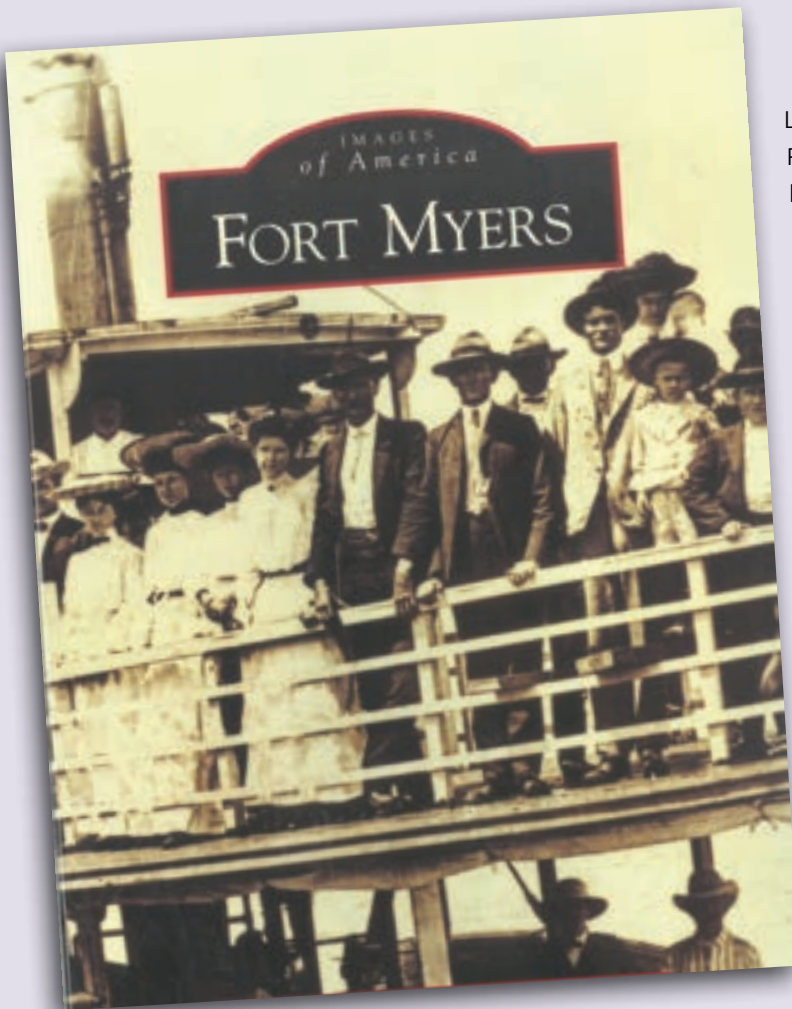
To accommodate families or small business groups, private guided tours are now available. These tours are for small groups and ensure that families will not be on a tour with other tourists. Masks are recommended on guided tours. Private tours should be reserved at least 48 hours in advance. During a private tour, visitors will see the historic winter homes of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford, the caretaker's houses, swimming pool complex, Edison's study, the Moonlight Garden, and more than 20 acres of botanical gardens. After the tour, visitors may take extra time to stroll the gardens, museum and botanic research laboratory at their own pace.

Cost: \$375 per group.

September Book of the Month:

IMAGES OF AMERICA

By Greg Turner and Stan Mulford



Learn about the history of Fort Myers accompanied by photographs of the time period. Discover when and how Fort Myers was founded, who it was named after and the battles that were fought here. Why did famous visitors such as Henry Ford and Thomas Edison settle here? You will uncover all those answers and learn more of the rich history of the "City of Palms."

Buy a copy in the museum store or have one shipped by calling 239-335-3661. Members receive 10% off the purchase price when purchased at the Estates.



GARDEN TALK: BUTTERFLY GARDENING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 • 10 A.M.

If you would like to learn how to attract and keep butterflies in your garden, don't miss this Garden Talk! Carly Pfalz will talk about which butterflies are prevalent in Lee County and the host and nectar plants needed for those butterflies.

Cost: \$10 for Edison Ford members; \$15 for non-members
Purchase tickets at the ticket counter the morning of the talk.

SAVE THE DATE:

ANNUAL ORCHID SALE & SYMPOSIUM

OCTOBER 1-2 • 9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

Did you know that the orchid was Mina Edison's favorite flower? This event will cover many topics on growing orchids. Workshops will be held outdoors, under the oak trees and surrounding areas. Vendors will have rare and unusual orchids for sale. Orchids also will be available in the Garden Shoppe.

A daily ticket is required to attend the workshops (\$20 for Edison Ford members; \$25 for non-members); the sale portion of the event is free to attend. Tickets do not include tours or admission to the museum, lab or riverside of the property. A limited number of garden carts will be available; guests are encouraged to bring their own. Food and beverage vendors will be onsite with refreshments available for purchase.

Cost for workshops each day: \$20 for Edison Ford members; \$25 for non-members

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE *(ticket required each day):*

SATURDAY

- 9:30-10:30 a.m. **Introduction to Orchids** by Mickey Carnell
- 11 a.m. - Noon **Benign Neglect** by Robert Riefer
- 1-2 p.m. **Orchid Mounting** by Debbie Hughes
- 2:30-3:30 p.m. **Growing Orchids from Seed** by Jim Davison

SUNDAY

- 9:30-10:30 a.m. **Growing Orchids in Trees** by Debbie Hughes
- 11 a.m. - Noon **Unraveling the Mysteries of Orchid Potting** by Stan Grazinski
- 1-2 p.m. **Democratization of Affordable Orchids** by Robert Riefer
- 2:30-3:30 p.m. **My Favorite Orchids** by John Hampton



Did Clara Ford Inspire the Farm to Table Movement?

By Karen Maxwell, Horticultural Specialist

My grandparents were gardeners of necessity. This occurs to me as I have spent nearly every day of the last few weeks putting the final touches on the wedding garden I have created for my daughter's imminent nuptials (more details on the wedding garden to follow in my October article). By comparison, a wedding garden is one of complete indulgence and joy, but it was the skills and interest my grandparents shared that imprinted on me for a lifetime.

As an immigrant from the Azores, my grandfather descended from a family of pineapple farmers – European farmers who got caught up in the pineapple rush of the late 1800s (as did Thomas Edison). The Azores were the only area in Europe capable of growing the tropical treat. Unfortunately, the erratic weather of these volcanic island farms located 900 miles west of mainland Portugal, doomed the pineapple economy in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Seeking an easier life, my grandparents were fortunate to acquire a small plot of land in Cambridge, Massachusetts. At that time, World War I was putting a squeeze on national resources, especially grains and large farm production, which had to be focused on sending sustenance to troops and allies overseas.

Though rationing did not take place in the U.S. during WWI, the U.S. Food Administration did undertake propaganda campaigns for “Meatless Meals” and “Wheatless Wednesdays,” lowering national consumption by 15% (on a voluntary basis). Large supermarkets were not yet on every other street corner. Canned and processed foods were suspected to be unhealthy and certainly not tasty. As WWI raged in Europe, the responsibility to feed the allies fell to the farmers of the United States; those farmers were predominantly women as their men were shipped to foreign lands.

In 1917, Charles Lathrop Pack created the “National War Garden Commission.” Sow the Seeds of Victory!, the posters implored. Everyone who had the space, began to grow their own fruits and fresh vegetables, and canned them to make it through the winters in the colder parts of the U.S. Of course, many people didn't have garden space, particularly in the cities whereby empty street corners, vacant lots, and parks became valuable commodities for food production – collectively known as Victory Gardens. These gardens gave people a sense of self-sufficiency and made healthy organic food readily available.

Victory Gardens continued through the second world war and became even more important when the U.S. did institute food rationing in 1942 under President Roosevelt, lasting until 1945. To the dismay of the White House, even Eleanor Roosevelt installed a victory garden in the decorative White House Lawn in support of the war efforts. Initially, FDR was so opposed to his wife's efforts, he asked federal soil scientists to inform the First Lady that the soil was nothing but rocks. Not easily swayed, Mrs. Roosevelt persevered with the help of the daughter of a presidential advisor. After observing little Diana Hopkin's efforts in the First Lady's Garden, FDR commented “I hope every American who possibly can, will grow a victory garden this year.” It made the difference between scarcity and abundance.

Without the benefit of Instagram and Facebook, promotion of the victory garden movement fell to the local garden clubs and women's groups. In 1914, an organization originated in Dearborn, Michigan, the Women's National Farm and Garden Association (wnfga.org). Famous for empowering an army of “farmerettes” while male farmers were fighting overseas, the WNFGA was created to provide training and locate employment for women in horticulture. Still active today, and yes, they



have a Facebook page! WNFGA continues to be based in Michigan, with several branches in Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania, and ironically, their archives now reside just down the road from my grandparent's home – at Harvard University.

Among the local horticultural luminaries and progressives in the Dearborn area was the wife of Henry Ford, Clara Bryant Ford. Clara, who passed away in September of 1950, was one of 10 children born to Michigan farmer Melvin Bryant. Also, a suffragist and a woman blessed with immense riches, she used her talents and opportunity to leave behind a sustaining legacy of empowering women as gardeners, farmers, and agricultural businesspeople.

Invited in 1927 to be their 5th national president, Clara Bryant Ford was to bring a new vision and direction to the organization by capitalizing on her rural roots and good fortune as a result of her marriage to Henry Ford. As she watched her husband change the American landscape with vehicles, she recognized an opportunity to provide much needed income and independence to the legions of farmerettes using vehicles to transport the farm and dairy products into the city or to a community marketplace.

Clara's vision was responsible for the first so-called Farmer's Markets in rural America, and she was determined to expand the promise of these markets throughout the United States. Now that Ford had provided the means of travel that greatly shortened the time of a journey, city residents could travel to the farming communities and back within a day. Clara quickly

realized that creating compact communities of farm stands with lots of parking in strategic locations would attract more buyers from the city in search of quality dairy goods and fresh produce.

Aided by the historical architect at Greenfield Village, Clara designed a Roadside Market and produced pamphlets complete with drawings and building instructions. She emphasized that it should be built of old whitewashed boards so cheap no farmer can say he cannot afford it. Her 17' x 14' market building didn't have a foundation, so it could be easily re-located.

Victory Gardens have given way to Community Gardens and during the last few years of the Covid Pandemic, these gardens began to flourish once more by providing a safe opportunity to get back outside in a meaningful and healthful way. These gardens serve many purposes – a safely distanced social experience, an opportunity to learn about Florida gardening, or a means to ensure quality organic food on your table. For transplanted gardeners, i.e., from northern states, a community garden plot in Southwest Florida is an opportunity to understand the nuances and characteristics of zone 10b and there is no better place to learn than at Edison and Ford Winter Estates.

Edison Ford has recently improved, relocated and added a few additional garden plots to their Community Garden, which is now adjacent to our magnificent Butterfly Garden. Participants are provided with soil and water and each gardener provides their own plants or seeds. **The Community Gardens are available for use between September 1 and May 30.**

continued on next page ▶



Community Garden



Carly Pfalz

If you would like to know more, contact **Carly Pfalz**, Horticultural Specialist at CPfalz@edisonford.org and get growing! Staff horticulturists are always available to answer questions, or you can reach out to me at kmaxwell@edisonford.org.

I would like to close our September article with a shout out to all the grandparents out there! Without them, I wouldn't be the gardener I am today. **Sunday, September 11 is National Grandparents Day.** As we pay our respects to those who lost their lives on 9/11, pause for another moment to think of how a grandparent may have inspired you. At a date to be announced in early Spring, 2023, I have proposed a "Bring Your Grandchild to the Garden day." Stay tuned for more details.



Bottle Palm *Hyophorbe lagenicaulis*

September Garden BOLO (be on the lookout) is for the flowering of nearly 100 varieties of palms. These palm flowers are called inflorescence and take on many amazing shapes and forms!



RHYTHM ON THE RIVER CONCERT SERIES
APPALACHIAN ROAD SHOW
(Bluegrass Band)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11 • 6:30-8:30 P.M.

Spend the evening along the Caloosahatchee, while enjoying great music, a fantastic sunset, and refreshing beverages! Bring your favorite lawn chair and a sweater if the weather is chilly. Beverages and food will be available for purchase. Concert starts at 6:30 p.m.; doors open at 6 p.m.

Tickets may be purchased online at EdisonFord.org or at the ticket counter. Individual tickets purchased in advance are \$30 for Edison Ford members or \$35 for non-members; tickets at the door will be \$40. Park in the Edison Ford lots only. No coolers or picnic baskets permitted.

A VIP seating area may be reserved by the table for \$225. Each table holds up to 5 people; table ticket price includes the use of a table and chairs.

2023 CONCERT SCHEDULE:

Michael Dutra & the Strictly Sinatra Band (*Sinatra Tribute*) • JANUARY 27, 2023 — 6:30-8:30 P.M.

Neil Zirconia (*Neil Diamond Tribute*) • FEBRUARY 17, 2023 — 6:30-8:30 P.M.

Come Monday (*Jimmy Buffett Tribute*) • MARCH 10, 2023 — 6:30-8:30 P.M.



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The Banyan Café

If you'd like to get a little bite to eat or specialty coffee while you're visiting, stop by the Banyan Café! Nestled under giant shade trees, it's the perfect spot to sit and relax!

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OPEN TUESDAY-SUNDAY
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Edison and Ford Winter Estates is a National Register Historic Site and a Save America's Treasures site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Edison laboratory is a National Historic Chemical Landmark. It is governed by a private, non-profit organization with a Board of Trustees.

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