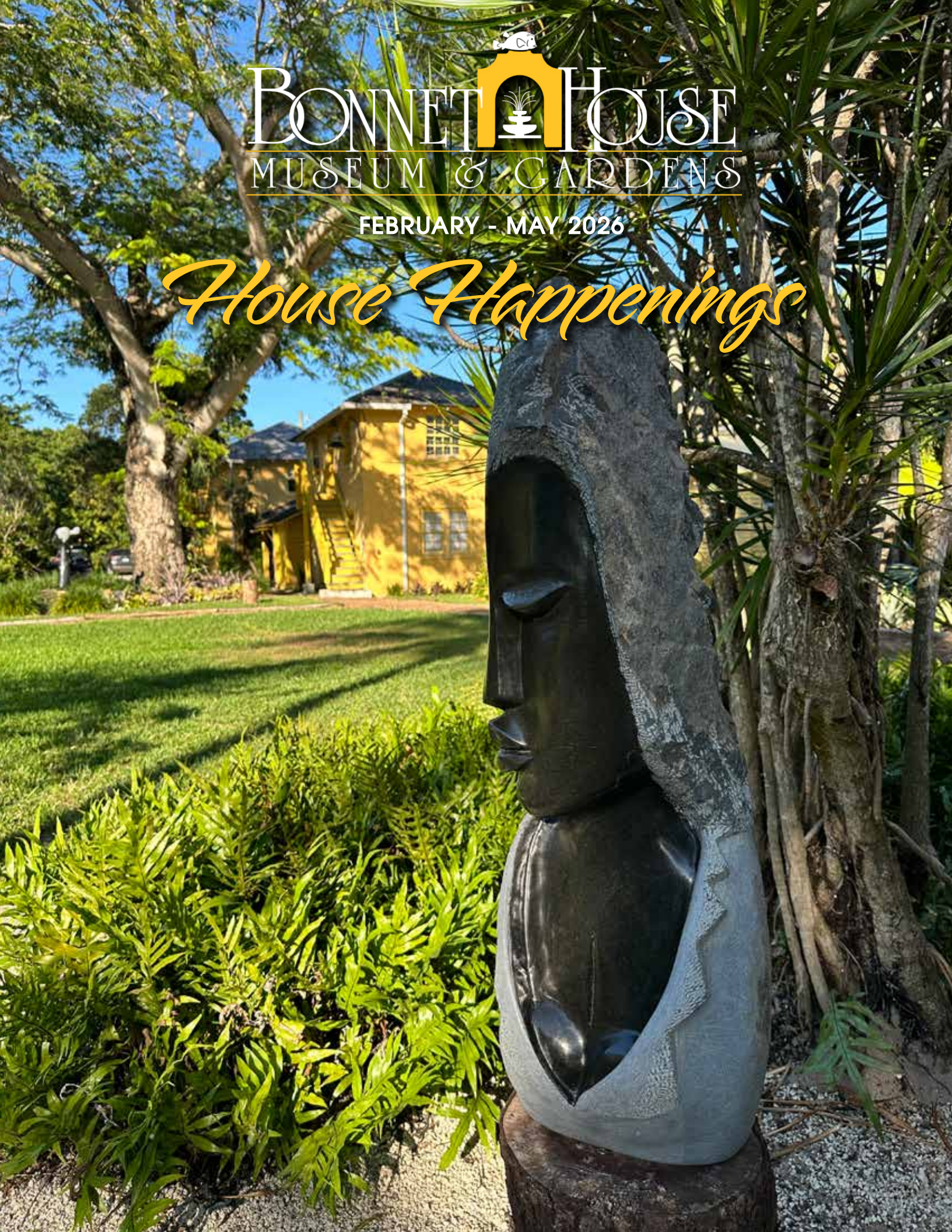


BONNET HOUSE
MUSEUM & GARDENS

FEBRUARY - MAY 2026

House Happenings



FROM THE CEO



Somewhat belatedly (as this newsletter is composed a few weeks before delivery), I want to wish everyone a very happy, healthy, and prosperous 2026! We all find ourselves at the half point of the current decade. Suffice it to say the 2020s seem to be shaping up as a consequential decade with change coming ever more rapidly and

in perhaps unexpected ways. Zoom and video meetings were fairly rare when 2020 dawned. They're now commonplace, and even these are changing with artificial intelligence finding its way into them. I can't help but wonder what Evelyn Bartlett—someone who famously said of Bonnet House, "I don't want it to change"—would make of our time. While I think of her as a traditionalist, she was certainly open to change. Remember, this was a woman who included a trip to the UK via Concorde and not an ocean liner as part of her 100th birthday celebrations!

Though Mrs. Bartlett gave up making her own art in the 1930s, art and artistry remained part of her long life as she actively added to her collections. Therefore, I think she would approve of Bonnet House being an exhibit site for ZimSculpt. Judging from her love of the Kampong pieces that cheerfully occupy the courtyard to this day, I think she might be tempted to add one or more pieces of ZimSculpt stonework to her collection. I'm told she had a special fondness for the wood carving of a marmot that is prominently displayed in the Bonnet House Drawing Room and would rub its head daily for good luck. Perhaps the marmot would find itself in competition with one of the ZimSculpt animals?!

We are truly honored to have ZimSculpt at Bonnet House and hope the wider community will embrace the exhibit. ZimSculpt has been part of the landscape at the Royal Botanical Gardens and Toronto Botanical Gardens in Canada, the Toledo Botanical Garden and Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden, and most recently at Peace River Gardens in Punta Gorda. The initial response to the exhibit has been stupendous with near universal acclaim for the talent of the exhibiting artists.

A wonderful aspect of the exhibit is that its designers and curators Vivienne and Joseph Croisette are on-site throughout the exhibit each day, providing information and details on the origins of the works. In addition, two Zimbabwean sculptors, Passmore Mupindiko and Shine Muzika are on site each day making new works of art from stone. What a wonderful echo this is of the artistry of Frederic Bartlett who created Bonnet House as an artists' retreat and who along with Evelyn spent the winter painting new paintings and embellishing Bonnet House. While we are proud of the authenticity of Bonnet House, founded in it containing nearly all its original furnishings, the estate's artistic ethos continues today thanks to our partnership with ZimSculpt this winter.

ZimSculpt runs through April 19, 2025. Be sure to find time this winter to come to Bonnet House and be inspired—even amazed—by the artistry of this exhibit.

In other news, I am cautiously optimistic about another accolade that may be coming to Bonnet House soon. The museum has been invited by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to apply for membership in its Historic Artists' Homes and Studios Program. This program is a group of over eighty sites across the United States that have historic significance due in part to their heritage as the homes and working studios of American artists. We have submitted application materials, and if accepted, Bonnet House will join the ranks of sites including the homes and studios of iconic American artists such as Edward Hopper, Georgia O'Keeffe, Norman Rockwell, Grant Wood, and Andrew Wyeth to name just a few. Membership will help promote and recognize the artistry of Frederic and Evelyn Bartlett and solidify Bonnet House's position as a professional museum dedicated to preservation of the built environment and fostering the appreciation of significant American artists. As we celebrate the United States' 250th birthday as a nation this year, membership in this program will demonstrate Bonnet House's commitment to showcasing the role artists have played in our country's storied history. We hope to have more information and good news to share in the next edition of this newsletter.

As always, to each of you who support Bonnet House through your commitment of time, talent, or treasure, thank you, and we hope to see you here and enjoying our glorious South Florida winter weather soon.

Sincerely,
Patrick Shavloske

DEVELOPMENT NEWS



We are overwhelmed by the participation, volunteer hours, dedication, and generosity of so many individuals and organizations that continue to help preserve Bonnet House.

The devotion of our mighty team of volunteers led by newly appointed Volunteer and Tour Manager, David Wooden, literally enables Bonnet House to operate daily. Without our dear volunteers, we would not have the resources to operate seven days a week. Their devotion and passion are integral to how the House and Gardens are received by our guests. Their hospitality, willingness to roll up their sleeves and generosity are unparalleled. We are forever grateful.

This was abundantly clear as we embarked on Holiday Magic. It is a herculean undertaking. Led by designers extraordinaire, Julius Bianchi and his sister, Beatrice Flarida, the designs and holiday décor they created certainly rivaled that of any window on 5th Avenue.

The behind-the-scenes operations for the installation, logistics, performance schedule, dining, and bar arrangements for five evenings of festivities are tremendous. Cheers to Nicholle Maudlin, Bonnet House COO and the operations team for taking care of every detail.

The hospitality provided at the Welcome Center and in the Museum Shop, led by Visitor Service and Administration Manager, Diane Ennis, along with the greeters, the Visitor Services Team, and more volunteers is impeccable.

Our Education Team, Director Linda Schaller, and Associate Director, Sonia Mesa, created a fantastical and memorable experience for families and children at the Winter Wonderland. The entertainment, activities and refreshments delighted the children and adults.

Holiday Magic wouldn't be special without the likes of Bookkeeper, Jay Rosansky as Santa. He listened attentively and with great humor as all the children shared their holiday wish lists. One child was in awe when Jay remembered his name from last year!

This year's Holiday Magic event took more than three thousand plus man and woman hours, helping to provide a profit of \$40,000 plus. The proceeds of Holiday Magic will continue to help provide the highest quality events and programs. Thanks go to event sponsors Hugh's Catering, Event Bliss Design, Buck Summit Wines, Hardshore Distilling Company, Deluxe Party Rentals, The Cake Lovers, Dom Caruso Cucina, Joe & Nora Dyke, Harold & Jan Bedoukian, Julius Bianchi & Beatrice Flarida, Mary Joe & Richard Brown, Teresa Ciccotelli, Stephen Draft & Allen Peterson, The Palmer Family, Jim & Lynn LaBate, Valarie Kinkade & Kevin Grant, Victoria Kirby, Betty Douglas, Sondra St. Martin, Sherry Walters, Christopher Bigney, George Castleman & Yoshi Shigenari, Hugh & Suzanne Higgins, Norman Keller & Virginia Becart, Rachel Clementi, Virginia Vyfvinkel, and Barbara Knochenhauer.

Absolutely none of the "magic" of Holiday Magic would have come to fruition without the incredible generosity of these sponsors and in-kind donors. These lead gifts help to defray expenses and provide the ability to launch our events. We could not provide any of our Bonnet House signature events without these generous gifts.

Quite literally on the heels of Holiday Magic comes ZimSculpt. We are thrilled to have the launch of ZimSculpt an outdoor sculpture exhibit running from January 18th through April 19th. Board Chair Jim LaBate enjoyed the exhibit last year at Peace River Botanical Gardens. Jim just knew there had to be a way to bring this extraordinary exhibit to Bonnet House.

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Through his forward thinking and the support of the Board this new venture will help Bonnet House attract new visitors and provides an opportunity for one-time visitors to come back. This is a don't miss experience.

Thanks go to exhibit sponsors (as of January 16, 2026), Jim & Lynn LaBate, Sherry Walters, Victoria Kirby, Museum and Collector Resource, LLC, Suzanne & Hugh Higgins, Norman Keller & Virginia Becart, The Judith Ann Linnell Foundation Fund, Chip & Eileen LaMarca, Brody & Brody P.A., Kathryn Lant, The Palmer Family, and Ted & Katherine Drum.

Of course, we will welcome back the extraordinary 17th Annual International Orchid & Garden Festival April 11th and 12th. Each year guests can re-connect with previous vendors and meet new ones from around the world. You will find hundreds of the most interesting and unique floral specimens. Enjoy the gardens and surroundings, listen to music, and relax with a drink and refreshments. Plan a family or group outing for the weekend.

Sponsors (again as of January 16, 2026) include: Sereno

Fort Lauderdale, Victoria Kirby, Jim & Lynn LaBate, Brody & Brody P.A., Sherry Walters, Hugh & Suzanne Higgins, Norman Keller & Virginia Becart, Kathryn Lant, Ann McDaniel, and an anonymous donor.

There is still time to become a Bonnet House sponsor. You can sponsor both ZimSculpt and the Orchid Festival for as little as \$750. Of course, higher levels of sponsorship would be immensely appreciated. These sponsorships enable us to raise the level of programming, and exhibitions and help to uniquely position Bonnet House as an experiential destination like no other.

Wishing all the very best in the New Year. Good health, prosperity, happiness, lots of laughs, great adventures, and many memories to be created at Bonnet House.

Thank you for your kindness and generosity. Always.

Cheers,
Monica Morrissey
Chief Development and Innovation Officer



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THE CURATORIAL EYE



America 250

America 250 marks 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. While many may think that only involves the Revolutionary period (which we do actually have some history of in Florida!), it essentially is a celebration of all American history and culture. It invites reflections on how diverse circumstances, people, and landscapes shaped the nation that followed. For Bonnet House, I have interpreted that as celebrating the development of South Florida and honoring our two notable American artists who lived and created here, Frederic Clay Bartlett and Evelyn Fortune Bartlett. Florida's southeastern coast may be young in comparison to other parts of the country, but it tells a powerful story of resilience, creativity, and adaptation, and Bonnet House is uniquely positioned to help share that narrative.

To mark this milestone, a focused exhibit will be presented in the Studio featuring two interpretive panels and a selection of collection objects typically kept in storage, including Frederic's original drawing of Bonnet House, train tickets from one of the Bartlett's trips down to Florida, and stored art relating to their time here. One panel will present a timeline of significant events linking global history with Bonnet House history, while the second—"100 Years on a Barrier Island: A Pioneering and Artistic Heritage" - will highlight Frederic and Evelyn, Hugh Taylor Birch's pioneering role and his recent recognition as the "Father of Fort Lauderdale Beach," and the brave Barefoot Mailmen who first safeguarded this coastline and established a primary mail carrying system. Together, these stories place Bonnet House within an evolving American

narrative and highlight the contributions that shaped the thriving, diverse community we enjoy today. I look forward to sharing this chapter with you and hope you'll join us in celebrating 250 years of our nation's history that continues to unfold.

ZimSculpt

We are so pleased to host ZimSculpt this season - an outdoor sculpture exhibition that naturally aligns with the site's long-standing connection between art, nature, and place. The hand-carved stone works by contemporary Zimbabwean artists draw inspiration from the natural world and people and cultural traditions that surround them, an approach that closely mirrors how Frederic and Evelyn Bartlett lived here, collected, and created. The Bartletts had a deep appreciation for global art traditions, skilled craftsmanship, and organic forms, and I believe they would have delighted in seeing expressive sculpture integrated throughout the gardens and grounds.

To complement ZimSculpt, I have curated a small temporary exhibit featuring African-related objects from the Bartlett collection, many rarely on view. While none originate from Zimbabwe, these pieces - displayed in the Studio, courtyard, and Drawing Room - reflect the Bartletts' broader interest in African art, wildlife, and culture, creating a thoughtful conversation between contemporary sculpture and the historic collection grounded in shared inspiration from nature and people. The exhibit will run through April 19th.

Katie Valli, Curator

EDUCATION - DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know during 2024-25 Bonnet House served 496 adults with our programs and classes including lectures, acrylic painting, watercolor painting, birding, bee keeping, yoga, orchid basics and repotting, and special art

programs? We also served seventy-five Broward County teachers in special workshops so that they can take the story of Bonnet House and the Birch-Bartlett family back to their classrooms and hopefully bring their

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students to Bonnet House on field trips. In house, we worked with 2,169 school students between our field trips and two Family Days. Additionally, our BECON TV programs taught by Sonia Mesa, Associate Director of Education, reached 7,753 students through free distance learning programs broadcast directly to Broward County Public Schools.

Did you know Bonnet House offers five different field trip and homeschool programs for youth including lessons in art, history and ecology? Images & Impressions of Bonnet House, Eco Here-Eco There, Time Travel at Bonnet House, The Last Egret, and An Old South Florida Portrait (where students visit both Bonnet House and Stranahan House) all provide enrichment lessons for local youth.



Bonnet House is located on a barrier island, and we have multiple different eco systems right on this 35-acre property. Did you know Bonnet House is home to the last of the natural intracoastal beaches, a mangrove estuary, a historic grove with trees that Hugh Taylor Birch and David Fairchild worked together to plant, a freshwater slough, coastal hammock, and a primary dune beach? Our students get to experience a property where the Barefoot Mailman once walked, where the House of Refuge was located, and where the Tequesta settled while visiting for winter months.

Coming to Bonnet House brings to life our local history and the art of the Bartletts in a way simply not possible in a classroom.

Did you know the native coontie plants like the ones found to this day in the Bonnet House coastal hammock were an important food source for the Seminole Indians, especially during the Seminole Wars? Did you know the coontie also supports the Atala butterfly, native to South Florida and some of the Caribbean Islands? Can you guess how many feet above sea level our secondary dune is and how that made the Bonnet House site a place humans have wanted to live for hundreds of years? Do you know how a hydrometer can tell us the content of salt in water? Do you know the special animal that will impress students by diving into the water, catching a fish, and eating that fish whole?

This article recounts just some of what Bonnet House has to offer for educational enrichment. There are so many activities and lessons inspired by this very special spot. We hope to share all the special things at Bonnet House for many years to come. They show why Bonnet House and its heritage matter so very much.

Linda Schaller, Sonia Mesa & Julius Bianchi
Education Department

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

I just wanted to send everyone a quick note to say thank you for everyone's hard work contributing to a successful Holiday Magic event! The help from so many people was amazing!! Each of you, in your own way, helped to make Holiday Magic a success. Bonnet House is so lucky to have our dedicated volunteers.

I would also like to take a moment to say "Thank You" to everyone for such a warm welcome in my new position as Volunteer & Tour Manager. I have worked with several of you through these past ten years while I was the Events Manager and have enjoyed working with all of you. This new position has seen such a seamless transition with the help of all of you. It is a pleasure and a wonderful opportunity working with everyone. I'm so happy to be helping to tell the Bonnet House story to our visitors.

As you know, we are always in need of new volunteers; if you know of anyone you can recommend, please have them get in touch with me. My goal is to have

our volunteer department grow and continue to be a great success as it has always been. Looking ahead, it's not too early to start planning for the Bonnet House International Orchid & Garden Festival on April 11th and 12th. PLEASE note these dates on your calendar. With over 2,000 people each day of the festival, it's all hands on deck. Our volunteers are so important to making the Orchid Festival a success.

Another save the date to add to your calendar is our annual Volunteer Appreciation event. This year it will be on Monday, March 23rd from 11am to 1:30pm. We're having it a little earlier in the year to make sure our seasonal volunteers can make it, and we'll also be providing a light lunch. We always look forward to recognizing our volunteers.

Thank you again to everyone, and I appreciate everyone's help!!

David Woodin, Volunteer & Tour Manager

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY - MAY 2026

YOGA & SOUND HEALING

Fri | Feb 6 | 9:00 - 10:30 am
Fri | Mar 13 | 9:00 - 10:30 am
Fri | Apr 17 | 9:00 - 10:30 am
Fri | May 15 | 9:00 - 10:30 am

SPEAKER SERIES

Mon | Feb 9 | 10:00 - 11:30 am
ZimSculpt: Hand-carved stone sculptures
from Zimbabwe with ZimSculpt Founders

Mon | Apr 13 | 10:00 - 11:30 am
Seashells: Nature's Sculptures
with Dr. Richard Ott

OIL/ACRYLIC WORKSHOP

Tues | Feb 17 - Mar 24 | 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
6-Week Workshop

ACRYLIC WORKSHOP

Thurs | Feb 19 - Mar 26 | 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
6-Week Workshop

BIRDING CLASS

Sun | Feb 22 | 2:00 - 4:30 pm

NEW FAU SPEAKER SERIES

Mon | Feb 23 | 12:30 - 2:30 pm
The Future of Florida's Coasts Part 2
with Dr. Evan Bennett

Mon | Mar 30 | 12:30 - 2:30 pm
The Future of Florida's Coasts Part 3
with Dr. Evan Bennett

BONNET HOUSE FINE ARTIST EXHIBIT OPENING RECEPTIONS

Wed | Mar 11 | 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Wed | May 13 | 4:00 - 6:00 pm

FAMILY FUN DAY

Sat | Mar 28 | 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

ZIMSCULPT OUTDOOR STONE SCULPTURE EXHIBIT NOW THROUGH APRIL 19, 2026

17TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ORCHID & GARDEN FESTIVAL SATURDAY & SUNDAY, APRIL 11 & 12, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

For more information, to purchase tickets, or to register for classes and workshops,
please scan the QR code or visit bonnethouse.org/events.



Sponsored in part by the State of Florida through the Division of Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Major support for Bonnet House Museum & Gardens provided by the Broward County Cultural Division, the Cultural Council, and the Broward County Board of County Commissioners.





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