

MINUTES
FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER
Friday, July 28, 2017
Big Cypress Rec Center, 3110 Hendry Drive – Periwinkle Room

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Kathy Porter at 1:30.

Present: 61 members and 35 guests.

New Business:

- Kathy welcomed members and guests, and reported on our meeting structure. She thanked Green Isles for their monthly donation of 6 plants, and announced that we have many others that were donated by members.
- Guest Al Higgingbotham from Indigo Travel Company discussed the upcoming tour for FNPS members to the Rainforest and Waterfalls of the Appalachians on Sept. 10-15. He mentioned the many places the tour members would see and that there would be expert tour guides at each place. He also mentioned the planned restaurant visits, and that most of the tour would be conducted from one motel, so members would not have to unpack and pack several times.
- A before and after picture of the landscape of Roger Selch was shown.
- Michael Salerno from the Daily Sun was recognized.
- Lloyd Singleton, our agent for Florida Friendly Landscaping, was introduced. There will be an article in the Daily Sun tomorrow this topic. He reported that a tidy, not wild and unkempt, Florida Friendly landscape can fit into local aesthetics. He also stated that it should be properly maintained and homeowners should follow the Florida Friendly Landscape Principles. He mentioned that the pattern book of The Villages landscape designs from the U of F graduate students is in the process of being approved by the Architectural Review Committee. It will be online, but Lloyd mentioned that we might make it into a book form using the nearby prison print shop, and sell it for a fund-raiser. Also, he is looking for 3 volunteers to remove and convert their turf. He would like to see Master Gardeners get training to certify yards as Florida Friendly.
- The speaker next month will be Lisa Roberts, the Executive Director of the Florida Wildflower foundation.
- A tour of at least 6 homes will be held for members only on Friday, Sept. 29 from 7:30 to 1:00.

Kathy introduced our speaker, Carol Spears, who is our chapter representative, and a retired National Park ranger. Her talk was titled, "From Invasive to Native, Creating a Home for Florida Plants and Animals. She said she gets her motivation from her heart. She loved animals as a child, and was influenced by her father and by camping. She loved science, especially biology and ecology, and became a U.S. National Park ranger in 1980.

She moved to The Villages in 2012 to a home that bordered a horse field by the polo grounds. This field was also a gopher tortoise refuge. In 2014, she planted a butterfly garden. She later went to a workshop on turf conversion led by Steve Turnipseed decided to convert her whole yard. She chose

Amanda Martin for the design and gave her the specifics of what she wanted for her bird, butterfly and bee garden. Amanda gave her a design and list of plants needed. She had her invasive camphor tree, non-native plants and sod removed. Then Mark Goetz of Green Isles Garden did the installation of the 63 species and 368 plants and Steve helped with the irrigation. She, Steve and others then helped her with 150 bales of pine straw and paths of melaleuca mulch. Since then, she has added about 20 more species totaling 45 plants.

She then showed many picture of the plants, and birds, butterflies and bees that she has attracted. She also attracted a gopher tortoise. She reported that the female lays her eggs near the opening of the burrow that can be 10 feet deep and 40 feet long. The incubation period is 90 days for this keystone species. She showed other species from her yard including a snake, dragonfly, lizard and hawk. She stated that this is her refuge. She ended the program with a slide show of her garden with music and chirping birds.

Donations: Donated plants were then awarded to members and friends.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:00.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be August 25 at 1:30 at the Big Cypress Recreation Center.

Jeanie Powell, Secretary