

FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—THE VILLAGES CHAPTER

Friday, September 28, 2018

Big Cypress Recreation Center, 3110 Hendry Drive – Periwinkle Room

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Steve Turnipseed at 1:30pm.

Present: 59 were in attendance, 11 of whom signed in as guests.

New Business:

Chance Drawing: Green Isle Gardens sponsors our Chapter and provided 6 plants for the chance drawing.

Steve welcomed members and guests. Steve welcomed all first time attendees.

FNPS: We are a chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (not a Villages “club”). There are annual dues to become a member of the Florida Native Plant Society and about 30% of the dues come back to our Villages Chapter. The Villages’ Chapter is about the sixth largest out of 37 chapters.

Volunteer needed: The treasurer needs help with collecting money and writing checks. Marcia Gould is handling the “back office” paperwork, but could use some help with this other aspect of the office.

Carol’s Next Door Project: Carol’s sister bought the house next door to her. The former owner had completely filled the terraced backyard with stones. Carol & her sister tried unsuccessfully to get someone to come take the stone away. Terry of Creative Garden Structures came in and did some planting and landscaping. Carol donated all of the plants from her yard to her sister.

Scott Davis spoke on The Milkweed Project at The Villages’ Chapter FNPS in the past. July 3rd he was in a serious motorcycle accident and has already undergone several surgeries. If anyone would like to make a donation to help with his medical expenses, Roger Selch will collect money at the back of the room at the end of the meeting.

PlantOberFest is being held Oct 13 (9am-4pm) & 14 (10am-2pm) at the Sumter County Fairgrounds in Bushnell. Our chapter is not participating. We will wait until Spring 2019 when it will back in Wildwood, FL.

Our September Presentation is: **Soil, Fertilizers, Composting and Mulch** by Kathy Porter

Speaker Bio:

A native of Staten Island, NY, Kathy has been a Village resident since 2003. She has been a member of the Florida Native Plant Society since 2006 and served as Vice President of Programs for The Villages Chapter for three years. In addition, Kathy is a Sumter County Master Gardener, Treasurer of the Marion County Rose Society, Chairperson of the Bookwork Book Club, Director and Membership Chair of the VHA, and is serving her second term as an elected supervisor of Community Development District #1.

Kathy discussed the

- Geology of Florida
- Soil versus Dirt
- Texture of Soil
- Soil Ph and Nutrients
- Composting
- Worm Farming

Sea level fluctuations contributed to Florida's bedrock of limestone – Florida is basically like Swiss cheese!

She mentioned a fascinating book called *The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea* by Jack E. Davis. It won the Pulitzer Prize in 2018.

Soil supports plants. Soil Ph is best between 5.8 and 6.3. Too much organic matter can be harmful to plants.

Fertilizers improve the condition of the soil. UF/IFAS recommends fertilizer 10-0-10 or 16-0-8. There are fertilizers for specific plants. Turf loves Palm Fertilizer. Do not put Turf Fertilizer on Palms.

- Follow the label directions
- More is NOT better
- The Label is The Law

The advantages of organics: slow release of nitrogen to plants, keep Ph neutral, binds with harmful pollutants so they don't leach into our water supply.

Product Comand – tested by UF, available at KB Supply. Can also use as an organic supplement for soil.

Biochar is the newest rage, but has not been tested.

Composting – returns organics to soil, save money by making your own compost.

Consider a worm farm. Australia has made composting mandatory and reduced their garbage by about 80%.

MULCH protects plants from the extremes of heat and cold, saves water and money, suppresses weeds, adds nutrients to the soil and beautifies the garden.

Kathy discussed Eucalyptus mulch and utility mulch. She does not recommend Cypress Mulch because Cypress takes a long time to grow. The cypress mulch sold today uses young cypress and that is having an extreme environmental impact.

Layer 2"-3" mulch and keep it away from the trunks of trees and plants; avoid "volcano" mulching and mulch out to the drip line of trees.

Kathy described Worm farming. In Florida, if you start a worm farm, it needs to be in a protected shaded area, to be successful. She recommended the book "Worms Eat My Garbage" by Mary Arlene Appelhof.

Composting (without worms) should be turned regularly. Some styles of compost bins make that easy. You need ARC approval in The Villages to have a composter outside your home.

Following her presentation, Ms. Porter addressed questions from the audience for about 15 minutes, until 2:35pm.

Donated plants were awarded to members and guest in the chance drawing.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

The next general meeting will be October 26, at 1:30pm at the Big Cypress Recreation Center

Jo Hudak, Secretary

ADDENDUM to Minutes
Email Regarding Treasurer Position
September 29, 2018

Judy Mason turned in the Treasurer supplies and resigned saying that she did not have time. At the meeting on September 28, 2018, Susan Hamilton volunteered to replace Judy in the Treasurer duties (Marcia Gould will still be working the back office forms and filings).

President Steve Turnipseed emailed the board of The Villages' Chapter of Florida Native Plant Society on September 29, 2018 asking for a vote to accept Susan Hamilton as the temporary replacement chapter Treasurer until the new officer vote takes place at the January 2019 general meeting.

The vote was unanimous in favor to accept Susan Hamilton as the temporary Chapter Treasurer, from

Steve Turnipseed, President

Roger Selch, VP of Programs

Georgette Gerry, VP of Field Trips

Carol Spears, Chapter Representative

Barbara Wertz, WebMaster

Joannene Hudak, Secretary