



November 2021 Volume 28, Issue 3

### Presidents Corner



Please welcome **Barbara Merriam** to the Executive Committee as Second Vice President. Tammy Rhode has resigned from the position due to her ever increasing professional responsibilities. Tammy has added so much to the

Committee and will be missed in that role. Fortunately, she will continue as Rentals chair.

Kudos to the Plant Sale team, especially our leading ladies Norma Thomas and Suellen Biferie! The 1000+ Plant Sale was a big success with buyers clamoring for more opportunities! Thank you all for your support.

Coming soon our second annual holiday greens sale for December delivery. The wreaths and garlands from Select Growers are beautiful, very fresh and well complimented. Please contact Cecelia Earl with any questions.

At the next general zoom meeting on Thursday, November 4th at 9:30am, our own Cheryl Floyd will guide us through "*What Your Garden Can Do for You*". In these times finding solace seems to be a good way to start the holiday season.

Happy Thanksgiving,  
Marshall Rawson

### Circle Around

The **Marigolds** started off the year with a grand field trip to the Yard Stop Garden Center in Mount Dora, lunch overlooking the water at Fish Camp Lake Eustis in Tavares and a final stop at the Peddler's Wagon in Eustis. The **Rose Circle** toured First Presbyterian's well maintained Community Garden where their volunteers pointed out that their vegetables were all partially shared, including some for the Neighbor Center. **Magnolias** have been up to their elbows in learning the "fine art" of hypertufa. **Milkweed Circle** met at Select Growers to learn more about Tiger Swallowtail butterflies from Charlotte Centilli. The **Daisies** are focusing on continuing their longtime friendships. The **Firecrackers** toured their own Margaret Gillen's garden which is the GCD's October Garden of the Month to discuss growing specific plants and garden design. Some members-at-large were seen helping with Downtown Planter Maintenance.

*Marshall*





### Jennie Patrick

Charter member of the Daisy Circle in 1973, passed away on October 28<sup>th</sup>. She was a joyful, faithful and enthusiastic member. She kept the Daisies' history well documented with photos. Jennie

was awarded the coveted Pillar of Pride award for her accomplishments over 49 years. Jennie always had a smile for everyone she met and will be greatly missed.



### Annual Plant Sale a SUCCESS!

October 9th, 2021 was a successful plant sale for our little Club. Twenty members stepped forward to

propagate and grow, make and place signage, marketing, setup and breakdown, receive and price plants, and represent us beautifully as salespeople, cashiers, membership, native plants specialist and pollinator and butterfly specialist.

Yard art added whimsy to the grounds as over 1000 potted plants were placed in the grassy area surrounding the arbor. The grounds showed its pretty face and its diverse planting giving new gardeners an idea of what their plants will look like as they grow.

All and all, a fun experience and it did not rain in spite of the forecast from the weather people. Thank goodness. After four hours of selling, our donations came to around \$2900. Expenses still to be taken from that total, but again, a good day's fundraiser.

Thank you to all who participated. Without you, we could not do have a plant sale and it would not be fun.

Thank you dear friends,

**Norma Thomas**



## Vegetable Gardening in Central Florida

In Florida you can grow vegetables year round - not all vegetables grow year round, but we do have year round vegetable growing sea-sons. I am in the process of planting my raised bed vegetable garden, and the vegetable bed will be active till mid-June when I start prepping my raised bed for the next year.

I just wanted to share some of the varieties of plants that are going in.

Three types of winter squash: **Cushaw squash**, the one that I brought to the plant sale. This squash is also called "Tennessee sweet potato" and "Cushaw pumpkin" and is used in making pumpkin pies in the Blue Ridge Mt. area. The seeds are from Florida Gardening. **Seminole pumpkin**, an original squash variety of the Creek, Calusa and Miccosukee Native American tribes. The seeds are from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange. **Butternut squash**, one of my favorite winter squash varieties. The seeds are from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange.

Two types of carrots: **Scarlet Nantes** a great Florida variety. Seeds are from Florida Gardening. **Uzbek golden carrot**. This was a free seed packet from Baker Creek.

Two types of fennels: **Florence fennel and bronze fennel**, these are planted for both swallowtail butterflies and for us to eat. Both seed packets are from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange.

Three types of onions: **Granex yellow hybrid**, this onion is called Vidalia Onion in the grocery stores. The seeds are from Burpee. **Sweet Spanish Utah strain**, this is a Spanish onion variety. The seeds are from Ferry-Morse. **White spear bunching onion**, in the grocery stores this is called Green Onions. The seeds are from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange.

One type of spinach: **Bloomsdale**, a great Florida spinach. The seeds are from two sources, Florida Gardening and Ferry-Morse.

In my garden I have planted nasturtium, dill and chive seeds and I need to plant my marigold seedlings. I still have to put in my turnips and rutabagas and lettuce seeds and my mustard seedlings.

My garden will be full and hopefully productive. I prefer to use smaller seed sources than Burpee and Ferry-Morse. I feel that I get better seeds which means better crops.

Happy gardening and if you have questions please just ask.

**Written by Dorothy Caldwell**



## Florida Native Gardening

The other day I overheard someone say “All this non-sense about native plants, they are nothing but weeds” and my heart sank. Then I thought they just do not quite understand what Florida natives are and why plant them. So, I am going to try and help with some understanding.

First a definition of a Florida native plant “A “Florida native plant” refers to a species occurring within the state boundaries prior to European contact, according to the best available scientific and historical documentation. ” [1] The words “prior to European contact” is sometimes a little confusing to many. It means before Florida was discovered by Europeans and in Florida, we have a specific time for this “In 1513 between April 2 and April 8, Ponce de León waded ashore on the northeast coast of Florida “[2]

Now let’s look at why Florida native plants are so important. The most important plant is the oak tree, this is a “keystone plant”. Keystone plants are defined as: “Keystone plant genera are unique to local food webs within ecoregions. Remove keystone plants and the diversity and abundance of many essential insect species, which 96% of terrestrial birds rely on for food sources, will be diminished. The ecosystem collapses in a similar way that the removal of the ‘key’ stone in the ancient Roman arch will trigger its demise.” [3] In SW Volusia on a native oak up to” 395 species of butterflies and moths use this as a caterpillar host plant in this area. For native pine trees ”171 species of butterflies and moths use this as a caterpillar host plant.” With native *Vaccinium* (blueberry) “150 species of butterflies and moths use this as a caterpillar host plant” [4]



There are keystone plants also in the flowers and grasses for our area of SW Volusia. The number one plant is **native gold-rod** which “82 species of butterflies and moths use this as a caterpillar host plant”. For the native aster ”58 species of butterflies and moths use this as a caterpillar host plant”.

On the **native hibiscus** “37 species of butterflies and moths use this as a caterpillar host plant” [4].



Each of these groups of plants are large with many varieties, and none of them are “weeds”. American in-sects, to a huge extent, live only on American native plants. Generally non-native trees such as crape myrtle, Chinese fringe tree, and ginkgo, though pretty and not invasive, support zero to three species of caterpillars in North America and take up space that could be used for a native tree. Think of native trees as bird feeders.” [5]

So now I have covered what is a Florida native plant and why plant them. Over the next few months I will look at some of my favorite native plants.

**Written by Dorothy Caldwell**

[1] <https://www.fnps.org/natives/definition>

[2] <https://dos.myflorida.com/florida-facts/florida-history/a-brief-history/european-exploration-and-colonization/>

[3] <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/Native-Plants/keystone-plants-by-ecoregion>

[4] <https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/>

[5] <https://www.tallahassee.com/story/life/home-garden/2020/12/24/keystone-plants-help-support-wildlife-your-yard/4013295001/>

## Welcome New Members

Laine Berman, Milkweed

Jane Morris, Milkweed

Marsha Smith, Milkweed and Firecracker

Cathie Wenderoth, Milkweed

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### Green and White Garden Delight



The Garden Club of DeLand presents the October 2021 Garden of the Month award to

**Margaret Gillen.** Her Victoria Hills garden has been planted predominately in green and white. In the summer months white caladiums grace the space and year round green and white variegated liriopé and low maintenance green coontie continue the theme. This thirteen year old garden has gone through a major transformation. Great care has been given to placing the right plants for the partially shaded areas. Agapanthus and daylily summer blooms were just finishing up for the sea-son. As we followed the path along the north side of her home, Margaret points out her potting area where she prepared plants to be sold during the Garden Club of DeLand's October plant sale. She shared that her circle, the Fire-crackers, are



making yard art Whimsy Sticks for the fundraiser.

We walked along her decorated sidewalk featuring brick art she creates with fun and inspirational sayings like: *Aspire to Inspire*. Gillen, former art teacher, teasingly refers to herself as a concrete artist. Her garage is her studio and her garden her pallet. "Peacock ginger is full now it will go down and come back again in the spring. It's a wonderful ground cover and spreads easily. Here are my camellias. My father was a camellia judge and he started the first men's garden club in Gainesville. My mother planted beautiful long-stemmed roses. They inspired my love of gardening."

To combat erosion, Margaret created a tiered garden and planted amaryllis due to their giant root system. Next she pointed out pink ladies and other plants that need a balance of shade and sun. She is outlining her garden with bromeliads that were actually rescued from a trash heap. "I love bromeliads; this one with the pink blossom is called Kyoto after the capital of Japan."

"Aspidistra is wonderful for floral arrangements. Soak the long leaves in water, and then you can curl and pin it to form a spiral. Every garden needs aspidistra and fern for floral arrangements."

Margaret received her certification as a Master Gardener with the Volusia County Master Gardener Program. She loves sharing plants and helping to keep DeLand beautiful and that's why she serves as Garden Club of DeLand co-chair for the downtown planters.

Next spring on Victoria Hills Drive, DeLand see real show stoppers when Margaret's azaleas will be in their full glory and her large tabebuia tree will be covered in yellow blossoms.

By **Cheryl Floyd**

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