

Suncoast Tropical Fruit and Vegetable Club

Meeting Notice

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 8, 2017
Where: Main Room Nokomis Community Center
234 Nippino Trail East, Nokomis, FL 34275
Agenda: 6:30 pm Chat and Tasting Table
7:00 pm Introduction and Presentation
8:30 pm Plant Raffle

Speaker: Roz Barminski

Topic: Recovery from Mental Illness Through Community Garden Based Work

Community gardens are found worldwide, where people plant fruits or vegetables that are indigenous to their climate. Urban gardens are a much more difficult process and require some out-of-the-box thinking to ensure their success. Hope Clubhouse of Southwest Florida in Fort Myers is an example of that success.

Hope Clubhouse of Southwest Florida is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization. In what started as a voluntary daytime program in 2007, Hope Clubhouse was founded on the belief that, with the help and support of their community, members can overcome the effects of mental illness, attain recovery and lead satisfying, productive lives. The Clubhouse gives everyone the chance to form friendships, gain respect through work, improve social skills and reduce the stigma so commonly associated with these illnesses as well as quality of life-enhancing activities. They provide a "whole-life" approach that engages individual members in many aspects of daily living, decision making and planning for the future.

Our speaker for November is Roz Barminski. Roz is a former intern at ECHO and has a master's degree in agriculture from Colorado State University. She is responsible for the horticultural program at Hope Clubhouse. The horticultural unit, along with the business and culinary arts units, provide skills and leadership development, for example, that are attractive to potential employers. In their "Garden of Hope" members learn about horticulture including what fruits and vegetables flourish in Florida, growing seasons and how to maintain a continual harvest throughout the year. The garden serves as a useful food source for the Culinary Unit in the preparation of nutritious meals for members and staff. Roz has developed a Permaculture Garden on site that provides a "roots-to-shoots" model to inspire members as they provide for the Clubhouse's nutritional needs. Roz and the Clubhouse have partnered with Florida Gulf Coast University and ECHO to help with their Food Forest program.