

## Tree Board "Save Our Trees!"

It's an exciting year for the City of Belle Isle as we celebrate our 100th anniversary!

Unfortunately, our Tree Board has only two members left...Doug De Young and me. I have been a Belle Isle Tree Board member since it began, and I look forward to attracting more active members again! We can encourage people to reach out to join our mission to help "Save our Trees" and all they mean for our natural beauty and quality of life. Trees help give us shade, clean pollutants from the air, and help absorb water from heavy rains, keeping runoff from being a big problem for our beautiful lakes!



Photo with class at Leu Gardens 01/27/2024  
"Gardening for Native Pollinators and Honey Bee Nutrition"...Christopher Stalder & his Mom, Patricia (seated) offer a class on various natural history subjects once a month at Leu Gardens!

I have lived in Lake Conway Estates since I was seven (7) months old...over 60 years now. I remember when there were vacant lots on St. Germain where I would chase butterflies with my net and see all sorts of wildflowers, insects, and wildlife that would capture my attention. Many species have been lost from our environment, and we can encourage more to come back with pollinator gardening and adding fruit and flowering trees to our gardens and landscapes. If you plant the right larval host plants, the adult pollinators will come to lay their eggs on them so that the larvae (caterpillars, etc.) can find nutrition for growth. Planting nectar plants for adults will keep them around once they come out of pupation.

My Mom, Patricia, and I have offered monthly classes at Harry P. Leu Gardens in the City of Orlando for over 12 years. Classes include: "Gardening for Native Pollinators and Honeybee Nutrition," "Beekeeping for Beginners," "Honey Tasting," "Native FL Snakes," and "Hotspots for FL Shell Collecting." Saturday, Feb. 10th, 2024, we will have live honeybees on display and our Belle Isle Wildflower Honey for purchase (cash and personal checks only) at the Family Day event at Leu Gardens in the Pavilion / Outdoor Kitchen from 10 am until 1 pm. On Tuesday, Feb. 13th, we are giving a "Gardening for Native Pollinators" program for the oldest garden club in FL, the Garden Club of Halifax Country... founded in 1922. The club meets at the Ormond Memorial Art Museum & Gardens in the morning. Saturday, February 17th, we offer a "Beekeeping for Beginners" class at Leu Gardens from 1:30 until 3 pm (to register, go to leugardens.org and look under classes for the Eventbrite link). Friday, February 23rd, we offer a "Native FL Snakes" program for Cub Scout Pack 207, which meets at the St. Michael's Episcopal Church in College Park. As you can see, we are busy helping prevent "Nature Deficiency Disorder," a big problem with our society's current social and cultural fabric.

Thanks to our many residents who are eliminating toxic chemicals from our homesites and gardening to encourage a healthier environment with diverse plant and animal life.

With Kindest Regards, Christopher Stalder,  
Environmental Scientist, Agronomist, Master Beekeeper, Herpetologist and  
Natural History Instructor at Leu Gardens  
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