



# Board Briefs

Newsletter from Garden Club of Georgia, Inc Board of Director  
Volume XIX - Edition 1 Fall 2023 Michelle Culberson - Editor



## Message from President, Lisa Hall

Welcome to the 2023-2025 term of The Garden Club of Georgia! We are going to continue to provide information from our Board of Directors in Board Briefs but will put a little twist on it this term. We want you to know what some of our chairmen do and will feature a chairman in each issue to give you, the reader, information on what their roles are and what they have been doing.

As for me, during this term my emphasis is on new communication tools, providing educational material for our members, increasing our membership, of course, and increasing our use of technology. I have been having several meetings on Zoom. It is a quick and efficient way to get people together from all over the state without the wear and tear of travel.

So far, we have our beautiful new website which continues to grow in depth of offerings to our members including a calendar with event information for you with the click of a mouse and district pages with club listings, activities, and photos. Our webmaster, Chris Adams has recently connected our new Facebook page to the website and our YouTube channel will follow closely behind. We have NGC classes listed on the home page where you can click on a link for more information and registration. During a survey collected at the July Awards and Leadership workshops it was found that many members are willing to attend Zoom meetings. We will be pursuing a variety of educational and fun offerings using Zoom!

I want to mention our vice-presidents and their roles as they are hard at work implementing information and activities for you. Diane Hunter, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, is tasked with managing and working with the district directors. She also works on the

website and is one of our tech gurus. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Bess Hartley, drew a big prize in the VP lottery, developing a fundraising, marketing, and advertising plan. She is finalizing and printing advertising packets to support *Garden Gateways*. Marilyn McDonnell, our 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, oversees meetings and instead of two annual meetings, we also will be hosting the Deep South regional meeting in March of 2025. Nilsa Summey, our 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President is responsible for every level of club membership including club members, subscribing members, new clubs, and grand gardener clubs. The District Co-Directors work with her as well as other Chairmen. I have also asked our secretaries to take on sizable roles. Gale Thomas is the Chairman of Education and Betty Benner Chairman of Communications. There is much work going on in all these areas!

Ariane Knowlton, our Headquarters Office Manager, also knows a lot about technology and is pursuing an advanced degree in online education. Along with Diane Hunter she will be spearheading the installation of new office software. This change alone will make everyone's life easier and do a better job for our members. Ariane has provided educational and instructional videos for the leadership workshop and will be available on the website.

Change is hard, but we must embrace technology. I think we should not use the word change but replace it with pivot. We can pivot and move forward to Plant America, promoting beautification, conservation, and education.

Best Regards,

*Lisa*

**New Website [www.gardenclubofgeorgia.org](http://www.gardenclubofgeorgia.org)**

**New Facebook page and remember to like and follow us!**

***To post content contact our Facebook Manager: Lisa Ethridge:***

***[Lrethridge110@gmail.com](mailto:Lrethridge110@gmail.com)***

***New YouTube Channel: Contact our YouTube Manager with ideas and content:***

***Camille Greeley: [Camille.Greeley@gmail.com](mailto:Camille.Greeley@gmail.com) or [Camillegreeley@att.net](mailto:Camillegreeley@att.net)***

# Vice Presidents Roles and Responsibilities

## **Diane Hunter – GCG 1st VP**

Diane Hunter has been working with our district directors and on our new website over the past several months, adding to the calendar that lists all the upcoming events for the club. This is an amazing resource for each club to use. She will continue to work on the newly approved Software that will be available and make our lives easier soon.

## **Bess Hartley, GCG 2<sup>nd</sup> VP**

Fundraising, Marketing, and Sponsorships

Bess Hartley's team of amazing members for this project are Betty Benner, Anna Burns, Christy Novellas, and Geri Shaw. *Garden Gateways* is the primary way for us to advertise The Garden Club of Georgia and our prices had not been updated since 1991. A recommendation was passed to reflect current prices.

A press kit was developed and implemented listing our updated pricing and includes a set of promotional information about The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. and explains to the sponsors Who we are and Why advertising their brand with us is profitable.

A list of possible sponsors who are compatible with our mission has been prepared and includes 23 botanical gardens, arboreta, plant research programs in Georgia, and Big Box Garden center stores. Sponsors also include GA Power, banks, Georgia based companies such as Lane Southern Orchards.

## **Marilyn McDonnell – GCG 3<sup>rd</sup> VP**

Since Marilyn has taken office, she has the assignment of coordinating the annual Conventions and Board meetings. She has engaged with various venues and has secured a place in Peachtree City to have The Garden Club of Georgia Convention in April 2024 which will be hosted by the Redbud District. The 2025 Convention will be in the Augusta area and will be hosted by the Azalea District.

Additionally, the rotation for the Deep South Convention returning to Georgia in 2025, a decision has been made to host this Convention in Valdosta. The Convention will include a Flower Show and a Tri-refresher to help increase interest for potential attendees.

## **Nilsa Summey - GCG 4<sup>th</sup> VP**

In charge of Membership Development, she participated in five Leadership and Awards Workshops and presented the “Membership is the key to GCG” and emphasized the 3 Rs of Membership ***Recruit! Retain! Revitalize!*** A membership information sheet has been posted on GCG website for all to view. The Membership Committee consists of the following areas of specialization which are reported separately: Membership Development (7 District Co-Directors); Subscribing Members (District chairmen); Life Members (Bess Hartley); New Club Support (Leanne Penman); Emeritus (Mary Phillips); Grand Gardeners (Deanne Sloan); Garden Club Councils (Rosemary Maulden); and Plant Societies (Ruthellen Anderson).

*Save the Date! New Location!*

*Our Annual Convention for 2024 will move from Macon to Peachtree City! Dates April 16-17, 2024 at The Crown Plaza in Peachtree City!*

*The Redbud District of The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc*

*Present*

*“Bloomin’ in the Heart of Georgia...Y’all Come”*

*Chairman Spotlight - Bonnie Pennington - Resources*  
*Chairman - Promoting Native Plants*



Coming home from the Post Office, from the corner of my eye, I saw this gorgeous band of blue that made me circle around again. Could that be the Blue Mist Flower that was used in a commercial Landscaping feature?

What a surprise – it was!

Mistflower, *Conoclinium coelestinum*, is covered with fuzzy tufts of blue-violet flowers for at least five weeks from late summer until frost. Around two feet high, Mistflower spreads to form a dense ground cover, or large patch, in partially shaded settings with moist well-drained soils. It also does well in full sun, with adequate moisture. A vigorous spreader by rhizome and seed, Mistflower can be thinned in early spring to control its spread on smaller sites. Otherwise, it may be better suited for settings where it has some freedom to spread.

Pair it with a short version of Goldenrod “Solidago Fireworks” or “Dwarf Little Lemon” for a colorful fall pollinator buffet.

It goes by many names - Wild Ageratum, Blue Boneset. Asteraceae (Aster Family). Mistflower is native to the east and southeastern United States. Early settlers and herbalists used Blue

Bonnet, (*Conoclinium coelestinum*) as a remedy for the common cold and flu. Current Homeopathic research suggests that taking a specific homeopathic product made from boneset reduces symptoms of the common cold similarly to aspirin.

Not only is it lovely to look at, but it also has a medicinal component.

The following are possible resources to purchase plants. Always check with the vendors to obtain their most up to date inventory:

[www.cottagegardennatives.com](http://www.cottagegardennatives.com)

<https://www.northgeorgianatives.com/videos.html>

<https://sites.gsu.edu/pcnativegarden/>

<https://www.plantdelights.com/collections/georgia-native-plants>

The **Native Plant Symposium in Athens** is always an excellent educational program. It is an event and a destination to plan. So many activities are available to you on that day – presentation of a current topic by informed speakers, touring the Botanical Gardens, the Plant Sale, and meeting new and seeing old friends. The date is **February 2024—event will be published soon.**

**The annual South Georgia Native Plant and Wildflower Symposium** will be held **March 24, 2024** at the University of Georgia Tifton Campus Conference Center Tifton, Georgia.

The day-long event is sponsored by UGA and The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., Camellia District IV. The symposium will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the opening of the day's plant sale followed by registration at 9 a.m.

Symposium topics will include forest plants of the Southeast and their wildlife uses, landscaping with natives and popularizing native plants. The day will conclude with a walking tour of the UGA Coastal Plain Arboretum at 3:10 p.m.

The cost of the symposium is \$30 with an additional \$10 fee for lunch. For more information on the event, call Amy Carter at (229) 386-7274 or email her at [abcarter@uga.edu](mailto:abcarter@uga.edu)



## *Penny Pines Project- Betty Davis, Chairman*

Many of us may not know the history behind the Penny Pines Project. It was in 1941 that the National Garden Clubs and the USDA Forest Service formed a partnership that began the Penny Pines program. The first Penny Pines plantation was planted in California.

At that time, seedlings could be produced for one cent each. Approximately 680 seedlings were used to plant a typical acre. Using these numbers, \$68 paid for 10 acres of seedlings.

This is how the name "Penny Pines" was derived and why \$68 is the minimum donation amount. With inflation over the years, \$68 plants less than 200 seedlings.

Garden Clubs can participate in this meaningful and practical conservation project by contributing \$68 to a Penny Pine plantation as part of the cost of replanting, replacement and/or trees indigenous (Not Just Pine Trees) to a particular damaged area, whether by fire or by another natural catastrophe. Clubs may designate a specific state you wish to benefit from this contribution. For each \$68 contribution, you will receive a Penny Pines Certificate from National Garden Clubs, Inc. made "In Honor of" or In Memory of" a special someone who has made a difference in the world, just by being in it.

Under a Conservation agreement, the Forest Service will do the planting, using your donation together with Federal funds. The plantations are a part of the regular National Forest reforestation program planted on burned-over and brush-covered areas which are potential productive timberlands. Planting sites are selected by the Supervisor of each National Forest. These plantations provide soil protection, watershed protection, soil stabilization, future harvestable timber, as well as beauty and shade for recreation.

From April 2022 to April 2023 Georgia Clubs contributed \$3,944 to the NGC Penny Pines Program. Since April 2023 Georgia Garden Clubs have contributed \$340.00.



## *Roadside Beautification, Kathryn Litton - Chairman*



### **Good News for Roadside Beautification planting of wildflowers and daffodils on State Highways in Georgia!!**

Chris DeGrace, Georgia Department of Transportation Office of Maintenance has reported to this chairman that 22 acres of perennial cosmos have been planted in each of the seven districts that will bloom next spring and maybe years to come. Along with this they have planted 22 acres of annual cosmos in each district that is coming up nicely since all the rains and will bloom next spring.

This will make up a total of 44 acres to be blooming in each district next spring where appropriate.

In addition, they have planted 210,000 daffodil bulbs to be blooming in addition to the many thousands already planted over districts where they do well.

It is noted that ***The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.*** has designated that the \$15,000 in donations from clubs and others be presented to the State Board of Transportation. They have not had an open meeting for several months but are now set up that this Chairman can meet with them on Thursday, October 19 to make the presentation to the Director of GDOT. It is an open meeting where anyone can come.

It is suggested that as many Garden Club members as possible attend this presentation to show our support for the planting of flowers on our roadsides. The meeting will be at 9 a.m., Thursday October 19 in the Headquarters building. Please get in touch with me, Kathryn Litton at [kathlitt336@windstream.net](mailto:kathlitt336@windstream.net) for more details if you want to attend. We need a good showing of members!

Much appreciation is given to the clubs that have donated funds for the wildflower program this past year. Certificates will be presented to District Chairmen for distribution at the fall meetings





**SAVE THE DATES JUNE 18-21, 2024**



**You are invited to join us for an exciting tour of beautiful Newport, Rhode Island, and a visit to the *Newport Flower Show*.**

Travel through nearly four hundred years of history as we explore the cobblestone streets of Newport and the scenic coastline of the area. Visit historic gardens including Green Animals, the oldest topiary garden in America. Learn about high society life in turn-of-the-century America as we tour some of the former summer “cottages” of America’s wealthiest families. Wander downtown and explore local boutiques, exquisite galleries, eclectic artisans and much more.

Details will be coming soon. Contact Mary Ann Bryant at [maryannbryant1@gmail.com](mailto:maryannbryant1@gmail.com) for more information.

# *Historic Landscape Preservation Fundraiser*

Sponsored by the Magnolia District

November 4, 2023 10:30am - 2:00 pm

Massee Lane Gardens

Home of the American Camellia Society

100 Massee Lane, Fort Valley, Georgia

\$45 Box Lunch included

**The money raised at this event goes directly to the Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Fund for the restoration of historic non-profit landscapes and gardens in Georgia**

The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc conducts several NGC approved adult educational classes in gardening, landscape design, and environmental issues. **All the classes are offered via Zoom.** You do not have to take the courses in order.

## *October and November Classes offered by Garden Club of Georgia*

Go to [www.gardenclubofgeorgia.org](http://www.gardenclubofgeorgia.org) for information and registration link in calendar:

October 30-31 Environmental School Course 1

November 2-3 Gardening Studies School Course 2

November 8-9 Landscape Design Course 2

# *Save the Okefenokee*

## *Register Today 2023 Conservation Homecoming*

*Barbara Bourque, Legislative Chairman*



We need to have House Bill 71 passed in the upcoming legislative session to permanently protect the Okefenokee Swamp. The Georgia House Bill 71 is legislation written in 2023 that will permanently protect the Trail Ridge area near the Okefenokee Swamp from future mining proposals. It has bi-partisan support with 94 co-signers in the Georgia House. This bill was sent to the committee, and then referred for further study. It is hoped that those in power will push this bill to the floor for a vote during the 2024 legislative session. Rather than waiting until 2024, we are asking members to talk to their State Legislators this fall – so everyone will be well educated on the issue early.

If you are possibly willing to meet with your state legislator for maybe coffee or tea to discuss Saving the Okefenokee, please contact Barbara Bourque, Legislative Chairman [b.bourque@comcast.net](mailto:b.bourque@comcast.net). There will be a zoom training session to help you set up a meeting and give you all the information you need to make you feel very comfortable. You can also contact your State Representative to make your opinion known using this link: <https://georgia.gov/contact-state-legislators>

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Georgia Water Coalition Meeting and Workshop**

When: November 8-9, 2023

Where: Near the Okefenokee Swamp

Join us for paddle trips on the 8<sup>th</sup>, with a twilight swamp boat tour in the evening  
& social

9<sup>th</sup>, a meeting in the morning to learn more about the OKE swamp/other  
conservation issues

Followed by an afternoon workshop on the Clean Water Act – details to follow

## Awards Committee Update - Chairman Diana Malone

All clubs, councils, individuals, and districts are encouraged to prepare and send award applications as soon as possible – so that awards applications will arrive **before December 1<sup>st</sup>**

For additional information on awards, please go to our website, <https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/membership-awards-2/> to select the application form itself or the guide which provides details of each opportunity possible to apply for.

New this term: All awards applications will be emailed to Diana Malone, preferably via email, [awardschairmangcga@gmail.com](mailto:awardschairmangcga@gmail.com). If your award needs to be mailed in, i.e., yearbooks, scrapbooks, etc., please mail them to her address: 129 Hannah Drive, Jesup, GA 31546. No awards applications will be sent to other chairmen or judges.





## *Message from National Garden Clubs, Inc. Special Projects Chairman, Trudy Rudert*

If you grow your own vegetable garden, fruit or other food items, National Garden Clubs, Inc. encourages you to donate some of this bounty to a local food bank or any other organization that helps fight food insecurity. If you don't have your own garden, then volunteer at a local community garden, a church garden, or any garden that supports feeding the hungry. If you can't work in a garden, then how about contributing financially to support groups who do the actual work of providing fresh meals to the less fortunate or to local schools who maintain gardens to help supplement their school lunch programs. Not only will you feel better about being part of the solution to fighting food insecurities, but it's a chance to promote gardening to those around you!

### **PLANT AMERICA AND FEED AMERICA**

During the 2023-2025 term, NGC will be keeping a running total of how much fresh fruit, herbs, produce, etc. is being donated by our members. We want to spotlight how the NGC is making a difference across America. Just fill out the **PLANT AMERICA-FEED AMERICA DONATION FORM**, and then submit it electronically. The form is short, and the directions are easy to follow. Some members may donate on a more frequent basis, while others may donate once or

twice in a season. **Every donation counts!!** So, let's get growing as we continue to **Plant America and Feed America** too!

This is the link to the Plant America, Feed America report form: <https://gardenclubwebsite.wufoo.com/forms/zsknpl11e4aocl/>

Next issue of ***Board Briefs*** is **February 15, 2024**, deadline for articles **February 1, 2024**