



# Laurel Letters

## Winter 2023



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*an*  
*Edna*  
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*Caroline*  
*Alford, Edna*  
*McClellan,*  
*Marie Purser,*  
*John Barnett*

Dear Laurels,

Once again, I have been on the road, not just in the “Laurel World” but in almost every district!

October is the season for Garden Club of Georgia (GCG) District Annual Meetings, so I jumped at the chance to visit the other districts by traveling to Americus, Macon, Jesup, Decatur and Augusta. And then...I got Covid, so I missed our own district meeting and the one in Dunwoody. Anetsa-Ga-Da Garden Club in Ball Ground, GA hosted Laurel’s Annual Meeting with style for 135 of you and our GCG guests. The baskets your clubs donated for the raffle and your donations helped us raise over \$2,000.00; you all are amazing! Thank you to our hostesses and to Merrell Holden and Edna McClellan for capably leading in my absence and thank you for coming! Save the date for 2024: October 9<sup>th</sup> in Marietta.

At the Friends of the State Botanical Garden Meetings in Athens in September and November, I learned about the fabulous Winter WonderLights event scheduled for Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> – Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>. The garden will be transformed into a wonderland of twinkling lights and dazzling displays. If you have not seen this show, presented by the UGA Office of the President, go to their website for details. Proceeds help fund the gardens!

I loved being a part of the GCG Board meeting in Athens where I gave the board an update on our district. It was fun to meet our board members and to learn about their plans! My biggest takeaway was that we have extraordinary changes that will make Garden Club Presidents’ reporting and communication so much easier. Watch for more to come on how we will submit our membership rosters and other information that will be much less confusing and labor intensive. I will be recruiting volunteers to help implement new ideas.

Back in Marietta, I attended The Flower Garden Club of Marietta’s 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. What an inspiring history! Lisa Hall, our GCG President, and Marietta Mayor Steve Tumlin spoke about the club’s many accomplishments and influence on the community. Mayor Tumlin was awarded a GCG Subscribing Membership.

In November, I went to the annual Historic Landscape Preservation Fundraiser at Masee Lane Gardens, home of the American Camellia Society, in Ft. Valley, Ga. where we toured the gardens, listened to an excellent speaker about camellias and ate lunch. Each district hosts once every seven years. All the proceeds go to those who apply and are selected for GCG grants to preserve our Ga. historic landscapes. Laurels have received several grants over the years.

Save the date for 2024: It’s Laurel District’s turn to host on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, Saturday, at Fair Oaks in Marietta. We need volunteers to help plan and staff the event; please contact Carol Fey at [cfey@bellsouth.net](mailto:cfey@bellsouth.net) or me! We NEED you!

Please invite me to attend your special events or your club meetings. I love a full calendar!

*Cheryl*

# Amicalola Garden Club

**How NOT To Be A Victim :**  
**Captain John Cagle Presents**  
**Program**  
**On Scams' Avoidance and False**  
**Identity Claims**

Captain John Cagle  
Ms. Rhonda Freeman



Amicalola Garden Club meetings resumed after summer break. A meeting was held on September 19, 2023, at the Tate Community Room. Hostesses were Ms. Peggy Andrews and Ms. Gail Cleveland. The ladies did an excellent job in decorating the room for fall. A barbecue luncheon was served and provided by members.

Guest speaker was Captain John Cagle with the Pickens County Sheriff's Department. Captain Cagle is Commander of the Criminal Investigations Unit with an extensive career in law enforcement beginning in 1979. After 30 years of service with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, he worked more than six years at Dawson County Sheriff's Department. In 2014 he began teaches courses at the University of North Georgia before joining the Pickens County Sheriff's Department.

Captain Cagle and his assistant, Rhonda Freeman, gave an informative and interesting presentation on how to avoid scams, including phone, impersonator, charity, prize, lottery, travel, and timeshare scams. Several victims in Pickens County have fallen prey to these scammers. There is a tremendous amount of interest in scams that are going on in Pickens County. The biggest take away was to "just hang up and don't become a victim."

Lou Charland gave the horticulture tip on putting the garden to bed. Lou provided interesting tips on planting fall crops, mulching and winterizing your tools.

President Linda Allred talked about the clean up of Freedom Park and the Tate Cemetery. Discussion was given to Tate Day on November 4th and the club participation. The Laurel District Meeting will be held at the Wheeler House in Ball Ground on October 24th. President Allred welcomed returning member Sally Eubanks.

Submitted by Fran Cathey, Amicalola Garden Club, Laurel District Meeting

# Ball Ground Garden Club

## **Ball Ground Garden Club Receives Standard of Excellence Award**

The Ball Ground Garden Club was awarded the Garden Club of Georgia's Standard of Excellence during the 2023 Laurel District Fall meeting held on October 24 at the Wheeler House Barn in quaint Ball Ground. The District Meeting was hosted by the BGGC this year. Pictured are **Peggy Tucker**, immediate past Garden Club of Georgia President presenting the award to **Karen Hawkins**, President of Ball Ground Garden Club.



Submitted  
by Sally  
Metz &  
Sally  
Eubanks.  
Photos by  
Gary  
Conway.

Many hands make light work. Our active committees bring us all together. Some of the larger committees are the Botanical Garden, Projects, Publicity, Plant Sale, and School committees. We also have smaller special committees such as landscaping at church where our meetings are held, Blue Star, Senior Center and more. Our goal is for every member to be involved and be on at least one committee in their area of interest or gifting. This camaraderie and involvement enabled us to achieve the Standard of Excellence award, as many other clubs do as well. We are thankful for Garden Club of Georgia and the many opportunities to achieve and contribute.

**Ball Ground Hosts  
Halloween Spooktacular**

The Ball Ground Garden Club partnered with the community to host a Spooktacular Event at the Ball Ground Botanical Garden. Three hundred plus young 'Trick or Treaters' enjoyed games, face painting, snacks, treats and a few tricks! Great costumes and fun by all!! Thanks to everyone who made this a wonderful community event.



## ***Gardening for Wildlife: Ball Ground Partnership Sees Great Results***

The Ball Ground (Anetsa-Ga-Da) Garden Club has partnered with the local elementary STEM academy to foster the love and support of pollinators. The club has developed a pollinator garden at the school, held pollinator information sessions at the library, supported the local pollinator census at the botanical garden, and has taught the students how to identify monarch butterfly eggs on plants at the garden.

From the STEM academy: “While we were out recharging and enjoying time with our families this summer, one of the STEM academy’s partners were rolling up their sleeves and creating a beautiful pollinator garden for our students. The garden, which was fully funded and created by the Ball Ground Garden Club consists of colorful lantanas, which are a must have for a pollinator heaven. These plants attract butterflies, bees and hummingbirds with their sweet nectar, attractive scent, bright color and flower form. The pollinator garden will provide an instrumental role in providing the students an avenue to investigate, explore and observe the importance of pollinators in gardening and conservation in the STEM enrichment laboratory.”

Submitted by Sally Metz



**A young pollinator enthusiast participating in the pollinator census.**



# Jonquil Garden Club

## *Jonquils Sparkle with December Events: Shirley Demos How to Create Outdoor Holiday Designs*

Jonquil Garden Club of Smyrna was treated to a fascinating, in depth demonstration by Shirley Priest, our own former JGC president and current Laurel Letters editor, on how to create outdoor holiday arrangements. Shirley detailed and demonstrated how to create three different container designs using a variety of greenery from her own garden as well as accents such as birch branches, dried lotus seed pods, and a bit of faux material.

We were able to see how she created the foundation for her designs by placing water containers of the right size to fill the inside of the decorative pots, for the greenery to sit in.

There are many types of conifer or broadleaf evergreen foliage available to us in our own landscapes—these make up the basis of a winter container design. Shirley shared with us the helpful technique of tying together small bundles of mixed greens with floral wire or rubber bands, making it easier to arrange the foliage masses in the pots and try them in different configurations to get the best effect.

Red holly, nandina or juniper berries add a beautiful color accent but may be unobtainable, so we can avail ourselves of the variety of faux berries and dried naturals available at craft stores, or “think outside the box” and scout our gardens for interesting sticks, dried seed pods, etc. to add to designs.



At the end of the program Shirley let us choose from some of many stems of greenery and faux floral stems that she had brought. We all left the meeting excited to get home with some new treasures, new confidence and fresh inspiration for our own designs!

Submitted by Heidi Hunt. Photos by Heidi Hunt and Michele Cox.

**Jonquil Garden Club Members Win Table Design Award at Merry Mingle**



Jonquil Garden Club members Michele Cox, Valerie McElwaney and Lorelei Clapper attended the annual Merry Mingle holiday luncheon, hosted by the Marietta Daisies Garden Club at the MEGC on November 29. Club members from many garden clubs in the Laurel District enjoyed the festivities.

The theme this year was Candy Cane Lane, and the members were encouraged to decorate the dining tables in a whimsical style. All of the attendees voted for their favorite table design. The winning table was designed by Jonquil members Michele Cox and Valerie McElwaney. They called their table, "Snowbird," which

featured a white, lighted snow globe-type lantern with tiny red cardinals inside, and a shimmery silver table topper with snowflake embroidery, accentuated by red cardinals in the snowy foliage and napkin rings. This is the second first place table award for Michele and Valerie, who were the winners last year.

"Many ladies told us that our table spoke to their hearts, because of its elegance and simple beauty," Michele said. "It was an honor to be able to use our talents and especially to represent the Jonquil Garden Club."



**More Merriment At Merry Mingle:**  
**First Place for Michele and Valerie**

**(R) *Elves Deanna Slone and Joe Arnoti keep the festivities going.***



***Submitted by Michele Cox.***

**Jonquils Talk Trash and Going Green at Smyrna Recycling Center**



**Julie Barwig, Keep Smyrna Beautiful and Recycling Center Director, presented interesting talk and tour on how the recycling center works to keep Smyrna “clean and beautiful. Nine members were able to hear an amazing presentation at the center on December 4 and find out how paper and glass can be recycled.**

**Photos by Paula Cahill**





# WINNWOOD GARDEN CLUB

## Winnwood Pilots Program for Future in Retirement Centers



**Winnwood, located near the Marietta Square, is a retirement community that offers independent and assisted living.**

**The Winnwood Garden Club in the Laurel District is recognized by the state of Georgia and is a pilot program for future projects in retirement centers.**

**Marietta Daisies Garden Club Members Nancy Pillar and Laurie Bailey meet once a month with the garden club to provide support for their activities. Each month the activities' director has a different project for the residents. Those who attend have a love of gardening and there is even a Master Gardener! The club has participated in a variety of programs such as creation of a wildflower garden, planting seeds, recognizing and conserving a habitat for bluebirds, as well as planting flowers to take back to their rooms. These activities are truly therapeutic as well as fun!**

**Submitted by Laurie Bailey**

## **From: Laurie Bailey, Laurel District Chair – Garden Therapy**

Gardening can be a lifetime activity! From toddler age to late in life, gardening can be not only a pleasure but also a wonderful and beneficial activity. It can combine the joys of gardening with the positive impact it has on overall well-being.

Garden therapy for older adults in assisted living environments can involve engaging older adults in various gardening activities, such as planting, nurturing, and harvesting plants and flowers. This form of therapy has been found to have numerous physical, emotional, and cognitive skill improvement benefits for seniors.

Loneliness can be an impact on residents in assisted living facilities who may not have families nearby. Having a monthly garden club program can be especially beneficial to bring those residents out of isolation to build friendships, provide moderate supervised exercise, and improve attitudes. Research suggests gardening may help reduce stress of aging, improve senses such as smell and touch and decrease anger and sadness. Being a part of a group and connecting with nature can be a beautiful thing!

If your club is interested in a garden therapy project, please visit GCG's website information about Garden Therapy under "Projects and Programs". And guess what? Your club can apply for grant money to implement a garden therapy program!

**Happy Gardening!**

**Laurie Bailey  
Laurel District Chair – Garden Therapy**



**Winnwood residents create beautiful containers and enjoy planting activity.**



**From: Deanna Slone,  
Subscribing Membership Chair – Laurel District**

**It's a great time to be part of the Laurel District! We are back to all the garden has to offer with seasonal changes ahead and new leadership within our district and across the state.**

**There is no better way to honor someone who is important to you as a family member or in your community at large who is not a garden club member than to purchase a Subscribing Membership to The Garden Club of Georgia. Say, "Thank you!" to your guest speaker, someone who loves to garden or simply shows support for what you do.**

**For \$25, a Subscribing Member receives a personalized certificate that is good for a one year membership along with a follow-up letter explaining his or her benefit. A thank you note will also be included stating how we appreciate their willingness to serve our community of gardeners.**

**To obtain a Subscribing Membership, please use the link below and follow the instructions:**

**<https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/subscribing-membership032023a.pdf>**

**Thank you for supporting your Laurel District and The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.**

**Any questions, contact:**

**Deanna Slone, Chairman - Subscribing Membership  
Laurel District of The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.**

**deannaslone@msn.com**

**(678) 429-8144**

## From the Editor:

Thanks to all clubs who contributed to LAUREL LETTERS WINTER ISSUE 2023.

Your articles, reports, and photos give a vivid picture of what your club has accomplished.

The deadline for Spring issue is **February 25.**

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all!

*Shirley*



### *Spring Issue*

**Deadline - February 25**  
**Emailed - March 15**

### *Summer Issue*

**Deadline - May 15**  
**Emailed - June 1**

### *Fall Issue*

**Deadline - August 25**  
**Emailed - September 15**

### *Winter Issue*

**Deadline - November 19**  
**Emailed - December 15**



Photos by Kelly Clark, Jonquil Garden Club

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