



Redbud Reporter

Spring 2025

From the District Director

Dear Redbud Garden Club Friends,

So, as I write this, it is mid-March. The daffodils and forsythia are a little dry looking but my Yoshino cherry and an unknown variety of camellia are in their prime. They look great side by side.

The Garden never disappoints, does it? If the flowers are a little lean, I'll see a huge dragonfly or my cat will find a lizard. Creation started in a Garden. I read an article recently about the mental health benefits of being in nature. They had actually researched and narrowed it down to 20 minutes/day and each month an extended period of like 2 hours at a time. I just know that something out there makes me feel good – perhaps the wavelength of the color green? This might sound crazy to some people but I bet you understand and now science is confirming that.

This will be my last letter to you as your Director. I was pretty “green” when I started this job but I have learned so much about Redbud and about myself. I could not have done this job without the help of all of you but I especially want to thank: Quill Duncan, Advisor Extradonnaire; sweet friend Rigby Duncan, who knows everything and has infinite patience; Gale Thomas, who helped me get off to a good start and has continued to give sage advice; and Joy Zaidan, who only needs a suggestion and things seem to happen by magic. I have so much enjoyed working with all of you and getting to know you better. Each of you adds a special touch to the things that the Redbud District and The Garden Clubs of Georgia seek to accomplish – beautify, conserve,



and educate. You walk the walk and—talk the talk and the things you do matter and make this world – and your communities – a better place. I continue to be amazed each day at your creativity, dedication, hard work and knowledge – all of which you willingly share without asking for recognition. We can do so much more together than we can separately. I am so grateful that I can be a part of this.

Bonnie Dudley is your new Director. She is efficient and enthusiastic. You are in good hands!

Thanks to you all again,
Kim

GCG Hosts the Deep South Convention for 2025

The Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. (DSGC) 2025 Convention was held on March 11-13 at the beautiful Rainwater Convention Center in Valdosta. It was three days of fun and learning. There were nine speakers and workshops, three tours of local historic gardens and wildlife areas, vendors, and a flower show! The food was good, too.

The vendors had exciting Georgia products – clothing, jewelry, native plants, camellias, books, etc. Several of the vendors were also speakers. It was exciting to learn about the emerging olive oil business in Georgia. The head of the Georgia Blueberry Association spoke about the history of growing blueberries in Georgia, as well as processing, choosing, and caring for the plants themselves. A camellia hybridizer had a gorgeous display of camellia varieties that were also for sale.

Many GCG members worked very hard to make this lovely event happen, including Marilyn McDonnell, who was the Chair, and Camellia District members Cathy Perry and Rita Hightower, who managed many aspects of the event. Each District Director chaired a committee and each district was responsible for a flower arrangement to honor the garden club members from a state in the DSGC – Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee. Our own Susan Turner worked her flower arranging magic to create a lovely design for Louisiana. Mary Carol McCall's squad (Camellia District) conceived and arranged all four table designs. Kudos for them!

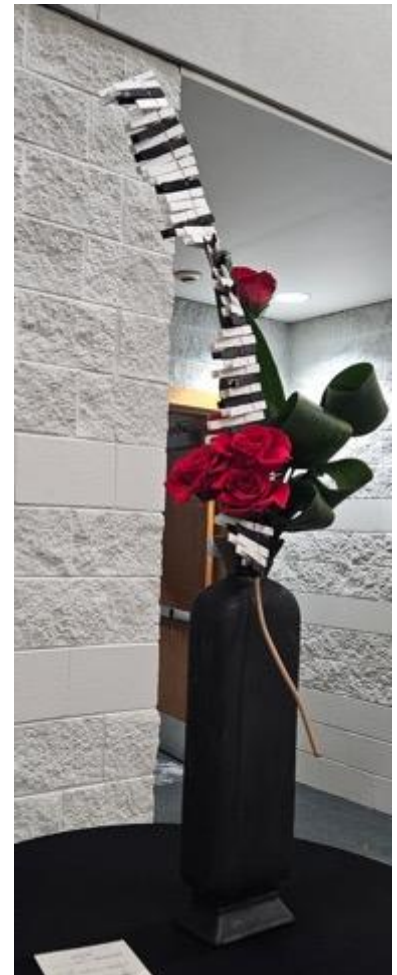
Awards night was exciting and fun. Redbud District won eleven awards and DeKalb Federation won one. You will hear more about these and other district winners at the GCG Convention April 29-30 in Augusta. The highlight of the Convention for many was the Awards Speaker, Lynn Fronk. She prepared eight arrangements while we watched – each one

representing some aspect of Georgia, her adopted home. She was informative and spoke warmly of each of these – The Masters, the 2006 Olympics, downtown Atlanta skyscrapers, Ray Charles, Jimmy Carter, and her hometown of Flowery Branch, etc. After her presentation there was a silent auction for purchase of these arrangements. It was quite the money maker! Thank you, Lynn!

Other fun things to know from the DSGC Convention hosted by GCG:

- One whole wall of the Rainwater Convention Center is made of glass that overlooks a swampy area with Spanish moss and geese. It was great to step out there and take a break or make a phone call.
- The Georgia Blueberry Association was formed in 1970. In 2024, Georgia produced 120 million pounds of blueberries grown on about 130,000 acres.
- Creator of the Georgia First Lady Camellia Collection and Speaker at the convention, Mark Crawford, has been working with Chinese growers to produce a "Four Season Camellia" – that will bloom June-mid September and love heat. These will be available sometime in 2026. Yay!
- Just as Georgia developed a blueberry business over time, olives can grow here, too, and Georgia is already producing olive oil.
- The Convention held a petite flower show that had many great entries. One category was the Battle of the States. Each State President created a petite design for judging. Alabama won that one.

Make plans to be there next March when The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs hosts the 2026 Deep South Garden Club Convention. You could combine it with a beach vacation for the family.



Above, clockwise from upper left: Susan Turner's design representing Louisiana; Camellia District members who arranged table designs; Lynn Fronk's design in honor of Georgia native Ray Charles; petite design entry area outside Rainwater Convention Center.

Left: Redbud District attendees at Deep South Convention (*left to right*) Susan Turner, Kim Fair, Bonnie Dudley, GCG President-Elect Diane Hunter, Frank Mullins, Gale Thomas

Celebrate Garden Week in Georgia and National Garden Week

Garden Week in Georgia is April 20-26, 2025. Commemorate the week by visiting a public or private garden in the state. Encourage others to enjoy the state's natural beauty. Plant flowers or trees. Participate in any activities to make the public aware of what the state has to offer and the work of The Garden Club of Georgia. All these things and more will help to add to the celebration of Garden Week in Georgia!

Make plans to also celebrate National Garden Week in your community during June 1-7, 2025! Each year National Garden Week provides a window for us all to encourage others to love their communities and work with organizations around us to enrich our environment. Refer to the suggestions on the National Garden Club's Official Website. Use those and the ones below to kickstart ideas for your upcoming events.

- Plan an opportunity for an adult or youth organization to improve a public space.
- Plan an opportunity to work with families to upgrade a nearby area.

- Work with a local nursery to plan a workshop on planting a flower garden.
- Plan a workshop or educational event at your local library for children in your community.
- Visit a garden in your area with your club. Invite friends.
- Work with a local senior care home to plan a vegetable garden.
- Plan an activity with school students.
- Donate a plant or flower arrangement to a government agency. Place a National Garden Week Poster with it, which can be downloaded from the National Garden Club's Official Website.

Create an enjoyable experience with your club during Garden Week in Georgia and National Garden Week. Send your pictures and event summaries to Sandy Reed, Editor of the Redbud Reporter sandyreed17@gmail.com and Bonnie Dudley, Redbud District Director, bondudley@yahoo.com.



Judges Symposium

Georgia's Judges Councils – North Georgia, Middle Georgia, East Georgia and South Georgia – invite you to attend the 2025 Judges Symposium on June 19 - 21, 2025 in Macon, Georgia at Highland Hills Baptist Church.

The symposium starts on Thursday at 2 pm with Botanical Arts - Design (Anna Burns) and

Horticulture (David Robson). On Friday Robson will do a deep dive into *Hemerocallis* and ferns. Claudia Bates takes over on Saturday with Design, "Design Diversity".

You don't have to be a judge to attend. Satisfy your curiosity and have fun. There will be a few vendors on site, too. [Get details and registration here.](#)



Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail® *2025 Symposium & Native Plant Sale* *Plains, Georgia* *Friday, May 2, 2025*

The 2025 Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail Symposium & Native Plant Sale will be held on Friday, May 2 from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Plains Community Center in Plains, Georgia.

Keynote speaker is Dr. Alan Armitage, Emeritus Professor, Department of Horticulture, University of Georgia. Other speakers include: Dr. Jaap de Roode, Emory University Department of Biology and Director, de Roode Monarch Lab; and Melissa Montgomery, Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter's Personal Assistant.

The Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail is a program inspired by Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter to help increase habitat for Monarch Butterflies. The

program is based in Plains, Georgia and has expanded throughout the United States as well as internationally.

[Registering your garden](#) with the Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail means you are providing nectar plants (flowers) as a butterfly food source and host plants such as milkweed or parsley on which butterflies lay their eggs. Your garden's name will be listed along with the city and state in which it is located. Only public garden addresses are published so people can visit them. All other gardens are listed only with the city and state so people can see how many gardens there are. Registering your garden helps monitor collective efforts to improve the migratory route of the Monarch Butterfly.

2025 GCG Convention

It's not too late to register for the 2025 Garden Club of Georgia Convention – but you need to act quickly! You must register by April 18 to avoid late fees. Hotel reservations must be made by 5 pm on April 7 to get convention rates.

This year's GCG Convention will be held at the Augusta Riverfront Marriott from April 29-30. The theme of the convention is "Gather on the River".

The registration form, convention schedule and hotel reservation information can be found [here](#) and in the Spring Garden Gateways.

You don't want to miss this entertaining and educational event – so don't delay!



2025 National Garden Clubs Convention



And speaking of Conventions! The 2025 Annual Convention of the National Garden Clubs will be in our own backyard this year in North Charleston, SC.

The Convention will be held from May 18 – 22 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Charleston Airport Hotel and Convention Center. Registration is due by April 20 to avoid late fees.

The registration form, program schedule, and information on tours and hotel reservations can be found [here](#).

It's not often that the NGC Convention is so close to home – so take advantage of it this year!

Upcoming Plant Shows and Sales

Georgia Iris Society Iris Show and Sale

April 26, 2025

Sale begins at 10 am

Show 11 am – 4 pm

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

1790 Lavista Road NE

Atlanta, GA

GEORGIA
IRIS
SOCIETY



8th Annual Ball Ground Garden Club

**PLANT
SALE &
FESTIVAL**

Saturday May 10th
9:00 to 3:00pm



FREE EVENT



The Festival is located at
the famous Ball Ground
Botanical Garden:
Large supply and selection
of plants,
Guided tours of our
Botanical Garden,
Raffles,
40 local vendors (food,
drink, shopping)

**215 Valley Street
Ball Ground, GA**

Avondale Estates Plant Sale

April 19, 2025

10 am – 3 pm

Lake House

59 Lakeshore Drive

Avondale Estates, GA



Go to avondaleestatesgardenclub.org for
more details and a video about the plant sale.

Cherokee Garden Library Celebrates 50th Anniversary



Please join us on **Wednesday evening, May 7, 2025**, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Cherokee Garden Library – a growing collection of 40,000 rare and contemporary works telling the diverse and meaningful stories of people and plants that have shaped the Southeastern United States and beyond.

Renowned interior designer Charlotte Moss will lead us on a fascinating journey as we travel the world through her eye and explore the small intimate gardens near and far. The lecture will be followed by an author's book signing and a cocktail reception.

All net proceeds of the event will support the acquisition of a seminal rare book for the Cherokee Garden Library, further advancing our nationally recognized collection.

Event Schedule

6:30 pm: Doors open at the Atlanta History Museum/valet available

7:00 pm: Lecture begins promptly in the Grand Overlook

Book signing and cocktail reception to follow, featuring music by Joe Gransden in the Allen Atrium.

More information and ticket purchases can be found [here](#).

Cherokee Garden Library at
The Atlanta History Center

130 West Paces Ferry Road
Atlanta, GA

Wild Nest Bird Rehab Supported by Deep South Prize

I had the honor of receiving the Deep South Award for Friends of Birds this past award year of 2024. There was a \$100.00 check attached to the award, and I wanted to share with you that the money went to a remote camera and a battery recharger to help support Wild Nest Bird Rehab located in Legacy Park Decatur. They do amazing work there with babies needing to be raised as well as injured birds. Just last year, 1500 birds were helped there. An amazing number! They have a Facebook page to show how they are caring for birds...the baby bird photos are truly remarkable!

The opportunity to apply for this award through my garden club has resulted in needed care for the birds we love and need, and I am so very grateful to have had this opportunity. Also thanks to Christi Granger who was our awards chairperson and encouraged and supported my application. I am also so very happy that my garden club has been inspired this year to donate \$600 to Wild Nest.

Thank you so very much for supporting our club members through your outstanding awards program that serves to inspire others to greater knowledge and understanding of our natural world.

Please see the attached photos taken of staff at Wild Nest. They are very careful about the rooms where the birds are kept but they were very happy to let me get a picture with them outside!

Very Sincerely,
Beth Langhorst
Avondale Estates Garden Club



Thanks from Georgia Regional Hospital

Many thanks to Smoke Rise Morning Glories member Glenndolyn Hallman and the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs from the Georgia Regional Hospital for the years of donations of clothing, underwear and toiletries to the residents of the hospital. Smoke Rise Morning Glories member Mary Cochran, who is the Activity Therapy Manager at the hospital, presented this certificate and thank you note to Glenndolyn, who is the GCG Chairman of Garden Therapy. This presentation was held in February.

Last December Glenndolyn took a mountain of donated supplies, underwear and clothing to the hospital. For many years, we have donated to the patients there and the staff and the CEO are truly appreciative of the time and effort. It is meaningful to those residents and patients who have so little. Additional donations will be delivered this spring.

Mary Cochran (left) presents Certificate of Appreciation to Glenndolyn Hallman.



GCG 2025 Spring Fundraiser



Order Flower Bulbs & Support Our Cause!

The Spring Program for Flower Power is here!
There are even more items available to select from other than beautiful perennials.
Included are cut flower bouquet seed mats, hummingbird and butterfly vertical gardens,
ground covers, vegetables, herbs, and gardening supplies.
Check it out. Order NOW. Shipment begins April 1-May 15.
Thank you for contributing to GCG Fundraiser.

Visit Our Personalized Website By 05/15:
<http://gardenclubofgeorgia.fpfundraising.com/>

Contact For More Information:
Bess Hartley

Turn In Paper Order Forms By: **NA**

Click [here](http://gardenclubofgeorgia.fpfundraising.com/) to order

DeKalb Federation Honors New Life Members

On February 27, 2025, the DeKalb Federation honored 11 new Life Members. Honored by the local garden clubs, these members were introduced by members of their respective garden clubs and each received a Life Member pin and membership card.

This year's honorees included Patricia Calcagno, Helen Dorroh and Susan Stewart (Avondale Estates Garden Club); Aly Palmer (Hunting Hill Garden Club); Linda Manners, Becky Bracewell and Lynn Hart (Lullwater Garden Club); Lisa Armistead (Mountain Mums Garden Club); Paula McEvoy (Smoke Rose Garden Club); Melanie Chastain, Faye Long and Geri Houpt-Burns (Smoke Rise Morning Glories Garden Club); and Cheryl Anderson (Stonecrest Garden Club). Two additional honorees, Frank (Buz) Smith (Shenandoah Rose Garden Club) and Jody Harris (Avon Garden Club) will be honored in April.

The highlight of the program was the recognition of the DeKalb Federation's Life Member of the Year. This year's Life Member of the Year is Bonnie Pennington. Bonnie currently serves as the DeKalb Federation's Garden Therapy Chairman. She is also the 2023-2025 Promoting Native Plants Chairman for The Garden Club of Georgia, Parliamentarian for the Redbud District, and the First Vice President of Smoke Rise Morning Glories Garden Club. Bonnie is also a GCG Life Member. With this recognition, Bonnie joins the 21 other DeKalb Federation Life Members of the Year.

The Life Membership Program was followed by a luncheon provided by the members of Federation Board and the Life Membership Program Planning committee.

Photos of the event can be found at:
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/AZeRAHTtXwmw1usk9>



Top: Federation President Quill Duncan presents the Life Member of the Year certificate to Bonnie Pennington

Middle: Bonnie Pennington with husband Bill and daughter Brooke Parris

Bottom: Table design created by Faye Long

DeKalb Federation Continues Beautification Project

The DeKalb Federation Landscape Committee has started taking advantage of lovely spring days to continue their beautification efforts at the Garden Center. On March 4, six members – Peg Wyse (Avondale Estates); Frank Mullins (Avon); Dolly Moy, Faye Brown, Joy Abrams and Quill Duncan (Smoke Rise Morning Glories) – worked on our beautiful Callanwolde Garden Center grounds.

Spring's lovely early blooms were a highlight as we groomed and weeded and pruned. Frank and Peg tackled a dying azalea and removed it from our grounds. Plants have life spans and many of our older hardy shrubs need extra attention to keep them revived – or in this case to say goodbye!

The daffodils were in full bloom across the grounds and in the rock garden. We loved seeing the results of our years of maintaining and adding new bulbs to enhance the overall beauty of our property.

When you next visit Callanwolde take time to admire the colorful displays! And by the way, Faye Brown is a new member of the Smoke Rise Morning Glories and she has already volunteered twice with the garden team. Welcome Faye!



Left to right: Peg Wyse, Quill Duncan, Frank Mullins, Faye Brown and Joy Abrams. Not pictured: Dolly Moy



The Georgia Daffodil Society Holds a Standard Flower Show

The Georgia Daffodil Society (GDS) and The North Georgia Council of Flower Show Judges held a National Garden Club, Inc. Small Standard Flower Show in Conjunction with a Plant Society at the Cathedral of St. Phillip in Atlanta March 7-8, 2025. GDS President and Flower Show Chairman Greg Freeman and GDS Vice-President and Show Co-Chairman Jaydee Ager led the planning committee in presenting this beautiful show. Other members of the GDS Society Flower Show Planning Committee included Susan Turner, Design Chairman, and Gale D. Thomas, Clerks Chairman. Members from Redbud District participated by serving as judges and clerks, entering floral designs and an educational exhibit, and entering horticulture. The youth entries in this show were provided by youth from the Redbud District.



Top left: display of daffodil entries

Bottom left: educational and table setting designs

Redbud is Raising Dough with Mrs. Fields Fundraising



Get ready for a sweet treat and a great cause! The Redbud District will be hosting a Mrs. Fields Cookie Dough fundraiser with all proceeds supporting our Yellow Daisy Flower Show.

Delicious, high-quality cookie dough will be available in a variety of flavors, including classic chocolate chip, peanut butter, and snickerdoodle. You'll be able to place your orders online beginning April 7 through April 21, 2025. Be on the lookout for more information to come by email soon. We appreciate your support and let's make this fundraiser a success together!

News from the Clubs

Avondale Estates Garden Club Donates \$10,000 to Groups Supporting Environmental Responsibility

Following successful fund-raising events in 2024, including the annual Plant Sale in April and the biennial Secret Garden Tour in June, the Avondale Estates Garden Club (AEGC) donated \$10,000 to local and regional groups that support the club's mission of supporting horticultural arts and promoting environmental responsibility.

AEGC officers and members traveled throughout the metro Atlanta region and as far away as Asheville, NC, to present checks to groups including the Asheville Botanical Garden, Woodlands Garden in Decatur, the Georgia Native Plant Society, and Wild Nest Bird Rehab.

One donation from the club went to a program at the A.G. Rhodes facility at Wesley Woods that is attempting to save the starvine (*Schisandra glabra*), an endangered vine native to Southeast woodlands. The rare plant is found in the woodlands surrounding the assisted living facility near Emory University. The money will be used to rebuild the arbor where Kirk Hines, Horticulture Therapist at the A.G. Rhodes-Wesley Woods, has planted vines grown by the residents and to purchase additional pots and soil as the seedlings emerge and growing specimens need larger pots.

The club selected the Asheville Botanical Garden as a donation recipient to help the organization recover from Hurricane Helene in September 2024. The 45 large trees downed by the storm were just a small part of the damage from winds and rain.

The complete list of donation recipients for the year:

- Emory/AG Rhodes Starvine Project
- Georgia Native Plant Society
- CHaRM, the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials
- Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center
- Garden Club of Georgia Scholarship Fund
- Avondale Elementary School for shade devices for their outdoor classroom
- Asheville Botanical Garden
- Museum School for library books about plants and the environment
- Wild Nest Bird Rehab
- Georgia Regional Hospital Garden Therapy
- Woodlands Garden



Kirk Hines, Horticulture Therapist at the A.G. Rhodes-Wesley Woods, accepts a check from AEGC members (left to right): Jean Kingsbury, Karen Liebert, Mary Crowell, Julie Martinez and Susan Barton for a project to save the endangered starvine that grows near the facility.

Avondale Estates Garden Club Hosts Plant Sale April 19

Dreaming of spring flowers? Mark your calendar for April 19, when the Avondale Estates Garden Club (AEGC) will host its annual Plant Sale beside the Lake House at 59 Lakeshore Drive.

The massive plant sale on the shore of Lake Avondale features hundreds of plants grown or curated by members. Shoppers will find native plants, pollinators, plants for shade, plants for full sun, popular perennials, as well as a selection of herbs, vegetables, and house plants. Garden club members, including plant experts and master gardeners, will be on site to assist customers.

The sale will be 10 am - 3 pm rain or shine.

“The sale has been successful beyond our expectations,” Avondale Estates Garden Club President Patricia Calcagno said. “Our members work incredibly hard getting ready for the sale, but the revenue has had a big impact in helping us support area environmental projects and charitable organizations,” she said.

Co-chairs of the 2025 plant sale are Ann Umbaugh, Susan Carney, Peg Wyse and Deborah Levine. Karen Liebert chairs the children’s activities.

Proceeds from the plant sale and other AEGC fundraisers benefit organizations such as the Avondale Estates Elementary School Foundation, Cherokee Garden Library, the GCG Scholarship Fund, CHaRM and the Georgia Native Plant Society.

The annual sale coincides with Garden Week in Georgia, which is usually an ideal time for local gardeners to start digging in the dirt.

The AEGC Plant Sale includes children’s activities that introduce small shoppers to gardening and help them plant seeds to get a head start on their gardens.



Top: Buyers flock to the Avondale Estates Garden Club’s plant sale every spring.

Bottom: Ally Wright helps daughter Madi (granddaughter of AEGC members Alice Murray and Susan Stewart) plant seeds at the children’s table.

Conyers Garden Club Garden Therapy Workday

On Tuesday, February 19, 2025, the Conyers Garden Club treated 22 members of the Olivia Haydel Senior Center to a garden therapy workshop on making hand-held floral bouquets/posies.

The seniors pre-registered for the session and all material and supplies were provided by the CGC. Each senior was able to select their flowers for the posies. With some direction from Garden Therapy Chairman, Gale D. Thomas and a little support and encouragement from the other CGC members, each senior created his or her bouquet using a collection of flowers and greenery.

Club members also provided jars for the senior to store their bouquets in water. This allowed them to enjoy their day's activities without worrying about their bouquets wilting. With the provided jars of water, the flowers stayed fresh until the seniors were ready to go home.



Conyers Sponsors a Basic Design Course

The Conyers Garden Club sponsored another Basic Design Course I. Started February 19, 2025, this course of 12 students meets monthly in Conyers. Using a curriculum developed by the Garden Club of Georgia, instructor Gale D. Thomas engages the students in active learning of various design types.

During each session, students create two to three different designs per class. The designs studied to date include line, line mass and functional table designs (low profile and tall table design). Additionally, the students participated in a group design challenge to create three exhibition tables using materials provided.

The next class, Creative and Petites, is scheduled for April. Anna Burns, author of *Guide to the New*



Petite - Floral Design 12" and Under and a newly credentialed National Garden Clubs Flower Show Schools Instructor, will be the guest instructor. The final class, Botanical Arts: Wreaths and Fruits and Vegetables, will be taught by Gale in May.

Green Thumb Welcomes New Subscribing Members

Green Thumb Garden Club welcomes the following community members as honorary GCG Subscribing Members for 2025: Thomaston Public Works Director Kyle McGee; Upson-Lee High School Agriculture teacher Josh Rabalais; and Thomaston Economic Development Director Taylor Smith. These men were nominated and chosen for their partnership with Green Thumb on local community projects and for their continued support.

Left to right: Angie Short, Taylor Smith, Kyle McGee, Josh Rabalais, and Tina Rogers



In loving memory of Ellene Noell Cook of Green Thumb Garden Club

September 11, 1935- December 17, 2024



Ellene Cook was an active member of the Green Thumb Garden Club in Thomaston, Georgia for over 60 years. She held many offices, including President (1978-1980) and Program Chairman. She was on the yearbook committee and served in many other aspects of the club.

Ellene attended many garden shows and was frequently the recipient of blue ribbons. In 2018 she was honored to be given a lifetime membership in the Garden Club of Georgia.

She was an active member of Thomaston First Baptist Church and served as Chairman of the Alter Guild for over 20 years and provided flowers from her own yard for many of the church arrangements.

Using her garden grown flowers, she brought much joy to others with floral arrangements. She quickly realized that gardening would not only be a rewarding experience for herself but could be an expression of love and care for others.

Ellene's home and gardens were the setting for many garden club events. Her last party was in September 2023 in which she hosted the annual salad luncheon and monthly garden club meeting.

She was a celebratory individual and Green Thumb Garden Club benefitted from her energy and willingness to "Make it Happen."

Mountain Mums Walk to Remember

A wave of community support swept through the Smoke Rise community on March 8th, as hundreds gathered for the 13th Annual “Tucker Walk to Remember”. Each daffodil bulb planted, each step taken, echoed a shared commitment to safe driving and the remembrance of young lives tragically lost.

The walk, organized by the Mountain Mums Garden Club, honors those remembered at the “Triangle of Trees” memorial, located at Highway 78 - Exit 7. This garden stands as a tribute to Mandi Smith, Brandon Hubbard, Brandon Stovall, Matt Taylor, Charlie Wellman, Julian Carter, and Ben Lolies. The trees there serve as a constant reminder to “Please Drive Safely”.

To further their commitment to safety, the club also presents Taggart's Driving School scholarships annually to area students who have written a winning essay about why they want to attend the classes.

The Walk to Remember is more than just an event; it's a shared act of love and remembrance. Seeing the families who have experienced such profound loss, and witnessing the community embrace them, is a powerful reminder of community and why we gather each year. All support, whether through walking, volunteering, or donating, makes a difference.

A special thank you to our scholarship winner, Dhyana Patel from Tucker High School, for her inspiring words. Her story and aspirations give us hope and purpose. We are thrilled to announce that we raised enough funds to support three additional driving scholarships next year, ensuring that more young drivers have the resources they need to stay safe.



Satsuki Garden Club Observes Arbor Day

In observance of Arbor Day in Georgia, members of the Satsuki Garden Club gathered at Academy Springs to plant two ‘Emerald Green’ arborvitae to enhance the serenity of the park. The Civic Improvement Committee of the club initiated the project in conjunction with the City of Covington.

Thuja occidentalis ‘Emerald Green’ arborvitae is a narrow, pyramidal evergreen with dense, emerald green foliage that holds its color throughout winter. It thrives in the heat and humidity of the south and tolerates dry spells when established. Arborvitae are hardy trees that require little maintenance and

grow well in part or full sun. It originated in the Americas and then spread to Asia. The word "arborvitae" comes from the Latin term for "tree of life". Birds and small mammals find shelter in the dense branches of arborvitae.



Arbor Day is a secular day of observance in which individuals and groups are encouraged to plant trees. Today, many countries observe such a holiday. Although National Arbor Day is in April, each state typically celebrates Arbor Day during their regional planting season. Georgia's Arbor Day is celebrated on the third Friday of February.

Smoke Rise Morning Glories Participate in Pressed Flower Workshop

On March 11, Smoke Rise Morning Glories were treated to a special workshop on using pressed flowers to create one-of-a-kind greeting cards and bookmarks. Beth Gabbart, owner of Bouquets Y'all, demonstrated how – with some glue (or Mod Podge), stationary, tweezers, a small brush, a package or two of pressed flowers, and a little patience – you can create a special handmade gift.

A weariness with the corporate world led Beth to start growing flowers on a plot of borrowed land. As an outgrowth of her flower-farming, she developed a business where she provides floral-centered entertaining and educational experiences for groups, businesses and special events looking for a creative experience for clients, staff and organization members.

Take a look at some of members' beautiful designs! Each was different but all showed the creativity of the group. Many thanks to Beth for providing this unique and fun experience!



Wisteria Garden Club Prepared Finals Survival Bags

Wisteria Garden Club had another successful Ways and Means Project chaired by Bonnie Dudley and executed by the whole club. Finals Survival bags were prepared and sold to parents and friends of LaGrange College students and then delivered to student mailboxes for Fall Final days in December.

Proceeds help us support state, national, district, and council garden club projects as well as our own community.



Left to right: Genie Sutton, Brenda Spradley, Marjorie Bowling, Hariett Wigley, Ann Blackwell, Gail Gordon, Debbie Massengale, Susan Hinson, Alesia Nixon, Suzanne Cook, and Elaine Howard.