

SUMMER 2025



# *Garden Gateways*

The Official Publication of The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.



*The Healing  
Tree of the  
Altamaha  
River*

**WELCOME**  
*Diane Hunter*  
**2025-27 President**

*Plant America  
Grant Winners*

Volume 96 No 1



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*Tending the Heart of Georgia: Creating  
Community through Beautification,  
Conservation and Education*



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*PLANT AMERICA for the next 100  
Years!*



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*Plant the Deep South with Flowers and  
Trees for the Birds and Bees*

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Garden Gateways readers?**

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Lisa warned me that this was coming, especially in the last two months! It's here now and I couldn't be more honored to succeed Lisa Hall and the countless amazing women who've helped steer this organization. Lisa is a hard act to follow.

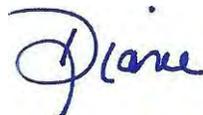
We're going to continue to stress the importance of the district and club experience in the next two-years. After all, you all do the good work every day. The officers just get to brag. Look for Cocktails and Conversation and mini-seminars on what presidents need. I've been encouraged by the amount of new and returning clubs due to a focused effort by Leanne Penman, new club liaison.

Our message is getting out there but we need to keep trying to reach potential members with media that they are using. Our communication effort led by 3<sup>rd</sup> VP Linda Doiron will be stressed.

Member365 has revolutionized how we keep track of our members and will be a big part of e-commerce going forward. Arianne Knowlton will help make it easier for members to access and maintain their own information. Speaking of money, our new Development Chairman, Monica Bozonier will be working closely with our Districts to get sponsors and fundraising sources.

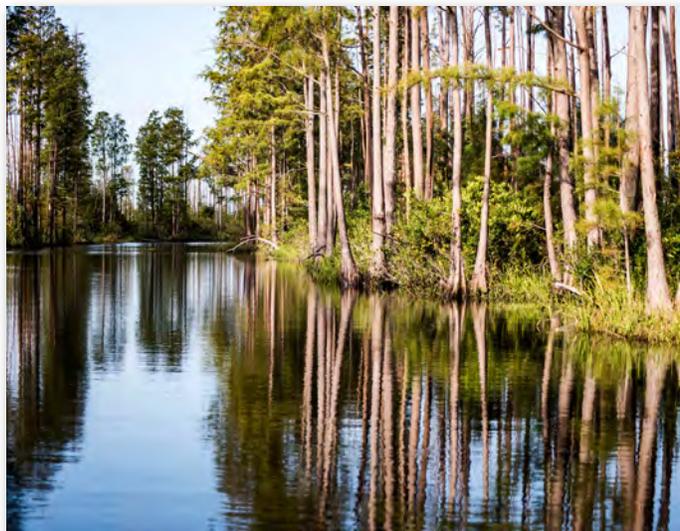
Gale Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, has a huge job. She'll take over as Convention Coordinator and Education Chairman, a pretty logical relationship. We need to continue to provide opportunities to enrich our members. The executive officer team is ready to help in any way. Look for the quick intro to the members in this issue. Remember, if you don't see your district represented, you can always join our journey when the next nominating committee contacts you!

My theme is "Tending the Heart of Georgia: Creating Community through Beautification, Conservation and Education." We do this every day and in multiple ways. Georgia has our heart and our hands. We wouldn't have it any other way!



~Barbara Bourque,  
Legislative Chairman

## Update on the Okefenokee Swamp



The 2025 legislative session of the Georgia House of Representatives had two bills being considered in the House Natural Resources Committee:

House Bill 561, the so-called Okefenokee Protection Act, would place a permanent ban of future mining along Trail Ridge (the eastern boundary of the swamp).

House Bill 562, proposes a five-year moratorium on the state issuing surface mining permits along the Okefenokee Swamp's Trail Ridge while experts evaluate the potential to lower water levels.

**Neither bill moved out of committee** due to concerns over property rights. Both bills are still alive and will be brought up again in 2026.

**Keep writing to your legislators to  
SAVE THE SWAMP**

There may be as many different reasons why gardeners garden as there are varieties of daffodils (25,000 or more). An excellent book that explores those personal reasons is *The Roots of My Obsession, Thirty Great Gardeners Reveal Why They Garden*. The reason I garden and why I am drawn inside the garden gate each day could fill a book. But simply, many gardeners like myself garden for the excitement and fulfillment they find. A book, a garden tour, a workshop or lecture can sometimes spur new excitement, and renewed purpose inside our garden gate.

A recent lecture and workshop on summer bulbs, given by Brent Heath of Brent and Becky's Bulbs of Gloucester VA, did just that. This year I am planting more bulbs but not for the spring display. I will be planting bulbs to extend bloom into the summer and autumn. For this demonstration, Brent provided deep 12 inch wide pots and a variety of five different bulbs or tubers. Each type of bulb was planted according to its desired depth, resulting in a layered pot with these 5 different summer blooming bulbs: *Dahlia* 'Gallery Serenade', *Lilium* 'Easy Fantasy', *Zantedeschia* (Calla Lily) 'Morning Sun,' *Begonia boliviensis* 'Bertini' and topped with *Oxalis tetraphylla* "Iron Cross". Gently



*Oxalis tetraphylla* "Iron Cross"

placing the papery brown bulbs and firm tubers in rich organic potting soil sparked visions of a lasting summer bouquet. So absorbed by the promise of this one large pot, I ordered more bulbs to fill more pots. More is more? Imagining bouquets with pleasing palettes of color while factoring in bloom time, height, sun requirements and watering preferences is a test of your horticultural knowledge. I hope the results equal the fun I've had planting these pots!

It is certain to be hot and steamy in Georgia this summer, so I will be making a daily check on the containers to monitor the growth, water wisely and stake as necessary. Because of a heavy deer presence where I garden, the most delicious and tempting pots will grow inside the garden fence. A positive aspect of growing bulbs in pots and containers is



*Dahlia* 'Otto's Thrill'



*Crinum* 'Stars and Stripes'

the portability. Moving pots of glorious bloom to the front walk or door step to greet guests for special occasions is easy and after they leave, the pots hasten back to their protected space behind the garden fence. The little red wagon will transport the heaviest pots because leaving temptation for wildlife could spell disaster.

When the summer flowers have faded, tubers and bulbs can be planted out in the garden. Just remember to allow the foliage to die back fully in order to restore energy for the next year's bloom just as you do for the spring flowering bulbs. That is another upside to growing in pots. While the foliage is dying back, you can move it to an out of the way spot and keep the rest of your garden space looking fresh.

Growing up in the Hudson Valley and gardening in New York and Connecticut, the planting of bulbs always started in earnest as the days shortened and the temperatures dropped. A bulb planted at the end of the growing season when leaves of red, orange



*Scadoxus*, Blood Lily

and gold began to drop and the chill in the air was steady promised the emergence of new life and abundant color in the spring to come. This year, planting bulbs for a different season feels new to me. Fall is no longer the only time I will be planting bulbs. Now I am obsessed with planting summer bulbs, in pots and in the ground. *Cannas*, *Colocasia*, *Crinum*, *Dahlia*, *Gladiolus*, *Hedychium*, *Hippeastrum*, *Hymenocallis*, *Iris*, *Lilium*, *Scadoxus*, and *Zantedeschia* are all likely candidates to be potted up inside the garden gate. Summer bulbs are a good reason to garden.



*Canna* 'Bengal Tiger'



*Hemerocallis* 'Pink Tirzah'

## Gather on the River with the Birds and the Bees and the Flowers and the Trees

On April 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> over 300 guests gathered at the Augusta Marriott at the Convention Center on the Savannah River to attend the 97<sup>th</sup> Annual Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. hosted by the Azalea District. The event honored special guests were Deep South Director Denise Thorne, GCG President Lisa Hall, and Honorary Life President of the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Deen Day Sanders.



Floral designs created by designers from all seven districts were in the hallways, and table designs graced the dining tables for all three meals where educational exhibits were also displayed. Eleven vendors offered a diverse selection of items for attendees to purchase from sunup to sundown on day one.

Opening day Luncheon featured Donna Byrby who presented her husband Stan Byrby's program on how the Burkman's nursery became the Augusta National's Masters Golf course. The afternoon attendees were offered two presentations, Vera Stewart told of her 40 years of becoming a nationally known entrepreneur in the food business. She sold and signed her two cookbooks and shared her DREAM acronym for success. Glen and Gail Hendry of the South Carolina Bluebird Society gave a beautiful power point of the 86 bluebird nestboxes that they monitor on the Hitchcock Woods trails.

Three options were offered for the next hour: Morris Museum of Art, A trip to the Augusta Council of Garden Clubs Perennial Garden and Designers Challenge. So much to see in so little time.

The Cocktail party and Awards Banquet where attendees dressed in fancy, glittering formal attire was exciting and well done. Owen Navarre gave an interesting program on the Rocky Shoals Spider Lilies just up the way on the Savannah River. Each District was seated together and cheered and waved their pompoms when they won an award.

Wednesday's Installation Luncheon took place with 225 attendees given the opportunity of seeing the beautiful photos of the Okefenokee Swamp presented by Mark Albertin, author and photographer. Denise Thorne, Deep South Director installed the The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. 2025-2027 officers followed by the installation of the District Directors.



Back L-R: Jane Hersey, Barbara Bourque, Peggy Tucker, DS Director, Denise Thorne  
Front L-R: Sarah Lanier and Deen Day Sanders

## Camellia Garden Club Celebrates 85th Anniversary

On Saturday, May 3, 2025, members of the Camellia Garden Club gathered to celebrate "Cheers to 85 Years!" We were honored to have Barbara Bourque, Former Garden Club of Georgia President and currently the Dogwood District Parliamentarian; Christy Novellas, Dogwood District Director; and Monica Bozonier, Immediate Past Dogwood District Director in attendance for our celebration.

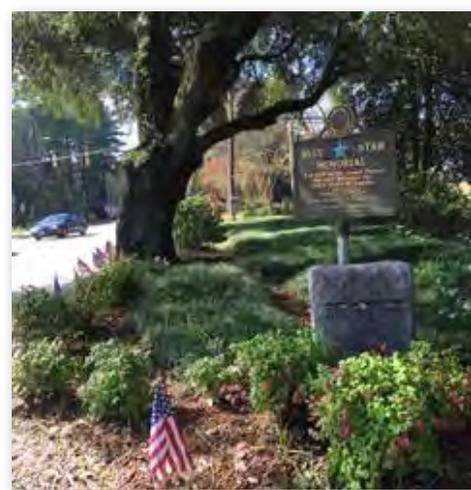
Founded in 1940 and originally based in Atlanta, club members now live in the metro area and surrounding suburbs. "Together We Grow," our motto, is the basis for all our initiatives including civic beautification at the Chastain Horse Park, garden therapy with residents of St. Anne's Terrace, and conservation emphasis with Trees Atlanta and the Atlanta Botanical Garden to name a few. In 2005 and in 2017-2018, we funded restoration and participated in the beautification of the Boy With a Swan statue at the Atlanta History Center. With a rich history of dedication to the environment and serving others, we look forward to the next 85 years!



## Plant America Grant Winners

**Azalea Garden Club of Columbus (AGC)** received a \$2,000 NGC grant for the Jordan Vocational High School (JVHS) Courtyard Garden Project. The AGC is partnering with the JVHS Alumni Association; Bloomer's at Midtown Garden Center in Columbus; and JVHS students/faculty on this project to revitalize a once beautiful courtyard used by students and faculty. Limited school funding had been focused on interior building improvements, and, unfortunately, the exterior courtyard has been neglected for decades.

Trees, shrubs, flowering plants, and ground cover that provide multi-season interest will be planted after soil conditioning. Primarily native plants were chosen based on hardiness, low maintenance and different flowering seasons. Metal sculptures made by students will adorn the garden beds. The new courtyard project will inspire and afford art students a variety of color and texture for subject matter throughout the seasons. AGC Master Gardeners will lead the volunteers' work; students will be supervised by JVHS teachers to provide the unpaid labor, artwork, construction and maintenance for the project. JVHS has been training young adults for well over 100 years in multiple administrative, professional, trade and craft occupations. Upon course completion and successful testing, students receive national and/or state certification.



**The Greensboro Garden Club** is thrilled to be the recipient of the NGC Plant America Grant that will be used towards the restoration of our Memorial Garden, which was created in 1946 to erect a living, growing garden to honor the men and women who served in WWII.

The restoration will coincide with the garden's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, honoring our 16 founding members, whose vision and dedication made the Memorial Garden possible. Many current trees and shrubs have been in place for over 40 years and are overgrown and obstructing the view of the passers by. We plan to revitalize the entire garden with new plantings that will be low maintenance (dwarf varieties), water conscious, and visible on all sides. Going forward we will continue the stewardship undertaken by our predecessors, while striving to preserve the memory of those who served in armed conflicts.

**The Spade and Trowel Garden Club of Thomaston** sponsors the Upson Lee Primary School Farm and Garden Club, which has 28 second-grade students led by Mrs. Amanda Gunnels. She teaches gardening skills like planting, harvesting, tool use, and environmental care. Club members volunteer to assist with meetings, planting, pruning, weeding, and mentoring.

Lauren Hall, chairperson of the Youth Committee, applied for the Plant America Community Project Grant to support the school garden club. The grant will help replace raised beds, beautify outdoor learning areas, and enhance greenhouse learning. Funding will cover raised bed kits, soil, pollinator plants, pine straw, seeds, and gardening tools. These improvements will promote hands-on learning, environmental awareness, and create welcoming spaces for students, teachers, and families.



# The Healing Tree of the Altamaha River

~ Linda Doiron

A long time ago along the winding banks of the Altamaha River in McIntosh County, a tree bloomed with unsurpassed beauty. It is said that the Creek Indians, who lived in harmony with the land, believed that the tree held the soul of a healer known as Alawa. It was centuries later when John and William Bartram (father and son) discovered this very special tree and collected its seeds. The locals believed that the tree was a sacred gift from the spirits of the river and upon removal of the seeds, every tree like it vanished in the wild until none were left.

It is recognized as one of the rarest of rare trees in America and has only ever been found wild in its native habitat of Georgia. It grows today in arboretums and cultivated gardens as a large multi-stem shrub or small single trunk tree typically reaching 20 to 25 feet tall. The Franklin Tree, as it is known now has also been described in the past as a "lost camellia" or "lost Gordonia." Its flowers are large and striking, measuring 3-4 inches across with cup shaped creamy-white petals and golden-yellow stamens. The seed capsules are beautiful and require 12-14 months to mature. The large white fragrant flowers bloom in late summer to early fall and are often compared to orange blossoms or honeysuckle plants. In the fall its leaves turn dramatic colors of red, orange and gold. It is fickle and must be planted in moist, well-drained acidic soil in full sun or partial shade.



Franklin Tree



Franklin Fall Flower

In a modern retelling of the story, John and William Bartram discovered a grove of the small trees in 1765 near Darien and later collected the plants and seeds to propagate them in their Philadelphia garden.

Within 50 years the tree was extinct in the wild, and it is believed by modern historians that without the Bartram's collection, the Franklin tree would no longer exist and may never have been discovered.

The Bartrams named the Franklin Tree (*Franklinia altamaha*) in honor of their close friend Dr. Benjamin Franklin, and the Altamaha River where it was discovered. The Franklin tree is considered an icon due to its unique history and limited genetics. All of the specimens today are derived from the Bartram's plant and seed collection. In 2002 the Franklin Tree was reintroduced to its original habitat along the Altamaha River in McIntosh county.

Conservationists planted 10 Franklin trees in the area where they were first discovered in 1765 to restore the species to its native environment where it was last seen in the wild in the early 1800s.

If you are interested in seeing a Franklin tree, the Atlanta History Center is home to the best specimen recognized for its impressive size and health. Located in the Quarry Garden, this Franklin tree was recognized as a Georgia state champion in 2008 by the Georgia Forestry Commission for being the largest of its species in the state.

## More about the Bartram Family

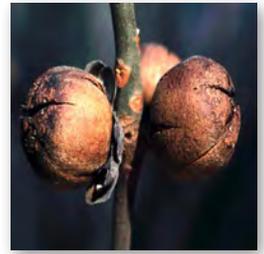
If you were at our Garden Club of Georgia convention in April, you may recognize the Bartram family name because one of our speakers that featured the Rocky Shoals Spider Lily credited William Bartram with the discovery of this native lily in 1773. The Bartrams were botanists and horticulturalists who had a keen interest in colonial native flora and fauna. They bought land near Philadelphia and built what was to become America's first Botanical Garden that still exists today as a museum house known as Bartram's Garden.

## The Healing Tree

While the Creek Indians were eventually pushed out of the Altamaha region, they carried a rich oral tradition filled with myths, legends and sacred stories including long-attributed "river guardians" tied deeply to the natural landscape of this southeastern Georgia gem. The protective spirits of the Healing Tree live on through today's conservation efforts by the Nature Conservancy, Altamaha Riverkeeper and others dedicated to this beautiful waterway and its unspoiled habitat.

## More about the Altamaha River

The Altamaha River is formed by the confluence of the Oconee and Ocmulgee Rivers and is believed to be 20 million years old. It is a 137-mile waterway that spills into the Atlantic Ocean near Darien. The Nature Conservancy has documented more than 120 rare or endangered species among this habitat known as the Altamaha River Bioserve. The river's watershed is the largest in Georgia and third largest in the United States. Its unofficial titles include "Georgia's little Amazon", "Where God Comes to Think" and "A-lot-amaha."



Franklin seed pod



Thank you to everyone for the words of encouragement, prayers and cards during and after John's open heart surgery that happened to occur two weeks prior to my final convention. Diane Hunter stepped right in and offered to do anything she could, and she did a marvelous job.

One of the most important things a leader of an organization of volunteers MUST do is say thank you and say it often. I have many people to thank for all that you have done this term.

Thanks to our executive and finance committees, investment and trustees committees for making the best decisions on spending money and executing plans. Thanks to our membership team led by Nilsa Summey. Thanks Bess Hartley for embracing Flower Power and yet another raffle to support our budget.

Thanks to the new group of women comprising the editorial committee for *Garden Gateways*, Betty Benner, our communications chairman, our copy editors and Stephnie Corley for creating the new full color, full size quarterly magazine providing interesting content and offering a section for each district to show us what they are doing.

Thanks to our awards committee led by Diana Malone for doing an outstanding job. Thanks, Janet Carn, for all the emails that had to be sent, sometimes at the last minute. Thanks to Gale Thomas for expanding our educational offerings and schools on Zoom. Thanks to Mary Ann Bryant for organizing a great trip to Newport. Thank you Brenda Griner, Geri Shaw and Anita Allen, our finance team, for moving to QuickBooks and making it work.

Thanks to Ina Hopkins for making many improvements to our Headquarters House. It shines! Many students were aided with grants from GCG due to the incredible dedication and drive of Susan Turner, our Scholarships Chairman, who raised the money and connected with students to provide \$175,000 this term! Thank you Susan.

Thanks to our Convention teams led by Marilyn McDonnell and our chairmen for the 2024 convention Quill Duncan and Bonnie Dudley, 2025 Deep South chairmen Rita Hightower and Cathy Perry and our 2025 chairmen Betty Davis and Molly Kimler and new protocol chairman Terry Morgan. Our meetings were outstanding because of all that you did!

Many thanks to Arianne Knowlton for spearheading the changes necessary to boldly move into the world of technology. She has added so much to our organization with her efficiency and kind manner.

Thank you clubs, councils and garden club members for all that you do to promote beautification, conservation and education! I am grateful for all that you do every day in your communities.

All my best for continued success!

Lisa



## 14 Plants that Repel Insects



1. Lavender (*Lavandula*)
2. Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)
3. Mint (*Mentha*)
4. Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
5. Marigolds (*Tagetes*)
6. Lemongrass (*Cymbopogon*)
7. Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*)
8. Citronella Grass (*Cymbopogon nardus*)
9. Chrysanthemums (*Chrysanthemum spp.*)
10. Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)
11. Petunias (*Petunia spp.*)
12. Garlic (*Allium sativum*)
13. Bay Leaves (*Laurus nobilis*)
14. Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*)

Source: [gardeningsoul.com](https://www.gardeningsoul.com)

## From the Mountains to the Sea

Did you know that we live in the largest state east of Mississippi river? That we have the largest black water swamp and the only gold certified Black Sky Park in the East? Have you explored our state from the 'Mountains to the Sea'? The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is the state agency charged with taking care of our environment. They do everything from scheduled burns, counting right whale births, protecting sea turtles, running camps and stocking fish and everything necessary to keep our state parks wonderful places to visit.

The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. has often partnered with DNR to provide programs statewide. The Backyard Wildlife Certification program has been ongoing for 20 years. Hope you have your certificate and are proudly displaying your yard sign. Before the Covid shutdown, GCG partnered with DNR to provide camping adventures for 5<sup>th</sup> graders (From the Mountains to the Sea and more recently Wild and Wonderful). DNR currently has many educational programs and camps to encourage enjoying our outdoors safely. Learn how to shoot rifles, pistols, skeet or clay and archery at Clybel Shooting Range located at Mansfield. Special Ladies Days are run to introduce women to shooting. If there is a gun in your house, you need this day.

Perhaps your teenager would like Camp TALON (acronym for Teen Adventures Learning



Chattahoochee Bend Source: GeorgiaStateParks.org

Ornithology and Nature), based at Epworth-by-the-Sea. This week helps prepare teens for the annual April Youth Birding Competition. There is a Career Academy held at Mansfield and Jekyll Island for Juniors and Seniors. During Career Week teens become acquainted with the variety of jobs done in the state parks. The goal is to inspire teens to think about new work opportunities and what further education might be needed. Both run a week and might be just what your teen needs. Get your middle school student to Outdoor Teen Challenge Camp at Charlie Elliott. They will learn teamwork and outdoor skills in a great nature center.

Perhaps you would like to be more comfortable outdoors. Try the camp experience, Become an Outdoor Woman (B.O.W.) a week at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center in Mansfield. You can learn how to build a campfire and cook on it, fish, get in and out of a canoe or kayak and paddle correctly, sharpen birding skills and much more.

Wherever you live have you sampled the state parks outside your area? If you always fish for bass in our lakes have you tried fly fishing for trout in North Georgia? Birding in South Georgia has very different birds from birding in North Georgia. If you are compiling a Bird Life List, try another area.

History buffs can explore remnants of plantations, forts, Indian Mounds, even a Civil War internment camp. There are middens in St Simons Island that prove native Americans lived and thrived there hundreds of years ago.

Are you or your family interested in a challenge to earn a special Tee Shirt? Currently there are four challenges--Muddy Spokes for mountain bikers, Canyon Climbers for the strong and nimble, Park Paddlers for canoes and kayaks and Tails on Trails to get you out with your dog. Sign up and proudly wear the hard-earned tee shirt.



Source: GeorgiaStateParks.org



Hurricane Falls at Tallulah Gorge Source gastateparks.org

Wherever you go, there are many overnight options; hotel rooms, yurts, cabins, RV hook ups and tenting areas. There are even stables for your horse. Select an activity and find out which park you will visit.

Visit [gadnr.org](http://gadnr.org) for all the information you need to create a great experience. Sign up for the DNR newsletter and you will be amazed at the things occurring in our state.

The Backyard Wildlife Certification application is found on the GCG web page under Community Wildlife.

## ***“Celebrating a Century of Beautification, Conservation & Education”***

***The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. – 1928 to 2028***

***Join The Century Club and Support Our Celebration.***

***We hope you will join us at the many events during 2028 to celebrate our centennial.***

The 100th Anniversary Committee will need funds to pay for the following:

-  Traveling Exhibits - Statewide
-  Exhibits within each of the Districts – at libraries and other public places
-  Century Club Member Lapel Pin (below) with our logo and a Century Club Banner
-  Help defray the costs of our many celebrations in 2028
-  Events & projects in each District that will be developed by the committee.

Therefore, in order to raise funds to help defray the cost of some of the events planned for our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, GCG has established the Century Club. Members who wish to belong to this club and financially support the 100<sup>th</sup> Celebration may donate \$100 and receive a Century Club lapel pin and certain other benefits.

**We are accepting \$100 donations NOW.**

Pins will be ordered over the summer and be distributed at the Fall District Meetings.

***Wear it with pride!!!!***

Make your \$100 check payable to GCG and mail to:

Barbara Bourque, 100<sup>th</sup> Committee Chairman  
6445 Holland Drive, Cumming, GA 30041-4641  
b.bourque@comcast.net 404-374-2828

Please see GCG Website for more details and the form to include with your donation.

<https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/100th-anniversary-celebration/>



Pin Artwork created by  
Samantha Lund,  
Lily Garden Club, Valdosta

## GCG Hosts the 2025 Deep South Convention

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 featuring petite designs. The food was good, too.

The vendors had exciting Georgia products – clothing, jewelry, native plants, food and books. 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 who developed the First Lady Camellia Series had a gorgeous display of camellia varieties from his specialty nursery.



Many GCG members worked very hard to make this lovely event happen, including Marilyn McDonnell, Convention Coordinator, Camellia District members Cathy Perry and Rita Hightower, and Lisa Hall, GCG President. Each District Director chaired a committee and each district was responsible for a flower arrangement to honor the garden club State Presidents in the DSGC – Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana

and Tennessee.

Awards night was exciting and fun. The Garden Club of Georgia won many awards including Member of the Year, Edna McClellan. 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



*Melissa Sanders arrangement honoring GCG President Lisa Hall*

each of these – The Masters, the 2006 Olympics, downtown Atlanta skyscrapers, Ray Charles, Jimmy Carter, and her hometown of Flowery Branch. After her presentation there was a silent auction for purchase of these arrangements.

Thanks to all of you that attended, supported financially and worked on the Deep South Convention just last month. It was a great success!



## Sunflower Concert Series

at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia

June 17 - The Randall Bramblett Band  
July 15 - The New Orleans Jazz Stompers  
Aug. 19 - Abbey Road LIVE!  
Sept. 16 - The 80's Walkmen

For more information and  
to purchase tickets, visit  
[botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).



State Botanical Garden  
of Georgia  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

## GCG Scholarships ~ Another Successful Year!



Last year, 2024, was a banner year in awarding \$85,000. in grants. We were cautiously optimistic in believing we could replicate that number in 2025. Ladies and Gentlemen, we did it again as fifteen students were awarded grants in varying amounts.

The total grants awarded in February 2025 was \$90,000!

At the Deep South Convention, hosted by GCG in Valdosta, Georgia student Alana Edwards received the DSGC Scholarship Award of \$3500. She is thrilled and very grateful, as are all our students for the grants provided by The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.

GCG members and friends supported Scholarships at all levels of giving, including honorariums and memorial gifts. Plant Societies continue to sponsor GCG Scholarships. Thank you all very much.

Now in our new giving period, let us continue to assist our students financially, as we support their future careers. On behalf of the GCG Scholarship Committee, we thank you for being a part of their lives. These young people are dedicated to the same mission as The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., Beautification, Conservation & Education.

Susan Turner, Scholarship Chairman  
[glencree@bellsouth.net](mailto:glencree@bellsouth.net)

## Meet Your 2025-2027 Executive Board ~ Diane Hunter, GCG President

*You've got a great group of executive officers on board. Learn a little about them right now.*

### **Bess Hartley – 1st Vice President – Magnolia District, Fort Gaines Home and Garden Club**

The 9000+ members are the most important volunteers in The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. "Our seven District Directors and Club Presidents are the lifeline for effective communication to these volunteers. As 1st VP I will be a guide/mentor to District Directors. Contrary to some reports, I did not throw rocks at dinosaurs when I attended my first garden club meeting-26 GCG Presidents ago."

### **Gale Thomas – 2nd Vice President – Redbud District, Conyers Garden Club**

"I have been actively involved in taking advantage of various NGC classes and learning as much as I can. Each learning experience also gave me the opportunity to meet new people. As Convention Coordinator and Education Chairman, I hope to provide exposure and opportunities for our GCG members to learn, enhance and develop new skills."

### **Linda Doiron – 3rd Vice President – Dogwood District, Norcross Garden Club**

Linda will head up our communication efforts with an eye to marketing and messaging. She'll be making sure we're using all of our media effectively from e-mail to website to the socials.

### **Quill Duncan – 4th Vice President – Redbud District, Smoke Rise Morning Glories Garden Club**

As membership committee chairman, Quill will lead a team dedicated to getting new members and clubs and member recognition. "Garden club is a wonderful way to meet people who share common interests! As Membership VP, I plan to share that testimony to encourage other members to reach out to those who might want to give garden club a try! "

### **Pamela Hendrix, Recording Secretary – Azalea District, Watkinsville Garden Club**

As recording secretary, Pam is in charge of the written record of GCG. She's served in various positions of her club and works as an attorney.

### **Michelle Culberson, Corresponding Secretary – Laurel District, Garden Club of Ellijay**

As corresponding secretary, Michelle will be the heart of the organization keeping up with who needs a cheerful word or a get well card. Michelle has been a plant sale chairman, president, and chaired a flower show.

### **Geri Shaw, Treasurer – Oleander District, St Marys Garden Club**

Geri is taking on her second term as treasurer. "As Treasurer my goal is to develop a strong financial team. We will manage the fiscal responsibilities of our organization and provide transparency to our membership without overwhelming them with too much data."

### **Frank Mullins, Assistant Treasurer – Redbud District, Avon Garden Club**

Frank became involved in Avon GC after buying a house whose yard needed work. "A big part of Avon's mission statement is 'Living an Environmentally Friendly Life.' I now maintain a pollinator garden covering half of my front yard that creates a healthy home for birds, bees and butterflies. As Assistant Treasurer, I want to utilize my accounting skills and streamline processes to make fundraising and budgets easier."

### **Trudy Rudert, Parliamentarian – Dogwood District, Norcross Garden Club**

Trudy has served as president of her garden club and the Fulton Federation of Garden Clubs. Trudy's keen eye and attention to detail make her a natural to succeed the parliamentarian par excellence, Doris Blalock.



L-R: Frank Mullins, Geri Shaw, Pamela Hendrix, Quill Duncan, Linda Doiron, Gale Thomas, Bess Hartley and Diane Hunter

# New Life Members

Bess Hartley, Life Membership Chairman

## New State Life Members

### **#2170 June Governo**

Honored by Moonflower Garden Club, Redbud

### **#2171 Gail Bailey**

Honored by Robbie Bailey, Laurel

### **#2172 Mary Virginia Keith**

Honored by Sea Oats Garden Club, Oleander

### **#2173 Eleanor Edwards**

Honored by Spade and Trowel Garden Club, Dogwood

### **#2174 Karen Hawkins**

Honored by Ball Ground Garden Club, Laurel

### **#2175 Jenean Twiggs**

Honored by Pine Forest Garden Club, Oleander

### **#2176 Mary Louise Flowers**

Honored by Pine Forest Garden Club, Oleander

### **#2177 Nancy Claxton**

Honored by Spartina Garden Club, Oleander

### **#2178 Charlene Woodall**

### **#2179 Sandra Singer**

### **#2180 Bobbie Johnson**

### **#2181 Patricia Cox**

### **#2182 Patsy Jo Adams**

### **#2183 Nancy Allen**

### **#2184 Joann Hollstrom**

### **#2185 Jane Varner**

### **#2186 Helen Smith**

### **#2187 Cooky Ward**

### **#2188 Glenda Stevens**

### **#2189 Mimi Duncan**

Honored by Spade and Trowel Garden Club of Thomaston, Redbud

### **#2190 Anita Bridges**

Honored by Rome Federated Garden Club, Inc., Laurel

### **#2191 Margo Seagraves**

Honored by Nancy Hart Garden Club, Azalea

### **#2192 Tammie Elaine Shattuck,**

Azalea

### **#2193 Eleanor Prather**

Honored by Monroe Garden Club, Azalea

### **#2194 Evelyn Foster**

### **#2195 Diane Smith**

Ball Ground Garden Club, Laurel

### **#2196 Kim Fair**

Honored by Redbud District, Redbud

### **#2197 Kay Lambert**

Honored by Village Green Garden Club, Magnolia

### **#2198 Sherrell Bailey**

Honored by Dogwood Garden Club, Magnolia

### **#2199 Cindy Gower**

Honored by Sea Oats Garden Club, Oleander

### **#2200 Judy Howerton**

Honored by Townview Garden Club, Laurel

### **#2201 Gloria Marshall**

Honored by Federated Garden Clubs of Macon, Inc., Camellia

### **#2202 Linda C. Owens**

Honored by Betty Davis & Molly Kimler, Azalea

### **#2203 Nancy Lisenby**

Honored by Seedling Garden Club, Oleander

## New Deep South Life Memberships

### **Cheryl Briscoe**

Honored by Greg Briscoe, Laurel

### **Linda Hardie**

Honored Jill Denlea, Laurel

### **Cathy Perry,**

Camellia

### **Janet Martin,**

Laurel

### **Tommie Shattuck,**

Azalea

### **Jan Stewart**

Honored by Randy Stewart, Azalea

### **William Tucker**

Honored by Peggy Tucker, Azalea

## New National Life Members

### **#10732 Trudy Rudert,**

Dogwood

### **#10744 Susan Turner,**

Redbud

### **#10752 Ina Hopkins**

Azalea

### **#10753 Martha Cobb**

Honored by Diana Malone, Oleander

### **#10757 Cheryl Briscoe**

Honored by Laurel District



Tropical Milkweed  
*Asclepias curassavica*

## **Not all milkweed is created equal!**

While milkweed is typically planted to help monarchs, tropical milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*) can harm them. Because of tropical milkweed's extended blooming period, it more easily spreads diseases that make monarchs sick. If a monarch already has the parasite *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* (OE), it can spread easily from the infected butterfly to the milkweed and then to other butterflies. OE decreases monarchs' survival and reproductive rates and can hinder monarch migration.

If you have tropical milkweed, remove it and replace it with native milkweed varieties.



Swamp Milkweed  
*Asclepias incarnata*

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service & [rosalynncarterbutterflytrail.org](http://rosalynncarterbutterflytrail.org)



**Welcome Merrell Holden  
Laurel District Director 2025-27**

Originally from Atlanta, Merrell lives in Cartersville. She is a graduate of Clemson University with a bachelor’s degree in Financial Management and a profession in accounting. Raising three children in Marietta, she expanded her ability to garden. This interest intensified with the move to several acres in Cartersville.

Merrell has been a member of The Magnolia Garden Club since 2015. She has served as membership chairperson, club president and co-director of Laurel District. She and her husband, Quentin, enjoy hiking and canoeing. Merrell also teaches, works part-time as a move manager, is a Vincentian and volunteers for several groups.

**The Annual Historic Landscape Preservation Fundraiser**

On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Garden Club of Georgia, Inc, (GCG) held its annual Historic Landscape Preservation (HLP) Fundraiser at Fair Oaks and the Marietta Education Garden Center hosted by the Laurel District to benefit the HLP Grant Fund. Grant recipients for 2023-2024 from across the state were recognized. Lisa Hall, GCG President and Marie Barnes, Former Georgia First Lady, were special guests.

Trevor Beemon, Executive Director of Cobb Landmarks and Paul Pugliese, Bartow County Extension Agent presented two informative programs along with exhibitors sharing information on garden plantings. ‘Plein Air’ artists were on the property incorporating the landscape into their creations. Garden club merchandise and raffle baskets were available along with breakfast and a catered luncheon. Docents shared the history of Fair Oaks, and guests were encouraged to stroll the grounds to enjoy the gardens including the Georgia’s First Lady Camellias, the Founders Garden, Pollinator Garden and Gazebo meditation areas.

Thank you to our donors for your support of the HLP Grants. Because of your generosity we were able to contribute \$9,850 to the fund to help to preserve Georgia’s valuable Garden Heritage.

**Historic Level**

Mayes Ward Dobbins Funeral Home

**Sponsor Level**

Patricia Silbiger  
Kathy & Neely Young  
Katryn Taylor  
Carol Fey

**Donor Level**

Tresa Allen  
Maria Alvarado  
Kathy Benson  
Cheryl Briscoe  
Jennie Byers  
Priscilla Buege  
Kellie Bullard  
Judith Crowe  
Nan Cantrell

Nan Eberley  
Violet Dawe  
Quill Duncan  
Kim Fair  
Linda Fenner  
Camille & Kevin Greeley  
Karen Hawkins  
Pamela Hendrix  
Annette Homiller  
Diane Hunter  
Rebecca Koller  
Kay Penninger  
Bonnie Pennington  
Susan Ragsdale  
James & Carol Reap  
Susan Roof

Susie Tabor  
Joni Thompson  
William & Peggy Tucker  
Mikel Vann  
Susan Welch  
Beth Wielage  
Lisa Wheeler  
M Monaghan  
Susan Wolf

**Garden Clubs**

Amicalola GC  
Ballground GC  
Canton Laurel GC  
Cartersville Magnolia GC

Chattooga GC  
Crabapple GC  
Cumming Evening GC  
Enota GC  
Fleur DeLis GC  
Flower GC  
Four Seasons GC  
Garden Club of Ellijay  
Heritage GC  
Hiawassee GC  
Honeysuckle GC  
Horti-Flori GC  
Jonquil GC  
Marietta Laurel GC  
Laurel Heritage GC  
Lawrenceville GC

Liberty Oaks GC  
Marietta Daisies GC  
Marietta Magnolia GC  
Mountain Laurel GC  
Mountain View GC  
Mountain Ivy GC  
 Rambler Rose GC  
Rome Federated GC  
Sope Creek GC  
Southern Magnolia GC  
St. Mary’s GC  
Stonehedge GC  
Three Rivers GC  
Traditions In Bloom GC  
Trayletaah GC





**Welcome Jan Carrell Stewart  
Azalea District Director 2025-27**

Jan was born in Atlanta and later moved with her family to the country. Her love for flowers and hummingbirds started as a young child while helping her mother with weeds in the yard and growing flowers from seeds. Jan joined her first garden club in Mississippi in the mid-1970s and in Tennessee in the mid-1990s. She helped her Tennessee club start a junior garden club where her youngest son served as president. Her husband's job took them to Mississippi; North Carolina; Illinois; Penang, Malaysia; Tennessee; New Jersey; and Michigan. Along the way, Jan volunteered as a first responder and led the March of Dimes "Ring Road Walk," raising over \$4K with her team at Johnson & Johnson. Moving back to Georgia with her husband and sons has allowed Jan to focus on her love for gardening including a vegetable garden, a pollinator garden, and raising chickens for eggs.

Jan has worked as an accountant/bookkeeper and administrative assistant for over 40 years. She was a member of the International Association of Administrative Professions (IAAP) where she earned her Certified Administrative Professional certification. Jan served as treasurer and later president of the Michigan Division of IAAP. Jan has served as President of the Sharon-Raytown Garden Club (SRGC) in Crawfordville since 2019. Her husband, two sons and daughter-in-law are also members of the SRGC. She looks forward to serving as the Azalea District Director and getting to know more club members in her district and around the State.



**The Magnolia Garden Club's 60th Anniversary:**

At the April meeting, the Magnolia Garden Club (MGC) celebrated its 60th anniversary with a 1965 theme at the home of Cathy and Richard Best. The club's major projects and resources support the Azalea Regional Library System Garden and the Bicentennial Garden which was designed by MGC member June Harrell. As the primary fundraiser to support the gardens' plantings and maintenance, the club makes, sells, and delivers Christmas holiday mailbox garlands. Additionally, throughout the year, the club assists with a number of greenspace projects within the community.

**Iris-Augusta Garden Club Basic Design Class:** Ten members enrolled in the class taught by master gardener, international master flower show judge, and Iris Club member, Barbara Horner. Students learned the elements of design along with basic color principles to use in design creations. The class also learned how to create arrangements for dining tables and how to use fruit and vegetables in their designs. Barbara is a wonderful teacher and made the classes informative and enjoyable. There was such a wide variety in the presentations with a lecture, demonstration, guided practice, and lunch, that the class sessions flew by. The students hope to have a flower show at the completion of the class.





**Welome Martha Cobb  
Oleander District Director 2025-27**

Martha is no stranger to many of you in the Oleander District. She is a member of the Seedling Garden Club and the Jesup Garden Club. Having served as Co-Chairman of the The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. (GCG) Awards Committee, she has already met and worked with many of you. GCG is so much more than people think it is. The Beautification, Conservation and Education of our state and planet is vital to our well being. Making our state the best it can be is very important to our future generations and we have a mandate to do just that.

Being involved in not only garden club, but also in DAR, Delta Kappa Gamma, and Leadership Emanuel have helped Martha to acquire the skills which will serve her as District Director. She looks forward to working with the people in her district as well as others across the state.

Martha's son and his family live in St. Marys with a 16 year-old granddaughter and an 11 year-old grandson. Her granddaughter is a GCG Subscribing Member and is very interested in flora culture. Martha looks

forward to the next two years with anticipation with the hope of moving the Oleander District forward. So let's get out there and Educate, Conserve, and Beautify!

**Parkersburg Garden Club** enjoyed a field trip to Wormsloe on the Isle of Hope for their April meeting. The group toured several remote areas that had been gardens at one time. The photos below are at



a small abandoned garden next to a Wattle and Daub house. The historical garden had been used to grow fruits and vegetables that would have supplemented the diets of those that lived or forged in the area. The team at Wormsloe is hoping to plant medicinal herbs and/or dye plants that are historically significant and would have been useful at that time.



**The Brooklet Garden Club** (BGC) Youth committee's Recycling and 2025 Earth Day project was making paper with the Brooklet Youth Jacket Garden Club 5<sup>th</sup> graders. The paper would be made into bookmark favors for the Bulloch Council of Garden Clubs joint luncheon hosted by BGC.

Youth committee members demonstrated the process beginning with tearing or shredding, making pulp in a blender, draining the pulp on a screen, and using a sponge, couch paper, and block to finish the process. The children worked in pairs of twos, five pairs at a time to create their own paper. The paper was cut into bookmarks and decorated using markers and adding ribbon. Each student made a bookmark for a council garden club member and one for themselves. They were beautiful! As the groups rotated, Mr. Petkewich the STEM teacher, presented a recycling slide program and demonstrated how reducing plastics makes a big difference in the landfills. The students enjoyed the project and seeing their creations. The ladies at the luncheon thought so too!





### Welcome Melodie Smith Camellia District Director 2025-27

Melodie joined Erin Garden Club, Inc. in March of 2013, after retiring from the State of Georgia. She served as President of her local club from 2019 – 2023. On the District Board she served as Chairman of Garden Therapy and Co-Director. Melodie’s mother introduced her to garden club beginning in the 1970s as a volunteer when her mother’s club participated in “Pick Up Litter Day.” Melodie was given her own bag and joined the members picking up litter in their assigned area. She was taught what to look for when cutting specimens in the garden to use in flower arrangements/designs during this time. Melodie’s husband was introduced to garden club when he was asked to help create and build stands used as a table centerpiece for the GCG Annual Meeting held at Callaway Gardens. The stories she could tell from her early years of garden club adventures! Melodie and her husband have a son and daughter-in-law, and two very precious grandchildren. Her state employment included lead investigator for child abuse and neglect for

10 years, 10 years helping the disabled seek employment, and the last 10 years as a State Social Security Specialist including two years in the State Office managing the program. She is a former Pilot International Georgia Governor. She has recently been appointed by the Mayor of Dublin to serve on the City’s Tree Board.

**The Amaryllis Garden Club of Valdosta** is currently involved in growing the 'Spirit of Valdosta' azalea, that will be used as a fundraiser for the Crescent Garden Center. This azalea was presented to the City of Valdosta in 2006 during the annual Azalea Festival by the wife and daughter of the hybridizer Joseph F. Klimavicz of Vienna, Virginia. The purplish pink coloration of the flower has the markings of a "V" and this is why this particular azalea was chosen as the "Spirit of Valdosta." The original plant that was presented and planted in a city park and unfortunately died.



After 17 years, in 2023, Mark Crawford of Loch Laurel Nursery was asked if he had this azalea available for sale by a former resident of Valdosta who apparently had attended the dedication. At that time no one involved with the city, or the azalea festival, was aware of this azalea variety, except the city historian. After investigating the existence of this azalea, the hybridizer was contacted who offered cuttings of the plant. Mark was in the Washington, DC area in the summer of 2023 and visited Mr. Klimavicz who provided about 100 cuttings that were rooted here in Valdosta. The rooted cuttings were very small and were grown for one season in quart pots and then transplanted to 2-gallon pots by members of the garden club and will be sold in the fall of 2025 and spring of 2026.





**Welcome Marilyn Aldrich  
Magnolia District Director 2025-27**

Like many other members of the Magnolia District, Marilyn was born and raised on a farm in middle Georgia. Marilyn married a military man and has three children. As they traveled, they always tried their hands at gardening where ever they lived. In some places they had more success than others. Marilyn always dreamed of those wonderful gardens her daddy had every year. It seemed like there were always vegetables from the garden. Her mama canned and froze spring and summer vegetables to use for the whole year. That was a lot of vegetables to feed a family of seven.

After her husband retired, they decided to build a house back on the family farm. Marilyn was looking forward to returning to Georgia and dreaming about all the flowers and vegetables she would grow. Surely, it was a "piece of cake" since they always had plenty for her large family growing up and fed a lot of neighbors too. After they moved into the new house, Marilyn started making that garden. It did not take long for her to realize that she needed a lot more skills if she was ever going to have a successful garden and landscape in the sandy soil and hot temperatures in her yard. So, she found the Butler Garden Club. She immediately saw that it was a great way to get reacquainted with her schoolmates after being away for 35 years. She also found wonderful gardeners to teach her how to get the garden going. She started learning about the importance of local pollinators, native plants, soil amendments and so much more. Over time, she fell in love with butterfly gardens, migrating birds, flower arranging and citizen science projects. Marilyn's garden is not the best or the biggest one around, but her love and knowledge about gardening and our environment continues to grow. Marilyn enjoys sharing the knowledge she has obtained and swapping plants with garden club members and neighbors. Marilyn spent many years in health care and has chosen "Healthier environment, Healthier You through Beautification, Conservation and Education" as the 2025-2027 Magnolia District theme."

**Columbus Council of Garden Clubs Gold Star Memorial Marker Ceremony** - On April 5<sup>th</sup> a meaningful and solemn ceremony sponsored by the Columbus Council of Garden Clubs in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. took place at the Georgia Visitor Information and Welcome Center in Columbus. The National Garden Clubs, Inc. Gold Star Memorial Marker was placed and dedicated in honor of the families whose loved ones paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

The Marker was presented to Latvia Rivers, Georgia Visitor Information, and Jim Clute of GDOT, with our appreciation for their support and approval for the placement of the marker. Guest speaker Mayor Skip Henderson graciously acknowledged the placement of the marker, the first Gold Star Marker in the area, as a lasting memorial to honor our nation's heroes and to know that the residents of Columbus are grateful and proud of our citizens who defended our freedom and appreciate the families who made the sacrifices as well. The memorial is part of the nationwide Gold Star Memorial Trail Project, which aims to remind communities across the United States of the high cost of freedom and the duty of every American to honor those who have served.





**Welcome Christy Novellas  
Dogwood District Director 2025-27**

Christy Novellas grew up in Marietta, GA. She attended Georgia Southern University where she became a member of the Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority. Christy completed her education at Georgia State University earning a BBA in Marketing. She began her career in banking after participating in the management training program at First Union Bank. Inspired by her mother, a master gardener and member of the Ellijay Garden Club, Christy developed a passion for gardening. While raising her twin daughters, Christy joined the Magnolia Garden Club in Atlanta, where she has been an active member for 19 years, serving in various roles including president for two years.

Christy has served as the Dogwood District Recording Secretary and currently the Dogwood District Co-Director allowing her to connect with fellow gardening enthusiasts, expand her knowledge about her district and contribute to the outreach efforts of the Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. As the Dogwood District Director, Christy aspires to increase membership in

existing clubs, attract new members, and enhance the overall understanding of gardening and stewardship within the community.

**Dogwood District Blue Star Memorial Marker Instalation Ceremony**

The Dogwood District in cooperation with The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. (GCG) and Hunter Memorial Park were very proud to install a Blue Star Memorial Marker (BSMM) at the Hunter Memorial Veterans Park in Douglasville on April 11, 2025. It was both a beautiful day and ceremony with the Presentation of Colors from the Chapel Hill High School NJROTC Color Guard, lovely singing from

Tammy Kone and the Ama-Kanasta Ensemble, a beautiful Invocation and Prayer from Rev. Roger Vest.

Additionally, we were welcomed by the Mayor of Douglasville, Rochelle Robinson, had a greeting from GCG President, Lisa Hall, a wonderful recognition of the service men and women from Barbara Bourque and a fantastic BSMM history from Jan These GCG BSMM Chairman. Also in attendance were the GCG Executive Board, Chris Bass, Parks and Recreation Director of Douglasville, Dogwood District Director, Monica Bozonier, the Dogwood District Executive Committee and lots of Dogwood District Garden Club Members, Family and Friends.



Chapel Hill High School  
NJROTC Color Guard



BSMM Board Members





**Welcome Bonnie Dudley  
Redbud District Director 2025-27**

Bonnie grew up in LaGrange where she loved watching her mom grow a variety of flowers in her yard and use them to make beautiful flower arrangements. Encouraged by her mom to enter, the Youth Division of the annual flower shows was her first experience of arranging flowers. She attended LaGrange College and earned a B.A. in Elementary Education and M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education. She retired from Troup County Schools after teaching 34 years. LaGrange College Alumni Director, Carolyn Burgess, invited her to attend a Wisteria Garden Club meeting in 1980, an alumni club associated with the college. That began her journey into the adventures of being a member of a garden club.

Bonnie has held every officer's position in her garden club and the Elms and Roses Garden Club Council. She has had the opportunity to chair and co-chair many Garden Club events from fundraising for Wisteria, planning LaGrange College events, participating in flower shows, organizing the Historic Landscape Preservation Fundraiser for Redbud, and co-chairing the The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc 2024 Convention. She has served as Co-Director for Redbud District from 2023-25. Bonnie spends her spare time gardening, playing Mahjong and Canasta and spending time with her 3 grandchildren, Sylvia, Mary, and Helena and 2 daughters, Shannon and Jennifer who all live in Georgia. Her dream is to eventually make her yard as beautiful as the one her mom grew at her childhood home. It is with great honor that Bonnie looks forward to working with all of you and promoting her theme, "Let's Dig In and Get Things Done: Beautify, Conserve, Educate."

**Mountain Mums Garden Club Organize the Tucker Walk to Remember**

A wave of community support swept through Smoke Rise community on March 8th, as hundreds gathered for the 13<sup>th</sup> 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, 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 Lories. 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, made 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.



## Coming Up



**June**

**June – July: State Botanical Garden Summer Camps**

9am - 4:30pm; State Botanical Garden Education Dept. offers 6 different week-long summer camps ages 5-10. See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**June 3 - Insect Pollinators in Our Gardens**

9am - 1pm; Zoom Virtual Lecture See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**June 7 – Carnivorous Plants of the Southeast U.S.**

9am - 1pm; State Botanical Garden Visitor Center, Classroom 2, Athens See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**June 13 - Our Native Pollinators**

9am - 1pm; Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**June 14 - Native Ferns of the North Georgia Mountain Regions**

9am - 1pm; State Botanical Garden Visitor Center, Classroom 2 See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**June 16 - Camellia & Magnolia Districts Leadership and Awards Workshop**

9:30am - 2pm; South Georgia Technical College, Cordele

**June 17 - Oleander District Leadership and Awards Workshop**

9:30am - 2pm; First Church, Baxley

**June 19 -21 - Georgia Councils of Flower Show Judges Symposium**

June 19, 2pm - June 21, 5pm; Highland Hills Baptist Church, Macon

**June 21 - Summer Tree Identification**

8:00am - 12pm; State Botanical Garden Visitor Center, Classroom 2 See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**June 24 - Azalea District Leadership and Awards Workshop**

10am - 2pm; GCG Headquarters, Athens

**June 25 - Dogwood & Redbud Districts Leadership and Awards Workshop**

9:30am - 2pm; Bellmere, Johns Creek

**June 27 - Art in the Garden Flower Show**

2 - 6pm; Gilmer Sequoia Regional Library, Ellijay, GA

**June 28 - Native Plant Propagation**

9am - 1pm; Chattahoochee Nature Center. See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).



**July**

**July 9 - Laurel District Leadership and Awards Workshop**

9:30am - 2pm; Marietta Educational Garden Center, Marietta

**July 15, 17 & 21 - Natural Communities of Georgia**

6pm - 8pm; Zoom Virtual Lecture See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**July 26 - Carnivorous Plants**

9am - 1pm; Chattahoochee Nature Center. See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).



**August**

**Aug. 5 - Azalea District Executive Committee Meeting**

10am - 2pm; GCG Headquarters, Athens

**Aug. 9 & 12 - Plant Conservation: Protecting Plant Diversity**

9am - 1pm; Virtual Lecture – Zoom See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**Aug. 11 - Redbud District Summer Board Meeting**

9:30am - 2pm; Lamar Dodd Art Center, LaGrange

**Aug. 12 - Magnolia District Summer Board Meeting**

9am - 2pm; Massee Lane Gardens, Fort Valley

**Aug. 13 - Dogwood District Summer Board Meeting**

9:30am - 2pm; Lost Corner Preserve, Sandy Springs

**Aug. 16 - Printing with Botanicals**

1pm - 2:30pm; State Botanical Garden Visitor Center, Classroom 2 See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu).

**Aug. 19 - Camellia District Summer Board Meeting**

9:30am - 2pm; Warner Robins, Details TBA

**Aug. 19 - Azalea District Summer Board Meeting**

9:30am - 2pm; Union Point, Details TBA

**Aug. 23 - Native Plants & Insect Pollinators**

9am - 1pm; Chattahoochee Nature Center. See [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu)

### Yellow-legged Hornet Nest Stages

**Embryo Nest**

Size: Tennis ball  
Season: Early spring

**Primary Nest**

Size: Softball - watermelon  
Season: Late spring - early summer

**Secondary Nest**

Size: Anywhere from 40-60 inches in circumference  
Season: Late summer - winter



Approx height 20-30"

### Report Yellow-Legged Hornet Nests

Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tyler J. Harper is urging residents across the state, but especially in the Savannah area, to remain alert and report sightings of Yellow-legged Hornet (YLH) primary nests as they begin to appear in late spring and early summer. Early identification and removal of these nests are essential to preventing the formation of secondary nests later in the season, which are significantly larger. Effective intervention now can stop the spread of this invasive species and help protect Georgia agriculture.

What Georgians Can Do:

**Stay Alert:** Look out for primary nests, which are typically bigger than embryo nests but significantly smaller than secondary nests. Primary nests can be found in trees, shrubs, or other elevated locations.

**Report Sightings:** If you believe you've discovered a Yellow-legged Hornet nest, do not attempt to remove it yourself.

Contact the GDA Plant Protection Division at [yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov](mailto:yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov) or a licensed pest management professional to ensure the queen is properly eradicated. or more information about yellow-legged hornets, visit <https://agr.georgia.gov/yellow-legged-hornet>.

**The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.**  
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An elevator and a staircase connect the upper and lower floors of the building. The lower level may also be accessed via the lower drive providing direct handicap access and permitting immediate access to the caterer's kitchen.



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