



Redbud Reporter

Winter 2026

From Your District Director

I recently Googled what are some good things about winter and here's what I read: winter is great for cozy indoor activities like hot cocoa and movies; there are fewer bugs and less sweat; festive holidays; comfort foods; and a chance for rest and reflection before spring.

Usually this is the time I work on my yard maintenance, think about adding colorful plants for spring by browsing through bulb catalogs, and making resolutions to faithfully exercise each day. Does shivering count as exercise? I've been doing a lot of that recently. This winter I've been blessed with spending time with family and friends and never once had to go outside the Redbud District. I enjoyed riding the trolley through Callaway Gardens Fantasy in Lights but talk about cold – I bet I burned a lot of calories shivering that night!

Later I enjoyed being pushed in a wheelchair by my daughter and granddaughter through the Garden Lights Holiday Nights at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. My sciatica has been acting up, and I just couldn't handle the walk. Then a few days later I attended the Hills and Dales Open House Christmas Tour in LaGrange with my big sister, Dru. That was another cold afternoon, but fortunately we rode the trolley up to the mansion and walked through the main floor. Every year I am amazed at the beautiful holiday decorations in the Callaway home.

On October 15, 2025, we had a wonderful Redbud District Annual meeting hosted by the Dogwood



Garden Club and the Garden Club of Griffin. Claire Crouch and Wendy Hall did a tremendous job serving as co-chairs for this event and members from both clubs were so hospitable and treated us to a beautifully decorated venue. Josh Weaver, Natural Capital Manager for The Ray, presented an interesting program. We were joined by GCG President Diane Hunter and many of the GCG Board members. If you haven't had the chance to attend an annual District meeting, think about coming to our 2026 meeting on Thursday, October 8 in Avondale Estates.

I recently received the Winter edition of Garden Gateways and saw the registration form for the GCG's 98th Annual Convention was included and the theme is "GCG Celebrates America". The convention will be held in Peachtree City at the Crowne Plaza

Hotel and Conference Center April 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 2026. Three days of great workshops, an awards celebration, informative speakers, and shopping. Registration deadline is March 14, 2026. It will be a great time.

Our President's Annual Reports are due February 15, 2026. The form is available on the GCG website under Member Resources. Click on Finance and Administrative Forms. Under Administrative Forms, click on the 2025 Presidents Report.

Our Redbud Winter Board Meeting will be held on February 9, 2026 at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center, 980 Briarcliff Road, NE, Atlanta, GA at 10:30 am.

Board members are requested to send an email to bonduddy@yahoo.com if they are unable to attend. Our club Presidents and members are also invited to attend. All attendees are reminded to bring a covered dish to share during our luncheon. And don't forget a serving spoon!

The Redbud District Board is here to support our clubs. If you have any questions, concerns or requests please contact any Redbud Board member. The list can be found on the following link: <https://www.redbuddistrict.com/board-members>.

Wishing you a merry and bright holiday season and a happy new year.

Bonnie Dudley
Redbud District Director

64th Annual Redbud District Meeting Held in Griffin

The Dogwood Garden Club and Garden Club of Griffin hosted the 64th annual Redbud District meeting at the Family Life Center of the First Baptist Church in Griffin on October 15, 2025. The Remarkable Redbud members and guests were treated to an informative and fun meeting complete with honored guest Diane Hunter, President of The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.

The theme of the meeting was "Crusin' With Daisy on the Highway of the Future" and our guest speaker was Josh Weaver, PhD, Natural Capital Manager for The Ray. Josh shared how The Ray is where bold ideas hit the road across the nation. The Natural Capital Program is transforming corporate and highway landscapes into vibrant sites for resilience. He oversees strategically implementing living infrastructures like pollinator meadows, bioswales, and native plantings.



Speaker Josh Weaver receives a donation from the Redbud District to the Ray Foundation in his honor. He also received a Subscribing Membership for 2026.

Also on the agenda was a touching memorial service presented by Juanita Barron and Jessica Warren (photo below), committee reports, awards program, luncheon, door prizes, and fundraising activities. The meeting ended with 85 attendees eagerly waiting to hear the names of the winners of the raffle baskets, two money trees, gift cards, and lottery tickets.



Members of Dogwood Garden Club and Garden Club of Griffin worked their magic by creatively decorating lovely fall themed centerpieces. Everyone in attendance received packets of wildflower seeds. Aluminum pull tabs for Ronald McDonald were collected and placed in a smaller version of Daisy's red sports car.

Many members generously showed their support of the Fig Leaf Project by donating new socks and underwear for the Georgia Regional Hospital and placing them in a daisy-covered container that eventually overflowed onto the floor. WOW! That's the best word to use to describe the 2025 Redbud District's Annual Meeting.



Griffin Mayor Doug Hollberg shows the 2nd place ribbon he won when he entered a flower show as a child.



Eight former Redbud District Directors attended the 2025 annual Redbud District meeting. Left to right, back row: Kim Fair, Diane Goldwire, Bonnie Dudley, Gale Thomas, Renie Faulkenberry; front row: Janet McGinnis, Joy Zaidan, Quill Duncan, Diane Hunter.



11th Annual Dollars Educate Scholars

January is the deadline for Scholarship Donations! Let's wrap up this giving period with the GCG Scholarship month!

Members donating \$1.00 or more now through January will make a **BIG** impact on Scholarships.

It's easy to donate. Contributions are given through your garden club treasury. Your club writes one check to GCG along with the completed form to:

GCG Asst. Treasurer, Frank Mullins
1184 Dunwick Dr. Avondale Estates, GA 30002

Support your District and your Director in the Dollars Educate Scholars fundraiser!

The winning District will be determined by total funds and the % of district/club participation.

Join the fun at the GCG Annual Convention, April 2-3, 2026 where we will once again crown ***The Queen of Scholarships!***



For more information, contact Susan Turner, Scholarships Chairman 770-922-4411 - glencree@bellsouth.net

Dollars Educate Scholars - TRANSMITTAL FORM

Please complete the following information and mail with your club's check for \$1.00 or more per member to

GCG Asst. Treasurer, Frank Mullins
1184 Dunwick Dr. Avondale Estates, GA 30002

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO

THE GARDEN CLUB OF GEORGIA, INC. or GCG

Please write legibly. Contributions received through January 2026 count in this giving period.

Club Name: _____

District: _____

Club Representative & Title: _____

Email: _____

Phone number: _____

Club Number: _____ Number of Members: _____

100% Participation? Circle one Yes No

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

GCG Celebrates America

The Magnolia District and The Garden Club of Georgia invite you to GCG's 98th Annual Convention as "GCG Celebrates America". The Convention will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Peachtree, GA on April 1 – 3, 2026.

There will be great workshops, an awards celebration, featured speakers to educate members, a raffle, and a variety of interesting vendors for shopping. Enjoy the beautiful floral designs by the districts plus learn about the education exhibits focusing on GCG's programs.

Our first speaker, Dr. Jaap de Roode, will be featured during the opening session of the Convention on Wednesday, April 1 at 10 am. Lunch will be on your own followed by an afternoon workshop presented by Suzanne Finger. That evening there will be a

district photo gathering, cash bar and buffet dinner followed by the Awards Event. Thursday, April 2 will begin with the business meeting, workshops, and speakers Dr. Sheri Dorn, Joe Cook, Katherine Kennedy, and Dr. Emily Coffey. The evening speaker will be Dorinda Dallmeyer.

This year there will be two fee-based workshops featuring two of GCG's floral designers – Anna Burns on Wednesday, April 1 and Lynn Fronk on Friday, April 3. Space for these sessions is limited to the first 20 registrants, so get your registrations in early!

More information on the Convention can be found in the Winter 2025-26 Garden Gateways. **Please note that the email for Rigby Duncan on the registration form on Garden Gateways is incorrect. The correct email is rigbyduncan113@gmail.com.**

The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. • 98th Annual Convention
GCG Celebrates America

April 1-3, 2026 • Crowne Plaza SW Peachtree City Hotel & Convention Center

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Badge Name Preference _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Club Name _____ District _____

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO REGISTER:

BASIC PACKAGE PLAN Includes Registration Fee, Wednesday Awards Banquet, Thursday Luncheon, Thursday Dinner, and Breakout Sessions.

PACKAGE PLAN TOTAL \$230 \$ _____

PART-TIME PLAN: No extra fee for breakout sessions

<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday Awards Banquet.....	\$65	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday Luncheon	\$50	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday Dinner	\$65	\$ _____

REGISTRATION FEE (per day) \$40 \$ _____

PART TIME PLAN TOTAL \$ _____

ADD-ONS (Optional Meals & Workshops)

<input type="checkbox"/> Floral Design Workshop I, Wednesday, April 1	\$50	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Floral Design Workshop II, Friday, April 3	\$50	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast Buffet Wednesday, April 1	\$38	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast Buffet Thursday, April 2	\$38	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast Buffet Friday, April 3	\$38	\$ _____

ADD-ON TOTAL \$ _____

TOTAL REGISTRATION COST \$ _____

Late Registration Fee (postmarked March 1st and later) \$30 \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- State President
- Member
- Guest
- Voting Delegate **
- My First GCG Convention
- Club President
- District Director
- District Board Member
- Council President
- Former State President
- State Board Member
- State Life Member
- Former Deep South Director
- Deep South Board Member
- Deep South Life Member
- Former National President
- National Board Member
- National Life Member
- Emeritus Member

**All GCG Board Members, GCG Life Members and one member from each club are Voting Delegates; please check Voting Delegate box if applicable.

Special Dietary Needs:

REGISTRATION DEADLINE MARCH 14, 2026

Make Check Payable to: **GCG 2026 CONVENTION**

Mail check and registration form to Rigby Duncan, 2800 Hunting Hill Lane, Decatur, GA 30033

No registration or refunds after March 14, 2026 - Registration fee not refundable.

On-line registration with credit card payment will be available in January at gardenclubofgeorgia.org

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Crowne Plaza SW Peachtree City, 201 Aberdeen Pkwy., Peachtree City, GA 30269

\$139 per night (plus taxes and fees) for King or 2 Queen room

For reservations, contact IHG Reservations at 877-22706963

Group Name: Garden Club of GA 2026 Annual Conference **Group Code:** XCU

Group rate available for March 31 - April 3, 2026

Reservation Deadline for Group Rate: March 1, 2026

For more information, contact: rigbyduncan113@gmail.com or 678.644.9502 (cell)

Historic Landscape Preservation Fundraiser

Plan to attend the *Irish Ramble on Bellevue*, a tour of historic houses, churches, and more in Dublin, GA on Saturday, March 28, 2026. Organized by the Erin Garden Club on behalf of the Camellia District, the tour is a fundraiser for The Garden Club of Georgia's Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Fund.

Tickets are \$50 and include \$10 in Chamber Bucks that can be used at various local businesses for lunch or shopping, as well as access to an art show at the Dublin Carnegie presented by ART Dublin. Tickets can be purchased [online](#).

For guests needing overnight accommodations, special rates are available at Hampton Inn and Home2Suites. Use name Gardeners or add code 0560030242 online under special rates and add corporate code 0560030242. Standard rooms \$179.99+ and Suites \$199.00.

Itinerary

9:00 am – Pick up ticket packet at Theatre Dublin, 314 Academy Avenue
9:30 am – Welcome and brief history by Joshua Kight, Mayor of Dublin
10:00 am – Tour of homes begins
3:00 pm – Tour of homes concludes

Tour sites

The Beckham House, The Birch House, The Brantley-Crockett House, Christ Episcopal Church, The Dublin Carnegie, First Baptist Church, The Lovett House, Old Dublin City Cemetery, The Page House, and Theatre Dublin.

“Celebrating 100 Years of Beautification, Conservation & Education” **The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. – 1928 to 2028**

Join The Century Club and Support Our Celebration

Help defray the costs of our many celebrations in 2028. Donate \$100 and receive a Century Club lapel pin and other benefits.

Accepting \$100 donations NOW.

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

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

See the GCG Website for details and the donation form

**Join us at the many planned events during 2028
to celebrate our centennial.**



News from the Clubs

Avondale Estates Garden Club

AEGC to Commemorate Arbor Day

The Avondale Estates Garden Club will partner with the City of Avondale Estates to commemorate Arbor Day in Georgia on February 20.

The event is earlier in Georgia than National Arbor Day to align with the state's favorable tree planting season — November through March — for establishing trees before summer.

The city's website — avondaleestates.org — will announce the time and location of the 2026 event. Residents and fellow Georgians can join the celebration by attending the ceremony or planting a tree in their own yard.

Keep in mind that, according to the Arbor Day Foundation, in one year a mature tree will absorb more than 48 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and release oxygen in exchange.

Planting trees and encouraging conservation is an important mission of the Avondale Estates Garden Club. In November, the club purchased 50 overcup oak (*Quercus lyrata*) saplings to give away following an Environmental Awareness seminar.

The garden club purchased the saplings, which are native to the Southeast, to encourage residents to both add to the city's tree canopy and learn how important trees are to the environment.

AEGC Holiday Luncheon Nets Funds for Scholarships

Avondale Estates Garden Club (AEGC) celebrated the holidays with a purpose on December 6 by collecting more than \$600 for the Garden Club of Georgia's Dollars for Scholars program.

The board of the club hosted a holiday luncheon, with board members preparing the food and decorating each table with holiday finery. Members were guests, and they were asked to drop cash in a big red stocking as a donation to the scholarship fund. Tables reflected the season, with board members creating holiday-themed centerpieces and setting the tables with their holiday china and silver.



Conyers Garden Club

Conyers Garden Club Fall Garden Workday

The Conyers Garden Club has worked with the local Rotary Club for the last 6 years to maintain a Children's Garden at the Light House Village (LHV) in Conyers. The LHV is a faith-based non-profit organization that provides (1) services and respite care and housing for children and adults with special needs and/or developmentally disabilities; (2) transitional housing, Phoenix Pass, for displaced women and their children; and (3) new affordable housing for public servants (first responders, teachers, etc.) and for adults with disabilities. Located on the campus of LHV is a garden for the enjoyment of the residents and their children.

On October 19, eight active members of the CGC and one member's spouse met at the garden for an annual fall bedding-down and cleanup of the garden. This routine fall clean-up included weeding, dividing perennials, and relocating numerous



plants. This was the club's last garden workday for the year and the members used this time to take care of the final tasks needed in preparing the garden for the winter.

Conyers Garden Club's First Garden Therapy for 2025-2026

The Conyers Garden Club (CGC) started the 2025-2026 club year with a garden therapy project of no-tie garden throw blankets. With kits purchased from a local retailer and extra fabric purchased from another vendor, club members cut the sides of the

blanket sets into fringes that would later be tied together. Pre-cutting the fringes on the fabric pieces ensured that the seniors would only have to tie the fringe ends, making the activity easier for all who participated.

Due to the amount of space needed for each person to work on his/her throw blanket, the CGC members worked with the seniors in shifts of five. The seniors laughed and joked as they worked, commenting on how easy the blanket making was. A total of 20 seniors participated in this event.

Each senior was delighted to leave the session with a throw blanket that he or she can use while sitting outside to enjoy the cooler evenings of the fall.



Conyers Garden Club Hosts Creative Wreath Making Session

The Conyers Garden Club hosted a December 1, 2025 Garden Therapy session at the Olivia Haydel Senior Center. The CGC Garden Therapy sessions have been so popular that there is always a waiting list. The December session was no exception; however, due to the size of the allotted space, only 20 seniors could participate in the session.

The December program was making wreaths using dried plant material. Club members donated all the plant material, ribbons and bows for this activity. Grapevine wreaths, glue guns, glue sticks, and floral wire were purchased with club treasury funds.

Prior to the start of the session, the 10 CGC members present set up 20 work stations so that each senior would start the activity with the same selection of plant material. Additional plant material was also available for those wanting more or different material. After a brief introduction to the use of dried plants, the seniors were encouraged to have fun and be creative with making their wreaths.

From a selection of bows and ribbons of various patterns and colors, each senior selected a bow for his/her wreath. CGC Members were on hand to assist any senior with motor or vision issues.

The seniors enjoyed the challenge of using dried plants to create wreaths. Many expressed that they



had never dried plants or considered working with dried plants other than purchasing lavender or other herbal sachets.

Although each person started with the same materials, the resulting wreaths were as individual as those creating them. As the wreaths were completed, each participant posed for photos with his or her wreath. It was a delight to see the completed wreaths and the smiles on the faces of the seniors as they showcased their wreaths. Comments from those participating in the session were very positive and gratitude was expressed by each person as he or she posed for photos. First-time participants expressed amazement that the wreaths they made were theirs to keep.



The Garden Therapy project at the Senior Center has been one of the CGC's most successful community service projects. Allowing great engagement of the senior members in the community, this project has been a wonderful collaboration with the Rockdale County Senior Services Department. For the third year in a row, the CGC has received a GCG Garden Therapy Grant for reimbursement of the funds for the club's 2025-2026 Garden Therapy activities. These reimbursement grants have allowed the club to continue to serve the seniors in creative and engaging sessions.

Conyers Garden Club Shares the Joy

Since 2017, the Conyers Garden Club has shared Christmas decorations and joy with various agencies in the Conyers/Rockdale County community. The annual program involves the club members sharing the inspiration behind their specific decorated tree or wreath. Even during the COVID pandemic deliveries were made to those offices that were open and club members used Zoom to show off photos of their decorated items.

On December 9, 2025, CGC held its annual Christmas "Share the Joy" program. Members of the club brought in decorated miniature trees and various sized wreaths. After the meeting, the decorated items were delivered to various county and city offices and agencies: The Rockdale County Sheriff's Department, The Conyers Police Department, the Rockdale County Fire Department, the Piedmont Rockdale Women's Diagnostic Center, the Magnolia House Assisted Living and Memory Care Center, The Mayor's Office, the Conyers Presbyterian Church (hosts the CGC) office, the Rockdale County Extension Office, and the Nancy Guinn Memorial Library.



Dunwoody Garden Club Hosts Native Plant Event

On October 25, 2025, The Dunwoody Garden Club sponsored Dr. Doug Tallamy – nationally-known ecologist, entomologist, author and professor – to speak about the importance of native plants and what each of us can do to help our fragile ecosystem. This was a free event, held at the Dunwoody High School Auditorium and over 450 guests attended! Our guests were from all over the metro area and beyond and included garden club members from Redbud, Azalea and Dogwood Districts; Master Gardeners from Gwinnett, DeKalb, Fulton, Cobb, and Oconee counties; and many friends, family and neighbors!

The event was a huge success! The doors were scheduled to open at 3:00 pm with Dr. Tallamy's presentation beginning at 4:00. We had guests arriving at 2:30! In the hallway outside the auditorium, we had tables with representatives from the Georgia Native Plant Society, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Monarchs Across Georgia, Chattahoochee Nature Center and the Dunwoody Nature Center. These groups had great displays and information for our guests.

Planning for this event started in the fall of 2024. Then co-presidents Maria Richmond and Betty Dworschak's goal for their term was to emphasize environmental issues. The club's annual fundraiser – Swing into Spring (card party, luncheon, fashion show and silent auction) – had been very successful in the last few years, so the club had money to spend on a renowned speaker and all the costs associated with putting on a large presentation for the community.

We could **not** have selected a better way to educate our guests about the importance of native plants for our ecosystem. Dr. Tallamy's vision is as simple as it is revolutionary: When we all take part in preserving biodiversity, we create the connected habitats that

life depends on. He made a compelling case for the urgent need for everyone to do more to protect our native insects, which provide pollination and food for many mammals and non-mammals. He doesn't preach that we need to get rid of non-natives. Instead, he proposes we eliminate the invasive plants, reduce our lawn areas – which provide nothing for the ecosystem – and plant natives. We can make a difference!!!



Key takeaways from the presentation:

- Bird populations have decreased significantly over the last 50 years partly due to a decrease in their food sources. Did you know it takes 6,000 to 9,000 caterpillars to feed one clutch of baby chickadees!! The caterpillars are found on native plants/trees, so if there are not enough native plants there isn't enough food for the birds.

- Many insects (including caterpillars) overwinter in the soil and in leaf litter. We need to leave the leaf litter under the trees/in our mulch areas over the winter!
- Get rid of invasive plants! The invasives choke out the native plants and reduce caterpillar populations significantly.
- Plant the right natives! Just 14% of our native plants make 90% of the caterpillar food that drives food webs. Oaks support 557 species of caterpillars in the Mid-Atlantic states and over 1000 species nationwide. Go to the National Wildlife Federation website and look for Native Plant Finder. <https://nativeplantfinder.nwf.org>.
- Light pollution reduces insect populations by: disrupting circadian rhythms, foraging, mating and reproduction; exhaustion; collisions; blind insects, etc. Instead of leaving those front porch lights on all night, consider switching to using motion sensors and/or yellow light bulbs. Yellow light is less visible and less appealing to most bugs compared to bright white or cool-toned lights, which mimic moonlight and draw insects in for navigation.
- Mosquito spraying is deadly – to ALL insects that encounter it. Any spray designed to kill mosquitos also kills other insects. Use mosquito bait traps – i.e. water with mosquito dunks; fans and of course deet on your exposed areas.



Dr. Tallamy has written five books with lots of wonderful information. You can find several of his talks on YouTube. Recently, a couple of our members stumbled upon a children's book version of his latest book – Nature's Best Hope, a young reader's edition. Maybe something worthwhile for our grandchildren!

Dunwoody Garden Club members hope that everyone will spread the word!! Tell family, friends, neighbors, people you run into at the plant nurseries, etc. about the importance of native plants. If you ever get the chance to hear Dr. Tallamy speak, you will walk away inspired!



LaGrange Garden Clubs Participate in the Daffodil Project



On November 20th, the Troup County Master Gardeners and members of the Elms and Roses Garden Club Council and Talisman Garden Club planted 250 bulbs at the Troup County Agriculture Center in LaGrange. This was part of the Daffodil Project to remember the 1.5 million children who

lost their lives in the Holocaust. The project also helps to bring awareness and support to children throughout the world who are still suffering in humanitarian crises.

The project began with 1,800 daffodils being planted in Atlanta. It has since expanded to 662 locations with over a million bulbs planted around the world.

Troup County's bulbs were donated by the Daffodil Project to be planted in a memory garden at the Ag Center. Founder of the project, Andrea Videlefsky, along with Holocaust survivor Herschel Greenblat, were on hand for the ceremonial planting.

Participants were privileged to hear Herschel share an emotional and inspiring story of how his family survived the difficult years of the Holocaust and how they eventually were able to make their way to the United States. He recalled seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time, while his father held his hand on the deck of the ship.

For more information, visit www.daffodilproject.net.

NGC Environmental School Coming in January



Through our state garden club organizations, National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC) is offering Gardening, Landscape Design, Environmental and Flower Show Schools. January 29th and 30th, The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. (GCG) will hold the first of four classes of the Environmental School. This will be held on Zoom! It is a great opportunity to hear lectures from some of our state's experts in the field without travelling any farther than your kitchen table or couch! You can attend for fun and as a learning opportunity or become a "Consultant."

Information will be available on the GCG website soon: gardenclubofgeorgia.org. You can find out more information about the NGC School and Consultant program on their website: gardenclub.org.

Lullwater Garden Club Decorates for the Birds

Lullwater Garden Club decorated Lullwater Conservation Garden as a holiday treat for the birds and other wildlife. Club members brought various homemade items for the birds and hung them on the shrubs in the formal garden. Bird feeders were filled with bird seed and peanuts.

As club members were packing up, they heard the birds encouraging them to leave faster so they could feast on the dried orange wreaths, suet, and the popcorn and cranberry garlands. A merry time was enjoyed by all.

Lullwater Conservation Garden is open to the public from dawn to dusk. So next time you want to walk your dog, or spend some time beside a peaceful flowing stream, embrace the beauty of nature or enjoy a collection of native plants, club members hope you will stop by for a walk in the garden.

For more information

www.lullwaterconservationgarden.org



Satsuki Garden Club Christmas Tour of Homes Brings Holiday Magic to Covington

Covington, Georgia was aglow with holiday cheer on Thursday, December 4, 2025, as the Satsuki Garden Club hosted its biennial Candlelight Christmas Tour of Homes.

From 4 to 8 p.m., more than 700 visitors strolled through six beautifully decorated residences, each offering a unique glimpse into the town's architectural heritage and festive spirit. The homes ranged from the majestic Neoclassical Revival built in 1903 to the gracious Southern Colonial-style completed in 2003. The oldest home, dating back to 1854, was a lovingly preserved treasure that has seen generations of renovations.

Inside each home, visitors were welcomed with dazzling Christmas décor—twinkling lights, fragrant greenery, and imaginative displays that reflected both tradition and creativity. The event not only celebrated the beauty of the season but also highlighted the Satsuki Garden Club's dedication to fostering community, history, and horticultural appreciation.

Beyond the décor, the tour became a joyful reunion. Friends, young and old, delighted in the opportunity to visit with neighbors and acquaintances not seen in ages. One attendee captured the spirit perfectly: "...what a wonderful event this was! There is much to love about this event that takes an enormous amount of time and planning. What I most loved and appreciated—not just the décor and the gracious opening of private homes to hordes of us—was the sense of community that this tour offers."

That sense of community has long been at the heart of the Satsuki Garden Club. Since becoming the club's primary fundraiser in 2010, the biennial Tour of Homes has supported projects that enhance gardens and promote educational programs. The club donates nature-related books to schools,



stocks a free children's nature library, maintains a butterfly/pollinator garden, and awards annual college scholarships to students pursuing studies in horticulture, forestry, and related fields.

Planning for the Home Tour began in January 2025 when homeowners were asked to participate. A two-chairman committee with a number of sub committees began their work in earnest once the six homes were secured. There were sponsors to contact, descriptions to write, photos to be taken, graphic design work to be done, plans for printing to be made and volunteers to contact.

Homeowners began their decorating as early as two months in advance. Club members arrived on the doorsteps the day before the tour with arms full of

Christmas greenery to add finishing touches to doorways, stairs, mantels and tables. With its 45 dedicated members, the Satsuki Garden Club ensured every detail of the 2025 tour was a success. Their efforts not only celebrated the beauty of the season but also strengthened the bonds of

community, leaving guests inspired and eager for the next celebration in two years. The club was especially honored to have The Garden Club of Georgia President, Diane Hunter, in attendance along with other district and state officers



Smoke Rise Morning Glories Adopt a Youth Garden Club in Fall 2025

The joy of gardening can begin at any age but why not when you are just three or four years old? And happily, that is exactly what is happening with the children from the Mountain Park Methodist Preschool. The church is located near the Smoke Rise community and Smoke Rise Morning Glories President Amie Walsh is an active member there. In August of 2025, she suggested to the club that we help the staff and teachers at the Preschool with gardening activities twice a month. The school has raised beds and gardening tools for child-sized hands, and they just needed some fun activities to get the program started.

The pre-K Garden Club is called *Grow with Us Little Gardeners*. There are 40 in the pre-school group, evenly represented by boys and girls. The church-affiliated group meets twice a month (6-8 months of the year) and plans to hold 12-16 meetings per year. Each program will last 20-30 minutes. Amie Walsh is the project coordinator and is working closely with the teacher on lesson plans. Many of the Morning Glories are participating in presenting programs.

The Morning Glories have already had several interactive programs with the children. These programs included worms and ladybugs. Other seasonal programs included Leaves, Pumpkin Patch, Pansies, Spinning (cotton), *Blessings from our Garden* book reading, Holiday Wreath-Making, and Making Pinecone Bird Feeders.

Plans are in the works for classes in January – April 2026. As the photos show, these gardening sessions have proven to be very popular with the young gardeners and the staff.

