

The Azalea Trumpet

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE AZALEA DISTRICT

WINTER, 2025/26

MEMBER OF: THE GARDEN CLUB OF GEORGIA, INC., THE DEEP SOUTH REGION, AND THE NATIONAL GARDEN CLUB



THEY MADE IT POSSIBLE: The six host clubs—Evergreen, Gateways, Rose and Dahlia, Rosemary & Thyme, and Watkinsville—collaborated to host an outstanding Azalea District Annual Meeting at the State Garden Club of Georgia headquarters at the State Botanical Garden in Athens. Shown are: District Director Jan Stewart, Ina Hopkins of Rose and Dahlia, Molly Kimler of Gateways Garden Club and Rosemary & Thyme Garden Club, Marsha Harden of Gateways Garden Club, Jan Goddard of Watkinsville Garden Club, Shirley Porterfield of Evergreen Garden Club and Cheri Crowley of Rose and Dahlia Garden Club. GILES Photo

Garden Musings from District Director Jan Stewart

October was a whirlwind of travel as we attended the seven GCG District Annual Fall Meetings across Georgia.

We were honored to host the Azalea District Annual Fall Meeting at The GCG Headquarters in Athens. Our sincere thanks go to Ina Hopkins and the six host Azalea District Garden Clubs—Evergreen, Gateways, Rose and Dahlia, Rosemary & Thyme, and Watkinsville—for putting together an outstanding meeting. The delicious food, creative raffle baskets, and excellent program made the day truly memorable. It was wonderful to see so many well-deserved awards presented.

Continued on page 2



MADAM PRESIDENT: State President Diane Hunter, right, was present to help pass out awards at the district annual meeting.

Musings from District Director Jan Stewart

We were privileged to welcome Diane Hunter, president of The Garden Club of Georgia, along with several members of the GCG Executive Committee. Diane presented the 2024 Standard of Excellence to clubs earning 30 or more points, as well as several GCG Scholarships.

Special congratulations to Watkinsville Garden Club, recipient of Club of the Year, with an impressive 39 points on the GCG President's Report. We also congratulate Jane Edmonds, recognized as Azalea District Member of the Year. Well done to all!

Two Laurel District Clubs Transferring In

We are thrilled to announce that two Laurel District clubs, Dogwood Garden Club and Lawrenceville Garden Club, have requested to transfer to the Azalea District. We are finalizing their

The Azalea District Theme

*"Humming for Beautification,
Conservation and Education"*

HUM BUSY: With brave wings she flies, flying so fast.

HUM TRUE: The earth has music for those who listen.

HUM SURE: Bringing the gift of joy, learn to laugh and be happy.

HUM LIFE: Darting lightly, spreading joy and beauty, teaching us to appreciate the nature's wonder.

HUM SILLY: There is no easy way to bathe a hummingbird.

HUM BOLD: Sipping nectar from every flower.

HUM BELIEVE: It's a great skill we all should learn: to believe in miracles in our life.

HUM HAPPY: Fly joyfully through my days, seeing beauty in everything.

HUM CONFIDENCE: Spread your wings, let your spirit soar, only from the heart can you touch the sky.

move with GCG for the 2026 membership year. Welcome to the Azalea District!

Upcoming District Board Meeting

We look forward to our next Azalea District Board Meeting in Hartwell, on Feb. 17, 2026. Since the meeting falls on Mardi Gras, we invite everyone to get into the spirit by wearing festive, colorful attire. We can't wait to see your creativity on display!

Join us in welcoming Randy Stewart as Azalea District Co-Director. Randy will support membership efforts and assist clubs with growth and retention. We're excited to have him on our leadership team.

Mark Your Calendar

The GCG Annual Convention is April 1–3, 2026, at the Crown Plaza Hotel, Peachtree City, Georgia.

Season's Greetings

We have enjoyed visiting many district clubs and look forward to more in the coming year.

I hope you had a **Merry Christmas**. I wish for you a **Happy New Year!**



MADAM PRESIDENT: Diane Hunter, president of The Garden Club of Georgia, was a welcome addition to the Azalea District annual meeting. GILES PHOTO

Azalea District News

District Clubs Attain Standard of Excellence



EXCELLENT: Not only is this a good-looking group, but it is a high-performing one as well, as these are the representatives from the clubs recognized for meeting the Standard of Excellence in the Azalea District. Shown are: front, Linda Williams, Azalea Garden Club; Beth Wiseman, Augusta Council of Garden Clubs; Lynne Seeger, Burkeland Garden Club; Suellen Jones, Pine Tree Garden Club; Jan Stewart, Sharon-Raytown Garden Club; Jan Colvin, Pine Needle Garden Club; Pam Wimpey, Gateways Garden Club; second row, L-R, Cheri Crowley, Rose and Dahlia Garden Club; Betty Hotchkiss, Gray Garden Club, Vickie Haney, Greensboro Garden Club; Kathryn Jordan, Nancy Hart Garden Club; Susan Hadden, Spade and Trowell Garden Club; Janet Collins, Rosemary & Thyme Garden Club; and Jan Goddard, Watkinsville Garden Club. GILES PHOTO

The Azalea Trumpet



The Editor

Blake Giles is the editor of the Azalea Trumpet. He is the past president of the Watkinsville Garden Club. He worked 34 years in the newspaper industry (remember those rolled-up pages they used to throw on your doorstep?).

Submission Guidelines

Send all information to azaleatrumpet@gmail.com.

Send events that you want included on the quarterly calendar.

Word files preferred, but other formats are acceptable.

Regarding photos, the bigger the resolution, the better.

Questions: azaleatrumpet@gmail.com

Deadline for next edition: Mar. 16

Azalea District Annual Meeting



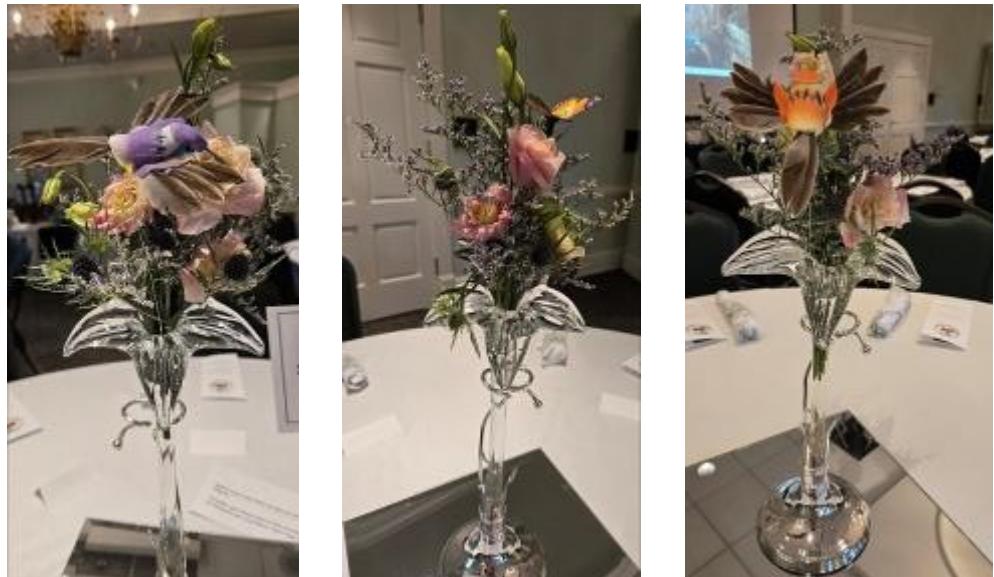
OUTSTANDING! Past-President Blake Giles and President Jan Goddard accepted the Ellen Schneider Goodrich Outstanding Garden Club Award on behalf of the Watkinsville Garden Club. District director Jan Stewart presented the award as members of the club in attendance joined them at the front. Members shown are Pamela Hendrix, Debbie Murwin, Amy Lanclos, Virginia Wells-McGeary, Cheryl Johnson, Frank Johnson, Violet Dawe, Lois Kraeling, Bob Kraeling and Candi Hoard.

Watkinsville Garden Club Named District's Outstanding Club

The Watkinsville Garden Club received the Ellen Schneider Goodrich Award as the most outstanding club in the Azalea District.

A dozen members of the club attended the annual meeting at the GCG state headquarters at the State Botanical Garden.

Other Standard of Excellence clubs included: Iris Garden Club (Augusta); Nancy Hart Garden Club, Gateways Garden Club, Pine Tree Garden Club (Hartwell), Rose and Dahlia Garden Club, Sharon-Raytown Garden Club, Burkeland Garden Club, Gray Garden Club, Greensboro Garden Club, Pine Needle Garden Club (Augusta), Azalea Garden



EYE-CATCHING: Watkinsville Garden Club members Cheryl and Frank Johnson, with help from Elizabeth Ann Florist & Gift Shop in downtown Watkinsville, placed the centerpieces, which were sold to raise funds. GILES PHOTOS

Club (Augusta), Rosemary & Thyme Garden Club, Spade and Trowel Garden Club and Iris Garden Club (Washington).

Jane Edmonds Named District's Outstanding Member

Jane Edmonds of the Warrenton Garden Club was named the recipient of the Dollie T. Harper Outstanding Member Award for the Azalea District.



ONE OF A KIND: District Director Jan Stewart presented the Dollie T. Harper Outstanding Member Award to Jane Edmonds of the Warrenton Garden Club.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Dorinda Dallmeyer, author and documentary producer, spoke on William Bartram and his trailblazing travels through the South. GILES PHOTO

Dallmeyer Salutes William Bartram for His Exploration of the Southern Environment

The Azalea District Annual Meeting featured a fascinating presentation by Dorinda Dallmeyer on the travels of William Bartram through the South.

Bartram was a naturalist, writer and explorer. He wrote *Bartram's Travels*, which detailed his exploration of the southern colonies from 1773 to 1777.

Dallmeyer edited Bartram's Living Legacy: The Travels and the Nature of the South. It features Bartram's anthology with essays by 17 modern-day southern nature writers. She produced an award-winning documentary as well.

GCG President Diane Hunter Sings Praises

Beautification, conservation and education remain the hallmark of Georgia's garden clubs, said Garden Club of Georgia President Diane Hunter when addressing the Azalea District annual meeting.

Following are some highlights of her address.

Praise for the district

The district hosted a fantastic state convention in Augusta, despite dealing with the residual effects of Hurricane Helene.

The clubs in the district are heavily involved in environmental issues.

The clubs participated in the Great Southeast Pollinator Count.

Praise for individual clubs

Milledgeville Garden Club still honors a yard of the month.

Warrenton Garden Club awards a community service award.

Sharon-Raytown Garden Club provided a display for Christmas in the park.

Rose and Dahlia Garden Club had a pumpkin palooza for their Growing Seeds, an after-school club.

Gray Garden Club makes goody bags for vets.

Iris Garden Club hosted a flower show in Augusta.

Gray Garden Club displayed daylilies.

Pine Tree Garden Club created bouquets for seniors.

The Augusta Council hosted basic design for 20 students.

Individuals cited.

Pam Hendrix, Ina Hopkins, Stephanie Corley, Janet Carn, Carol Reap, Molly Kimler, Marilyn McDonald, Peggy Tucker and Jane Hersey were all cited for their service to GCG.

NCC programs cited

Plant America will emphasize red, white and blue in conjunction with the 250th anniversary of the United States.

NGC and Keep America Beautiful are partnering to underwrite local beautification of Blue Star Markers.

State initiatives cited

GCG hosted a tri-refresher course at Gibbs Gardens.

Two flower-show schools are in the works.

More speakers and workshops will be offered at the state convention.

The Growing Leaders course began Sept. 30 and extends monthly through May.

The first-ever district and club treasurer training attracted 200 via a Zoom course.

Grant guidelines have been streamlined.

GCG is fund raising through Flower Power and cash raffles.

Clubs should maximize the reach of social media--Facebook, Instagram, websites--



LINDA HARRIS HONORED: Past GCG President Peggy Tucker and GCG President Diane Hunter showcased a certificate designated a named scholarship to honor Linda Harris, Tucker's sister. GILES PHOTO

since it is where newcomers often discover garden clubs.

Districts are creating projects for the GCG 100th anniversary.

GCG funded scholarships to the tune of \$175,000 in during Lisa Hall's term as president.

Deep roots

Summing up, Hunter said she was awestruck by the history of the Garden Club of Georgia.

"We supported the protection of the Okefenokee Swamp in the 1920s, and this year we worked with other groups to halt mining in the Okefenokee. We conducted litter campaigns in the late '30s. We helped support legislation to protect rivers and the coast in the late '60s. Our entire state benefits from every project, every class, every flower show. I thank you for tending to the heart of Georgia."

ANN WRIGHT

Sponsors Made Azalea District Annual Meeting So Much Better

Baskets filled with gift items have become a highlight of the Azalea District Annual Fall Meeting. Offerings at the 2025 meeting certainly set the bar high for future meetings.

The raffle collected \$965 which will be used for a project in the Azalea District.

Appreciation is extended to the following clubs who contributed to this fundraising effort:

- ◆ Burkeland Garden Club
- ◆ Cherokee Rose Garden Club
- ◆ Evergreen Garden Club
- ◆ Gateways Garden Club
- ◆ Pine Tree Garden Club
- ◆ Rose and Dahlia Garden Club
- ◆ Spade & Trowel Garden Club
- ◆ Union Point Garden Club
- ◆ Warrenton Garden Club
- ◆ Watkinsville Garden Club
- ◆ Sharon-Raytown Garden Club

The following clubs donated cash to the Azalea District in lieu of a basket. Thank you very much!

- ◆ Greensboro Garden Club (\$100)
- ◆ Azalea Garden Club/Augusta (\$50)



E Q R C

Excellence Quality Regulatory Compliance

Randy Stewart, President

- ◆ Carrington Woods Garden Club (\$50)
- ◆ Dogwood Garden Club (\$50)
- ◆ Nancy Hart Garden Club (\$50)
- ◆ Winslow/Midville Garden Club (\$35)
- ◆ Gray Garden Club (\$25)
- ◆ Monroe Garden Club (\$25)
- ◆ Pine Tree Garden Club (\$25)
- ◆ Rosemary & Thyme Garden Club (\$25)
- ◆ Spade & Trowel Garden Club (\$25)
- ◆ Town & Country Garden Club (\$25)

And *major kudos* to the Greensboro Garden Club for being a 2025 sponsor at the \$100 level.

Thank you all for your support and attendance.

If you were not present for the Fall Annual Meeting, our speaker, Dorinda Dallmayer, has been asked to make a presentation at the 2026 GCG Convention.



**Greensboro
Garden Club**

Your Azalea District Annual
Fall Meeting Committee

Azalea District Annual Meeting Sights



So Much: The annual meeting offered a touching memorial service, door prizes, crazy costumes, valuable information, delicious food that was artfully displayed and a keynote speaker, GILES PHOTOS

Sharon Raytown Garden Club



WENDY MILLER, 2ND VICE PRESIDENT



JAN STEWART, SHARON-RAYTOWN PRESIDENT

Crawfordville Planters Adorning Downtown Get Fall Update from Garden Club

A little TLC goes a long way.

The Sharon-Raytown Garden Club spruced up streetside planters in downtown Crawfordville with a fall planting.

Small towns can present a more welcoming front with attractive touches that enhance the experience of visiting the locale.

The Sharon-Raytown Garden Club is committed to beautification efforts in its community.



WENDY MILLER, JAN STEWART AND PAULA ATCHISON

Milledgeville Garden Club

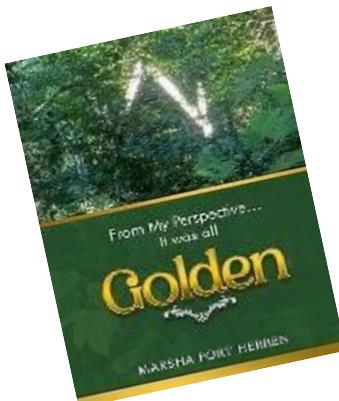
Herb Farm Founder Marsha Herren Speaks to Club

Marsha Herren spoke to the Milledgeville Garden Club: "The Historical Perspective of Herbs: A Medicinal and Flavorful Journey." Marsha Herren and her husband Darryl officially licensed Olive Forge Herb Farm in the mid 1980s, the first and only licensed herb farm in Georgia for the next 34 years. The farm sat on 15 acres on Brown's Crossing Road in Milledgeville. After her husband's death, Ms. Herren was not physically able to manage the farm alone. She keeps the Facebook page Olive Forge Herb Farm going with recipes, ideas about growing and new facts about herbs. She has spent these years since 2017 painting and writing while continuing to research old diseases and plant based medicines used by our ancestors.

Ms. Herren spoke to the Milledgeville Garden Club in October 2025 sharing with the membership her love of herbs. She shared medicinal uses for

peppermint

and rosemary. She brought along her artwork and published books to share with the club. She has been instrumental in assisting the club with the refurbishment of the historical Brown-Stetson-Sanford House's herb garden undertaken in 2024. The membership awarded Ms. Herren with a MGC Subscription Membership and made a donation to the MGC Scholarship Fund in her name.



CLUB PRESIDENT ANA MARIA EDWARDS AND SPEAKER MARSHA FORT

Milledgeville Garden Club



LOOKING OFFICIAL: New officers for the Milledgeville Garden Club include Jan Jeffords-Schenck, president elect; Ana Maria Edwards, president; Sandra Wilder, vice president; and Holly Williams, treasurer. Not shown are Anne Smart, secretary; and Jennifer Pollard, parliamentarian. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**

Milledgeville Club Shares Beautification Plans as Club Kicks Off New Year

The Milledgeville Garden Club shared its plans for community beautification projects as it started off under new leadership, led by President Ana Maria Edwards.

Members received new yearbooks which detailed the plans.

The club added a new member, Anne Neely-Beck.

A tasty meal was served by hostesses Gail Pohl, Nancy Anderson, Kathy Geist, Shirley O'Quinn, Kathy Veal-Smith and Jimmie Spier.



WELCOME TO THE CLUB: Anne Neely-Beck is the newest member of the Milledgeville Garden Club. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**

Milledgeville Garden Club



God bless our veterans!

Christmas cards arrived at the Veterans Home in Milledgeville. President Ana Edwards of the Milledgeville Garden Club and President Alvin Thomas of the Lion's Club were there to help spread the joy!

The Garden Club hand colored nearly 200 cards, and thanks to the generosity of the Garden Club, Lions Club and Kiwanis Club, \$10 was added to many of the cards so able Veterans could enjoy spending their money.

Thank you Milledgeville Service Clubs. We love our veterans!

Augusta Council of Garden Clubs

AUGUSTA
COUNCIL
OF GARDEN
CLUBS, INC.

CORDIALLY
INVITES ALL
GARDEN
CLUB OF
GEORGIA
MEMBERS

Annual Spring Luncheon Event

Join us for a delightful gathering



Date: Thursday, March 26, 2026
Time: 9:30 Registration and Coffee,
10:00 am Meeting
Location: Augusta Country Club, 655
Milledge Road, Augusta, GA 30904

TO REGISTER SCAN QR CODE

Registration Link:
https://gformsapp.com/f/IMr_OOOIVnDH47FLIClScnToPOylbICCJnhsjsjLaKWI/en/

For more details contact: Beth Wiseman
Email: bethwiseman807@gmail.com

Honored Guests:
National Garden Clubs, Inc., President Donna
Donnelly
Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., President Diane
Hunter

Very Special Speaker: Brie Arthur, the Plant Lady
Brie Arthur is a bestselling author, horticulturist, and garden communicator who inspires gardeners to reimagine their landscapes with creativity, purpose, and sustainability. She is the author of The Foodscape Revolution and Gardening with Grains, bringing fruits, vegetables, and even grains into beautiful, functional gardens. See her YouTube channel, Brie the Plant Lady.

Watkinsville Garden Club

Release the Monarchs...



CLUB PRESIDENT JAN GODDARD

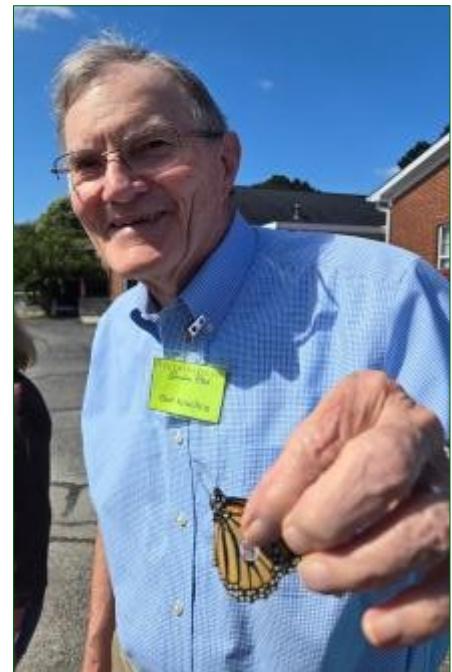


CHERYL JOHNSON



SHELLEY STEVENS AND AMY LANCLOS

After a presentation by first vice president Shawna McGrath on monarch butterflies, club members climaxed their October meeting by releasing monarchs for their trek to Mexico. Shawna is a monarch butterfly "citizen scientist" who nurtures the larvae on her homestead. When she taught elementary school, she engaged her students with the monarchs and their annual habits. She is an advocate of planting milkweed, which the larvae feed on.



BOB KRAELING



JOANNE FINE AND PAMELA HENDRIX



JOY REED

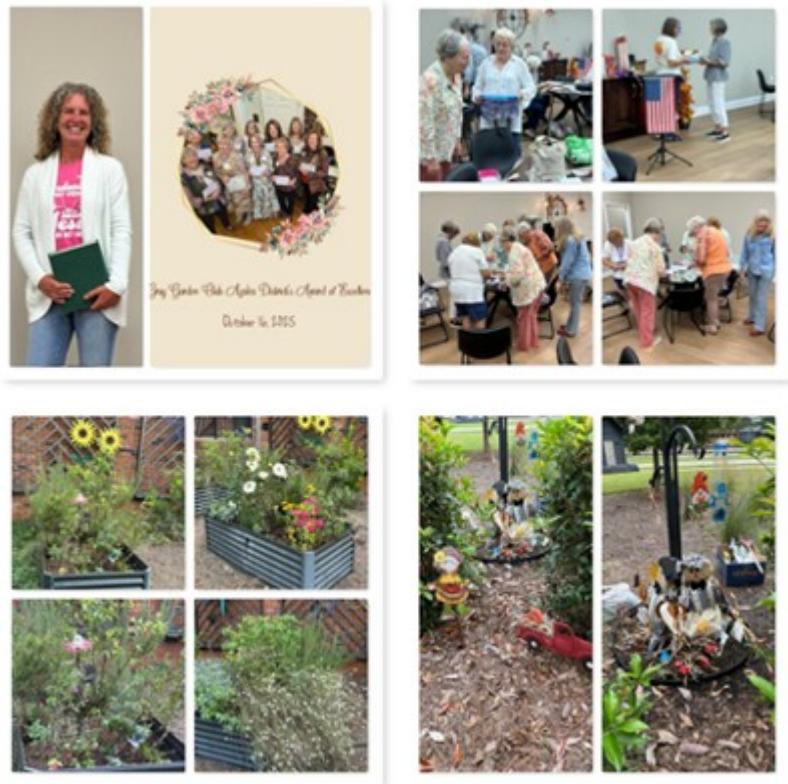
Gray Garden Club

Pepper, Lavender and Poppies Make for Interesting Season

Late summer and fall was a busy time for Gray Garden Club members. September's program was an interesting talk given by Christina Ivanovich, Garden Center Manager at ACE Hardware in Gray on using plants to make homemade remedies, such as making pain relieving salves from hot peppers.

October brought us an Award of Excellence certificate from the Annual Azalea District Meeting. The program presented by Tia Litke, of Bramble Bottom Farms, was on growing, preserving and cooking with lavender. She showed how and gave members the opportunity to propagate lavender to take home

along with dried lavender bundles. Members also refilled the planters at the Jones County Library with plants donated by ACE Hardware. The library Fairy Garden was also decorated for fall.



November brought us DeLise Knight, from Pineola Farms, who presented a program on Christmas tablescapes that will not break the bank! Next came the Veterans Appreciation Day, where members were privileged to pin poppies on the veterans and give them a treat bag assembled by the membership. To finish November, a group gathered to make centerpieces, out of mugs, for the annual Christmas luncheon.

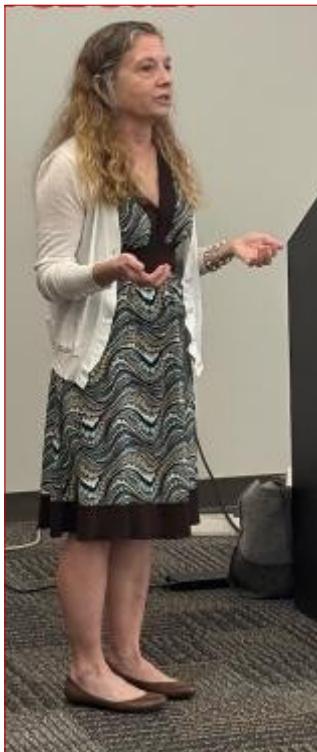


Rose and Dahlia Garden Club

Did You Know Athens Has a Moon Tree?

Athens is home to one of the incredible moon trees. You might be wondering — what exactly is a moon tree?

At our November meeting, guest speaker Melanie Ford shared this fascinating arboreal tale. She recounted the remarkable journey of seeds that traveled to the moon aboard the Apollo 14 mission in 1971. Upon their return, these seeds were planted across the United

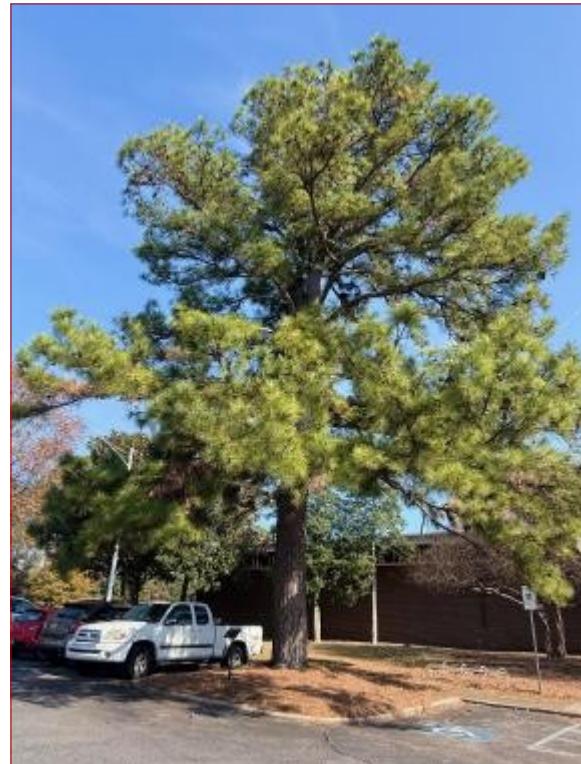


MELANIE FORD

States in honor of America's bicentennial, nearly 50 years ago. Today, they stand as living monuments to exploration and history. Athens' tree is one of only 110 or so that have been located in the U.S. Melanie's master's thesis documents the story in detail, from astronaut Stuart Roosa, who carried the seeds into lunar orbit, to the U.S. Forest Service, which helped nurture them. Thanks to their efforts, Athens proudly hosts its own moon tree: a humble yet historic loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*)**. You can find it standing tall in the parking lot of the city's old library, now home to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Melanie has played a key role in preserving and protecting the legacy of this

tree, and the 3 or so others in Georgia. Her passion and scholarship brought this hidden piece of Athens' history to life, and we were thrilled to learn about such a unique connection between our city and the story of space exploration.



ATHENS' MOON TREE: This loblolly pine at the Planning and Zoning Commission in Athens is a moon tree.



ALMOST 50 YEARS OLD: A marker details the tree's history, including a visit to space by the seed.



TO THE MOON AND BACK: Astronaut Stuart Roosa on Apollo 14 carried seeds into space that were planted on earth.

Greensboro Garden Club

Community Adorned with Festive Christmas Touches

It's that time of year, and the Greensboro Garden Club is out in the community adding festive Christmas touches.

Club members have been especially busy this fall updating and refreshing planters around town.

At the Greene County Senior Center, members teamed up with senior residents to freshen up the outdoor planters. Additional seasonal projects included creating the winter planters for St. Mary's Hospital and the Lake Oconee Humane Society, filling them with fragrant rosemary and colorful annuals.

The club wrapped up the season by installing its annual Christmas decorations at the Memorial Garden, highlighted this year by the addition of a new lighted Christmas tree.



Ladies Garden Club

It's Multiplication by Division

By Kathrine Clark

The Ladies convened at a member's home to prepare for next spring's annual plant sale fundraiser.

This year's goal is to propagate more native plants from our own gardens, to reach Athens' conservation-focused audience whose interest lies in adding more valuable keystone natives to their landscapes.

President Kathrine Clark, a lifelong gardener and landscape design professional, demonstrated techniques for dividing woody and perennial clumps from her collection, showing how to identify their growth habits and place them correctly in pots of specially mixed soil where they will establish themselves during the dormant season.

Everyone who attended played a part in the meeting's success, with more than 222 newly planted pots of pollinator- and wildlife-



friendly native plants ready long before the spring rush. More plants will be prepared before our late April sale, which will be held on a Sunday in the courtyard of Creature Comforts Brewing Company in downtown Athens. The date will be announced soon. We hope you will come enjoy the event with us.
Photos by Connie Herringdine



Holiday Nativity Display Draws Hundreds to Historic Louisville Home

Nearly 350 people attended the awe-inspiring nativity event held by the Louisville Garden Club in one of its town's historic homes the first weekend in December.

Three hundred nativities from all around the world were artfully displayed with greenery and labels as to their countries of origin. All event proceeds will be used to fund the club's beautification projects for its community and to replant trees lost to last year's storm.



Rosemary & Thyme Garden Club

Library Receives Books Written By NGC President

Since its formation in 2019, the Rosemary & Thyme Garden Club of Loganville has been meeting in the O'Kelley Library.

Now a new facility is being built to house the O'Kelley Library. It seemed appropriate to invite Stacy Brown, the executive director of the Azalea Regional Library System, to explain the new building's setup.

The Rosemary & Thyme Garden Club has for years maintained a planter in front of the existing library. They asked permission to have a small garden on the new grounds.

The club thanked Brown by presenting to her four National Council Children's books written by Brenda Moore, NGC president, 2023-2025. The books were *The Frightened Frog*, *The Saved Seed*, *Network with Nature* and *My Green Is Gone*.

The library placed them on a prominent shelf for check out, and the books will move to the new library.

The club will meet in the new library when it opens.



The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. News

Garden Club of Georgia Pointing to Centennial Celebration in 2028

The Garden Club of Georgia has unveiled its theme and logo for its impending 100th anniversary.

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

“Celebrating a Century of Beautification, Conservation & Education”

There will be many events during 2028 to celebrate the centennial. Put it on your long-range calendar.

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

- Statewide traveling exhibits
- Exhibits within each of the Districts – at libraries and other public places.

Garden club members can help defray the costs of celebrations in 2028. People who attend various functions will still need to pay something to register for bus tours in Athens, the reception itself in June at headquarters, or other events to be determined, in order to make a commitment that they are coming. The funds raised in advance will lower the ticket price of everything that year.

Any other events and 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 the 100th Anniversary Celebration, GCG has established the Century Club. Members who wish to belong to this club and financially support the 100th Celebration may donate \$100 and receive a Century Club lapel pin (preliminary design above) and certain other benefits. The total list of benefits is still being determined. Other benefits being considered are:

- A beautiful acknowledgement card suitable for framing, possibly featuring watercolor artwork of GCG Headquarters.
- Early seating at certain events
- Recognition at events or in district newsletters and *Garden Gateways*.

Plus more.

Donations are being accepted now. Pins will be ordered over the summer and be distributed at the Fall District Meetings. Wear it with pride! The fundraising will determine how big celebrations can be. Your support is appreciated.

Get your order in ASAP to become a Century Club Member.

Make your \$100 check payable to GCG and mail along with the form below to:



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

I want to become a Century Club Member



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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Garden Club Name: _____

District: _____ Check #: _____

“GCG Celebrates America”

APRIL 1-3, CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER PEACHTREE CITY, GA.

Let's Gather Together!

The Magnolia District and The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. invites Garden Club members to The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.'s 98th Annual Convention at the Crown Plaza in Peachtree City, as "GCG Celebrates America".

The Crown Plaza Hotel and Conference Center offers the perfect setting for the three days of information, fun, shopping, and fellowship. It has gorgeous outdoor scenery, beautiful lakes, and relaxing accommodations.

On April 1-3, there will be great workshops for skill development, celebration of garden clubs with awards for projects, and featured speakers to educate members. There will be a raffle for entertainment and a variety of interesting vendors for shopping pleasure. Enjoy the beautiful floral designs by the districts presented for your visual enjoyment plus learn about the educational exhibits which focus on programs of GCG.

Our first speaker Dr. Jaap de Roode will be featured during our opening session of the Convention on April 1 at 10 a.m., so do not be late to check in and start the adventure. Lunch will be on your own followed by an afternoon workshop presented by Suzanne Finger.

That evening there will be a district photo gathering, a cash



Register here with the QR code.

THEY SPEAK GARDEN: Speakers at this year's GCG State Convention include (clockwise, from top left) Jaap de Roode, Emily Coffey, Joe Cook, Katherine Kennedy, Suzanne Finger and Sheri Dorn. [ONLINE IMAGES](#)

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 & Registration Form to: Rigby Duncan, 2800 Hunting Hill Lane, Decatur, GA 30033

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

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 877-227-06963

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



PAVING THE WAY: Past State President Peggy Tucker, right, was surprised recently with a photo of her commemorative brick paver at the National Garden Club Headquarters in St. Louis, Mo. Immediate Past President Lisa Hall, left, and current President Diane Hunter presented the photo to Tucker. Each term, the Garden Club of Georgia presents its president with a life membership in the NGC. Since Tucker was already a life member, she chose the purchase of a brick paver. Roughly a quarter-mile long, the Path of Success is a walking path located on the grounds of NGC's headquarters and links to the Missouri Botanical Gardens, spreading more awareness of NGC than ever before. This project will also serve as an educational platform, showing the rich history and mission of NGC. Tucker's paver is placed just beneath the one honoring Deen Day Sanders. "This makes this tribute even more meaningful to me. I am deeply honored and grateful for this recognition from GCG," Tucker said. Sanders is a prominent philanthropist known for her contributions to the Days Inn hotel chain and her extensive work in gardening and charitable activities. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**

Milkweed for Monarchs: You can help support monarch butterflies

From State Botanical Garden

Bright orange and black wings flutter by on the journey that defies all odds. Monarch butterflies born in the fall must fly about 3,000 miles to reach their overwintering ground in Mexico. These native insects are under threat from many different hazards, and their numbers are declining. One of the best ways we can support monarchs, and other native insects, is by providing them with appropriate food sources.

Conservationists at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia at the University of Georgia stress the im-

portance of planting native species in your home garden to support native wildlife, such as the monarch butterfly.

"Adult monarch butterflies need native, nectar-producing powerhouse plants, especially during their spring and fall migrations. They can be sourced from a variety of genera, including but not limited to *Phlox*, *Symphyotrichum* (*Aster*), *Rudbeckia*, *Penstemon*, *Monarda* and many others.

One of the best species for monarchs, as well as many other pollinators, is *Pycnanthemum* or mountain mint. Native pollinators love

mountain mint, and with over 20 species native to Georgia, *Pycnanthemum* can be a staple in any native pollinator garden, according to Jennifer Ceska, the garden's conservation coordinator.

Monarch caterpillars are special in that they require a specific host plant, milkweed or *Asclepias*.

The milkweeds you select should be native and ecoregion appropriate. If you can plant just two *Asclepias* species, researchers recommend *Asclepias incarnata*, swamp milkweed, and *Asclepias tuberosa*, butterfly milkweed.

Hurricane Helene, Compost, and God's Vine

Reprinted from the National Garden Clubs website

One of the most rewarding benefits of gardening is discovering that, sometimes, we are not the only gardener in our landscape. Despite our best efforts to control our space, sometimes, forces beyond our control have other plans. Here is a sweet tale of one gardener's experience after Hurricane Helene.

**by Karen Oliver
NGC Five Star Member**

In September of 2024, Hurricane Helene ravaged her way inland all the way to the Georgia/South Carolina border, forever changing our landscape and our lives. My husband Henry and I were among the lucky ones. Several residents of the North Augusta /Augusta area were crushed in their beds.

Assured that the brunt of the storm was headed toward the other side of Atlanta and would miss us, we slept soundly within our seven-acre homestead. We awakened to utter devastation.

Miraculously, our house was not harmed; however the four acres immediately surrounding us suffered massive damage. Our chickens were all killed, our koi pond crushed. Huge oaks, pines and elms were uprooted. Our two-acre woodland garden, orchard, well, and barn were all destroyed.

For the next six weeks, all we could do was basic clearing of our grand trees, grateful to be spared our home and our lives. Each day we did whatever we could to focus forward, determined to rebuild our beautiful gardens. We told ourselves the goal was to just accomplish SOMETHING!

Then something rather amazing happened at the rear of our property.

One day, I noticed some vines growing out of the one remaining compost bin. The vines grew quickly, then started to bloom. Something must have sprouted from previously discarded vegetable scraps and was now growing vigorously. In a short time, the vine covered the space of two Volkswagens.

My plant identification app told me this was butternut squash and sure enough, flowers quickly turned into fruit. By mid-July, harvesting began.

Please understand that not only did I not plant this, but I never even watered it! I couldn't. Our well was destroyed. Throughout spring and summer, as we continued our reconstruction, this volunteer squash vine continued to grow all on its own.

As of Sept 5, I have now harvested 153 butternut squash!

About 100 squash ago, Henry and I realized that this was



MIRACLE HARVEST: Karen Oliver with some of her harvest from 'God's Vine.' ONLINE IMAGE

simply not normal. I think God decided that these two gardeners needed something to smile about and hope for.

I believe that this is a divine act of mercy from God who decided we had had enough grief and gifted us some joy.

The harvest still continues, new blooms appear every day, and we continue to share our bounty with our community.

Dozens have been distributed through our local food pantry, our favorite pizza restaurant, our pharmacist, and our priest. We continue to share these gifts gladly and are forever grateful for this opportunity to tend what we have named God's vine.

Beautification Project Announced for Blue And Gold Star Memorial Markers Across USA

As America honored its military veterans on Veterans Day, National Garden Clubs, Inc. and Keep America Beautiful® announced a joint initiative to remove litter, to plant flowers, and to beautify Blue Star and Gold Star Memorial Markers across the nation.

Blue Star Memorial Markers, marked by bronze plaques placed in gardens, parks, highways, and cemeteries, were first established by the National Garden Clubs in 1945 to honor all who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Gold Star Memorial Markers were later created to recognize the families who have lost a loved one in service to our nation. Today, more than 4,000 Blue and Gold Star Memorial Markers across the country stand as enduring symbols of sacrifice, pride, and unity.

“We couldn’t be more pleased to be partnering with National Garden Clubs to bring renewed beauty and care to Blue and Gold Star Memorial Markers across the country,” said Jennifer Lawson, president and CEO of Keep America Beautiful. “Together, we’ll transform the places where communities come together to reflect, remember, and give thanks for the sacrifices made by those in uniform and the families who stand beside them.”

“Blue and Gold Star Memorial Markers symbolize great pride in our nation’s veterans and are among the National Garden Clubs’ most treasured traditions,” said Donna Donnelly, president of National Garden Clubs, Inc. “Each one shares a story of courage, service, and patriotism. Our partnership with Keep America Beautiful will help ensure that these Memorial Markers continue to bloom with beauty, hope, and remembrance.”

Local Keep America Beautiful affiliates will



partner with National Garden Clubs members to enhance the areas around Memorial Markers by removing litter and debris, planting flowers and greenery, and restoring these cherished spaces.

In honor of America’s 250th Anniversary Celebration on July 4, 2026, there will be a special emphasis on planting red, white, and blue flowers.

National Garden Clubs and Keep America Beautiful will provide grants to local clubs and affiliates to support plantings and beautification projects. This collaborative effort unites the two organizations’ flagship initiatives—Keep America Beautiful’s Greatest American Cleanup and the National Garden Clubs’ PLANT AMERICA Program—to engage volunteers and communities in joining together to care for the places that honor our nation’s heroes.

“Together, we want every Blue and Gold Star Memorial Marker to shine as a living symbol of service, sacrifice, and the enduring beauty of a grateful nation,” said Lawson and Donnelly in a joint statement.

Grants

We have the cash!

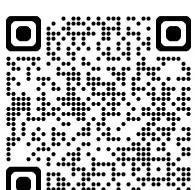
State, regional and national organizations are ready to give you funds. GCG has eliminated most matching grants; we've made it much easier to apply, too. Please go to the details on each website to get the right information.

State Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.

		What it's for	Amount	Date restrictions
	<u>Blue Star Marker Restoration</u>	Restoration only	Up to \$500 per marker	None
https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/projects-programs-blue-gold-star-historical-markers/				
	<u>Community on My Mind Grant</u>	Any worthy civic project	Maximum \$200 annually	Must be started within GCG fiscal year, May 1-April 30. Application deadline April 15
https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/projects-and-programs-community-on-my-mind/				
	<u>Garden Therapy Grant</u>	Projects that encourage hands-on gardening by facility residents and/or patients	Maximum \$750 annually	Must be started within GCG fiscal year, May 1-April 30. Application deadline April 1
https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/projects-and-programs-garden-therapy/				
	<u>Historic Preservation Landscape Grant</u>	Restoration of historic gardens, public landscapes	50/50 matching grant up to \$3,000	Application deadline Aug. 1
https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/historic-landscape-preservation-grant/				

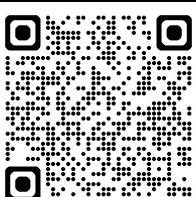
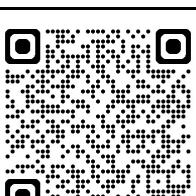
Grants

State Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.

		What it's for	Amount	Date restrictions
	<u>New Club Grant</u>	To assist in expenses for a new garden club	\$100 per fiscal year for first two years	Application deadline April 10
https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/membership-mentoring-new-clubs/				
	<u>Parks and Public Lands Grant</u>	For clubs undertaking projects in public parks and/or public lands	Maximum \$200; project sent to DNR, PHSD for additional funds	Apply within GCG fiscal year, May 1-April 30
https://70w341.a2cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Georgia-State-Parks-Grant-Application-2024-.pdf				
	<u>Flower Show Grant</u>	For clubs who have not held a flower show ever or in the past five years	Up to \$200 in matching funds	Apply four months before show
https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/fss-and-judges-symposium/				

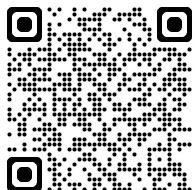
Grants

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

		What it's for	Amount	Date restrictions
	<p>Plant America Grant (Requires registration to access application)</p>	Any project benefitting community: Blue Star, schools, public buildings, etc.	Maximum of \$2,000 for direct expenses	Apply April 1 through Oct. 15
https://www.plantamerica.org/apply				
	<p>Espoma</p>	Any community gardening project	\$250 in Espoma supplies	Apply October through May 31
https://gardenclub.org/espoma-grant				
	<p>Ames Tool Grant</p>	Any garden club project involving planting, maintaining	\$450 in Ames Garden Tools	Apply Jan. 1 through March 1. Project must be completed March 1 through Sept. 30
https://gardenclub.org/ames-tools-grant				
	<p>Natural Disasters</p>	To ameliorate damage from natural disasters in public areas and gardens	Up to \$5,000	Awarded in NGC fiscal year, June 1 through May 31
https://gardenclub.org/natural-disaster-grant				
	<p>Native Plants and Wildflowers Grant</p>	To fund planting projects focusing on natives	Up to \$500	Apply two months before the start of the project
https://gardenclub.org/operation-wildflower				

Grants

Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.

		What it's for	Amount	Date restrictions
	<u>Unified Project</u>	Projects focusing on planting for pollinators in public spaces	\$250 first place, \$159 second place, \$100 third place, available in several categories	Application deadline Jan. 1, 2027

<https://www.deepsouthgardenclubs.com/unified-project-award>

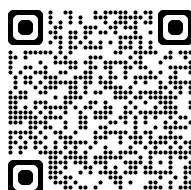
Azalea District Calendar

TUESDAY, FEB. 3, 2026

Azalea District Executive Committee Meeting, GCG HQ, Athens, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEB. 17, 2026

Azalea District Winter Board Meeting, Hartwell, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

 **MON., MARCH 16-SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2026**

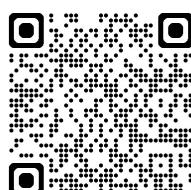
Deep South Convention, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line *Explorer of the Seas*, Port Canaveral, Fla.

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026

Augusta Council of Garden Clubs, Inc. Annual Spring Luncheon Event, Augusta Country Club, 9:30 a.m. 

WED., APRIL 1-THU., APRIL 2, 2026

Garden Club of Georgia Annual Convention, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Peachtree City,

 **MON., MAY 4-WED., MAY 6, 2026**

National Garden Club Convention, St. Louis, Mo.

Garden Calendar

TUESDAY, AUG. 18, 2026

Azalea District Summer Board Meeting, Milledgeville

THURSDAY, OCT. 15, 2026

Azalea District Annual Fall Meeting, Waynesboro.

FRI., NOV. 21, 2025-SAT. JAN. 10, 2026

Winter Wonderlights, State Botanical Garden, Athens

FRIDAY, JAN. 9, 2026

January Friends First Friday, State Botanical Garden of Georgia, 9-10:30 a.m.

SATURDAY, JAN. 10, 2026

Athens Beginners Beekeeper Seminar, State

Botanical Garden of Georgia, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 4, 2026

Stormwater Management for the Sustainable Landscape, State Botanical Garden of Georgia, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEB. 6, 2026

February Friends First Friday, Conservation Is the Key, State Botanical Garden, 9-10:30 a.m.

SATURDAY, FEB. 7, 2026

Winter Tree Identification, State Botanical Garden, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEB. 13, 2026

Native Plant Propagation, State Botanical Garden, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25, 2026

Native Plant Symposium, State Botanical Garden, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2026

Plant Taxonomy: The Identities of Plants, State Botanical Garden,

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2026

Fundamentals of Design Graphics, State Botanical Garden, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

THURSDAYS IN MARCH 5, 2026

Nature Ramblers, State Botanical Garden, 9-10:30 a.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2026

Soils of the Georgia Piedmont and Beyond, State Botanical Garden, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2026

Spring Wildflowers of Upland Deciduous Forests of Georgia, State Botanical Garden, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026

Creating the Ultimate Landscape Design, State Botanical Garden, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026

Irish Ramble on Bellevue, Dublin, Ga., 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2026

Spring Tour of Homes and Art Sale, Washington, Ga.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026

Piedmont Garden Tour, Athens, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.