

Laurel Letters- Spring 2026

Dear Laurel District,

Thank you all for your contributions to our success as district 01 of The Garden Club of Georgia. I am seeing and hearing from many wonderful people and I am thankful to be in on such fun and inspiring endeavors.

Mikel and I hosted six Laurel Forums for club presidents in the Fall using our handy Zoom account. We met morning and evening in September, October and November. The groups were small consisting of 5 to 10 people joining, but still informative and worthwhile from what I have heard. In 2026, we have expanded our invitation to include club presidents and board members. Our six meetings in January, February and March grew to around 15 participants. These meetings have provided the opportunity to answer many questions about membership, president's reports, events and Garden Club of Georgia initiatives. We will meet again in September, October and November of 2026.



Remember that <https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/laurel-district-page/> at <https://gardenclubofgeorgia.org/> is the first place to go for information about many things. Our webpage lists deadlines for Laurel Letters and Garden Gateways along with events and a listing of our clubs by city. **If you are not receiving emails from me or GCG, you can press the Sign up to be on Our Mailing List for Laurel District News button. You may have been removed for some reason.** My email address is on our webpage. Everything goes to me to be funneled out.

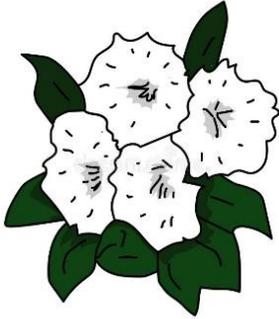
Sincerely, *Merrell Holden*

Condolence Procedure

Laurel District asks that you let us know at

laureldistrictdirector@gardenclubofgeorgia.org

if a garden club member has passed so we may reach out to the family



with a card and honor them at our memorial service. We would like to know the name, garden club with city, date of the passing, garden club, district or state offices held by this person and the mailing address of the family.

FROM MIKEL VANN, CO-DIRECTOR:

I have been talking with Quill Duncan, Garden Club of Georgia VP of Membership. Our discussions are mainly about Subscribing Memberships and Grand Gardener Clubs. Legacy Leaders is a new way to honor active members who are ninety years or older. This program will be rolling out in the next few months.

I have been joining Merrell for Laurel Forums on Zoom. These meetings have been very informative for the attendees.

Quill Duncan, Arianne Knowlton, Leanne Penman and I are in conversation about reinstating clubs. These clubs will be processed as a new club and will receive new club numbers.

A new club has been created by the Marietta Council of Garden Clubs. They are called Rooted Together Garden Club and have 17 members. They are also being sponsored by the Marietta Magnolia

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Garden Club. I have met with them three times and they have sent their information to State. They held their first official meeting February 11. Their next meeting is March 18 and the Marietta Magnolia Garden Club is providing refreshments.



- What - Happened

Laurel District Winter Board Meeting 2026



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The Magnolia Garden Club of Cartersville hosted our meeting on Thursday, February 26, at Heritage Baptist Church. The theme was ***Plant Red, White and Blue with Us!*** Board members Merrell Holden, Mikel Vann, Anita Bridges, Claudia Bell, Jean Ray, Cheryl Briscoe, Edna McClellan, Marie Purser, Victoria Chandler, Rene Lanier, Deborah Paul, Judy Patterson, Madeline Chandler, Deanna Slone, Karen Hawkins, Maye Suddeth, Mickey Carlton, Virginia Hunter, Kathryn Coffee, Kathy Cooper and Linda Easterwood, club presidents Sharon Norman, D'Ann Downey, Chris Davis, Mary Hrovatic, Vicki Jones, Caye Hale and Michele Cox and club members Janet Martin, Dee Anne Wyse, Darri Adams and Susan Wilson were in attendance. (ladies, if you need an alibi, here it is!)



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Everyone raved about the food and décor. It was a good day!



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We passed the budget for May 2026- April 2027 and there was discussion about our only source of income, outside of merchandise sales, which is the raffle of baskets at the Laurel District Annual Fall Meeting. We

look forward with great anticipation to see the thoughtful and grand creations donated by our clubs. We are thankful for the contributions of time and money and are concerned about some clubs not being included.

The board voted for the executive board to create new guidelines about raffle baskets and donations to Laurel District.



Board members gave reports and club presidents spoke about what is going on in their worlds. Here are some reports:

Blue Star & Gold Star Markers- Victoria Chander

This Chairman has checked and noted the location and the condition of all the Blue Star Markers in Northeast GA. She will continue checking each marker in the Laurel District and will report on the progress at the Fall District Meeting.

Flower Shows- Judy Patterson

At a meeting a few weeks ago our state president, Diane Hunter, noted that the Garden Club of Georgia is devoting more attention to flower shows as a way to promote interest in exhibiting horticulture and design. She said that there had been several articles in recent publications of "Garden Gateways" which suggests that more and more flower lovers are becoming interested in both attending shows and entering exhibits. If you have never attended a flower show, you are in for a treat! And lucky you! Flower show season is about to begin. While many show dates have not yet been announced, there will likely be one near you in Laurel District.

Last year there were shows in Atlanta, Dallas, Ellijay, Hiawassee, Summerville, Johns Creek, Perry, Marietta and elsewhere. Already on the calendar is the annual Daffodil Show at Saint Phillips Cathedral in Atlanta on 3/13 and 3/14.

If you attend the GCG Convention, April 1-3 in Peachtree City, you'll have the opportunity to attend workshops offered by two outstanding designers/judges, Anna Burns and Lynn Fronk, both of whom are Master Flower Show Judges and active in the Garden Club of Georgia. This is a wonderful opportunity for anyone interested in Floral Design to see designs created by masters. No pre-requisite: just love beautiful flowers! Also, there will be lovely and unique floral designs presented by the districts from throughout the state to be placed in the convention area. What a feast for the eyes!

Of course, flower shows can't go on without judges to award those coveted blue ribbons. Right now, there are fewer than 70 judges statewide and with the number of shows increasing the need for new judges is growing. If you are interested in becoming a flower show judge, there are several flower show schools upcoming. The first will be in Ft. Payne, AL beginning March 23rd through the 26th. Though out of state, this location is convenient for those living in northwest Laurel District. Next will be a flower show school in Macon (Camellia District) scheduled April 13th-16th. A third flower show school will begin on August

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26th through the 29th at Bellmere in Johns Creek (Dogwood District). Here's hoping you are interested in learning more about flower shows and flower show schools.

Four and Five Star Membership- Madeline Chandler

The 4 Star Club encourages garden club members to complete all 4 National Garden Club Schools: Flower Show Judges School, gardening, environmental and landscape design.

For 5 Star status one must acquire master status in the 4 schools.

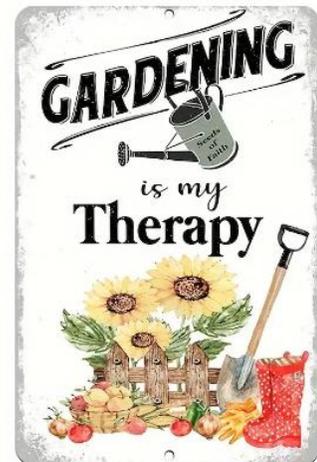
There are a total of 174 people who are 4&5 Star members.
Garden clubs in GA have 14 4&5 Star members.

The 4&5 Star membership program with NGC is not only "American" (USA). It encompasses all the Americas- North, Central and South America.

Garden Therapy- Joyce Laben

My garden club did a garden therapy project at Manor Lake Assisted Living Facility in Buford Georgia. The project was awarded the first place for garden therapy. Many thanks go to Ileana McCaigue for her leadership and dedication to this project. I like to share our award application that explains the project. I hope my sharing will inspire other garden clubs to implement garden therapy projects.

Keep Smiling, Joyce



Manor Lake Assisted Living Facility
Garden Therapy Project

STONEHEDGE GARDEN CLUB



2. SUMMARY & OBJECTIVES:

Our club member, Ileana McCaigue, was the Garden Therapy Project Coordinator at the Manor Lake Assisted Living Facility in Buford, Georgia. While serving as a Eucharistic Minister for several residents, they expressed a love of gardening without the ability to garden at their new home. Ileana then noticed that the three, standing height, raised planting beds in the back courtyard of the facility were empty. After approval by the facility director, Ileana did the budget, proposal, and plan for the beds, as well as the initial contact and follow up communication/coordination with the facility and activity director. She then presented a proposal for this to be a garden therapy project for STONEHEDGE GARDEN CLUB to support. The following were the objectives of the project: 1) Engage the residents in planting and maintaining flowers in the beds, and 2) Per resident request, fulfill the need to add flavor to the food being served by growing some herbs in one or more of these beds.

Ileana surveyed the residents to determine their interest in what plants they would like and how they could help. In page two of this submission the results of the survey can be found. The first responsibility of the residents was to prepare the beds by digging out the top 4 inches to make room for richer planting soil. The activity director at the facility directed and assisted in this activity. The garden club then added rich, top, soil and fertilizer to the beds. The residents were then involved in planting the flowers and vegetables. From there forward, they were responsible for daily watering, and

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weeding the beds under the direction of the activity director. [Please note: Photos with residents' faces were not included to respect confidentiality.]

3. INVOLVEMENT OF CLUB MEMBERS & OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

The club member who led the project was Ileana McCaigue. She worked directly with the facility on all aspects of the project. On April 5, 2023, eight club members assisted the seven residents in planting the boxes. Each resident had a club member working alongside them. Margaret Siem, club member and plant buyer, donated a plaque for placement on the first bed after the Spring planting. The Fall planting on October 7, 2023, also involved club members assisting the residents.

4. PROJECT EXPENSES & MEANS OF FUNDING:

According to the results of the survey, a budget was prepared and presented to the Stonehedge Garden Club for funding at the March meeting. The budget is included on page two. The club approved and funded the projected cost of \$560 for the Spring planting. At the October meeting, the club allocated \$250 for a Fall planting and another \$250 for the Spring 2024 planting.

5. CONTINUING INVOLVEMENT & FOLLOW-UP MAINTENANCE:

On a weekly to bi-weekly basis, Ileana checked the beds to note areas in need of weeding and plant growth, as well as to educate the chef, staff and residents on the need to harvest and use the herbs. This Fall the plants were modified with the weeding of dead plants, the addition of 4 Encore azaleas, and the addition of decorative cabbages and varied colors of pansies. The residents and club members worked together to take out spring vegetables and annuals, leaving only rosemary and lavender bushes. The new plants were added to two of the beds where the vegetables once were. The third

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bed was left with all flowers that now included pansies. Upon Ileana’s suggestion, the Activity Director agreed to have the residents make one bed a holiday bed with the residents making, placing and changing decorations inside that bed monthly or as applicable.

INTRODUCTORY 2023 RESIDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Highlighted plants were the ones requested by the ALF residents.

2023 RESULTS SUMMARY																	
Total Number of Residents Surveyed:		11	ASSISTED LIVING	NA	MEMORY CARE												
QUESTIONS:		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">OPTIONS</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">YES</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">NO</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				OPTIONS		YES	NO	9	2	11	-				
OPTIONS																	
YES	NO																
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1. Did you enjoy gardening? Would you like to garden again?																	
2. What do you like to plant?		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">FLOWERS ONLY</th> <th style="width: 33%;">VEGETABLES ONLY</th> <th style="width: 33%;">BOTH</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">-</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				FLOWERS ONLY	VEGETABLES ONLY	BOTH	2	-	9						
FLOWERS ONLY	VEGETABLES ONLY	BOTH															
2	-	9															
3. What part of gardening do you enjoy?		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">Planting</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Watering</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Weeding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Picking Veggies</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Picking Flowers</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Arranging Flowers</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Planting	Watering	Weeding	9	11	7	Picking Veggies	Picking Flowers	Arranging Flowers	11	11	9
Planting	Watering	Weeding															
9	11	7															
Picking Veggies	Picking Flowers	Arranging Flowers															
11	11	9															
4. How would you be most comfortable gardening?		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">STANDING</th> <th style="width: 50%;">SITTING</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3*</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">*1 in power wheelchair; can stand briefly.</p>				STANDING	SITTING	8	3*								
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8	3*																
5. Which plants would you like to see in your garden at Manor Lake?																	
VEGETABLES			FLOWERS														
Tomatoes	Herbs:	Blueberries	Begonias	Daisies	Roses (Knock Out)												
Bush beans	Garlic	Bell Peppers:	Gladiolas	Daffodils	Tulips												
Cantaloupes	Oregano	Red, Green & Yellow	Hydrangeas	Azaleas	Gardenias												
Cucumbers	Rosemary		Geraniums	Zinnias	Marigolds												
Butter Crunch Lettuce			Sunflowers	Blue flowers (Lavender)	Caladiums												
Summer Squash																	
Green Onions/Sweet Onions																	
Report prepared by Ileana McCaigue & Margaret Seim																	
ISM/2-25-2023																	

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2023 PROPOSED BUDGET Highlighted plants were those that were planted.

BUDGETED ITEMS		PROJECTED COSTS
Soil testing (Dirt sample collected 2-27-2023)		\$ 15.00
ProMix garden soil for raised beds (\$17.50/2.8 cu liter bag x 6 bags)		115.00
Mulch for raised beds & pots (\$8 x 6 bags)		55.00
Fertilizer; tomato cages (6)		60.00
Labels to identify plants in raised beds and along ground level beds		15.00
Plants for items listed below that are selected:		300.00
PROJECTED TOTAL:		\$560.00
VEGETABLES		FLOWERS
Tomatoes (Bush, Roma & Cherry) Bush beans Cantaloupes Cucumbers Carrots	Herbs: Garlic Oregano Rosemary Celery Basil Thyme Lavender	Blueberries Bell Peppers: Red & Green Spearment Butter Crunch Lettuce
		Sun Begonias Gladiolas Hydrangeas Geraniums Sunflowers Day Lillies
		Daisies Daffodils Azaleas Zinnias Blue Iris Lavender Violet Salvia
		Roses (Knock Out) Tulips Gardenias Marigolds Caladiums

Report was prepared 3/05/2023 by Ileana McCaigue.



Garden Club of Georgia- Laurel District 2028 Centennial Committee- Cheryl Briscoe

As you know, The Garden Club of Georgia has our 100th year anniversary coming up in 2028! As the Laurel District representative, I attend all the celebration planning meetings.

Those of you who have already joined the Century Club, received a beautiful commemorative pin. For those who want to join, the cost is a \$100 donation. It's not too late to join in. The money will pay for exhibits around the state as well as a birthday party.



Laurel District Board discussed Laurel's project to celebrate 100 years with Garden Club of Georgia. We voted for our clubs to plant 100 Laurel plants across our district. We have 54 clubs so that's about 2 per club to purchase and planted wherever they choose. We would like pictures to show our work! We hope you and your clubs will be excited to add Laurels to our district!

Who is on our board?



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First Name	Last Name	Board Position
Merrell	Holden	Director
Mikel	Vann	Co-Director
Anita	Bridges	Recording Secretary
Claudia	Bell	Treasurer
Jean	Ray	Corresponding Secretary
Cheryl	Briscoe	Parliamentarian and Advisor
Caroline	Alford	Advisor
Victoria	Chandler	Advisor
Edna	McClellan	Advisor
Marie	Purser	Advisor
Victoria	Chandler	Blue Star and Gold Star Markers Chairperson
Rene	Lanier	Chaplain
Deborah	Paul	Cherokee Garden Library Chairperson
Inday	Bauer	Community Wildlife Project Chairperson
Judy	Patterson	Flower Show Coordinator
Madeline	Chandler	Four and Five Star Members Chairperson
Joyce	Laben	Garden Therapy Chairperson
Deanna	Slone	GCG 2027 Convention Chairperson
Karen	Hawkins	GCG 2027 Convention Co-Chairperson
Jill	Denlea	GCG 2027 Convention Co-Chairperson
Elaine	Williams	GCG 2027 Convention Co-Chairperson
Cheryl	Briscoe	GCG State Botanical Gardens District Rep
Maye	Suddeth	Grants Chairperson
Cheryl	Briscoe	Historic Landscape Preservation
Mickey	Carlton	Legislation Chairperson
Caroline	Alford	Marshall Forest Land Trust Chairperson
Lynn	Fronk	Merchandise Chairperson
Joyce	Crider	Merchandise Co-Chairperson
Virginia	Hunter	Pull-A-Tab for Ronald McDonald Chairperson
		Scholarships Chairperson
		Social Media Chairperson
Kathy	Donahue	Youth Contest Coordinator for Poetry & Posters
		Youth Programs Chairperson
Jean	Ray	Garden Council of Cherokee County President
Kathryn	Coffee	Marietta Council of Garden Clubs, Inc. President
Kathy	Cooper	Rome Federated Garden Clubs Co-President
Linda	Easterwood	Rome Federated Garden Clubs Co-President

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We have open board positions.

Please let me know at laureldistrictdirector@gardenclubofgeorgia.org if you know someone interested in these initiatives.

Scholarships Chairperson

Promotes and recognizes donations to The Garden Club of Georgia scholarships.

Social Media Chairperson

This chairman serves as photographer and promoter of Laurel District using social media outlets in conjunction with GCG.

Youth Programs Chairperson

Facilitates GCG youth programs and awards in the district.



“Raise the Roof, Shingle by Shingle” Fundraisers

Fair Oaks, home of the Marietta Educational Garden Center, needs a new roof at an estimated cost of \$30,000 (\$7 per shingle)! The Board of Trustees kicked off a “Raise the Roof, Shingle by Shingle” campaign asking garden clubs, neighbors, and community friends to donate. The Fair Oaks Board of Trustees enlisted the help of The

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Commons Garden Club and friends to host a fundraiser on Valentine's Day. Guests donated \$40 each to grab a seat at a table to play the latest craze: MahJongg! They were served delicious brunch bites to fortify them to compete. Door prizes and silent auction items (all donated) included garden and MahJongg related items. Just under \$2,000 in



proceeds went to the "Raise the Roof" fund! What a fun day spent together with a great outcome.

Breaking news! Another "Raise the Roof" fundraiser is in the planned for Wednesday March 25th from 1:00pm to 4:00 at Fair Oaks. Signup is in progress now on the Marietta Educational Garden Center website:

www.mariettagardencenter.com

SPRING MAHJONGG *Mingle*

Our Raise the Roof Fundraiser continues with a
Spring MahJongg Mingle at Fair Oaks

Play MahJongg, Enjoy Light Snacks &
a Silent Auction



Wednesday,
March 25th



1:00pm -
4:00pm

\$40 per player | Register online at
www.mariettagardencenter.com or use the QR code



All proceeds go to “Raise the Roof, Shingle
by Shingle”, \$7 per shingle



Celebrate Spring 2026

A Garden Symposium

Expert Speakers • Demonstrations • Raffles
Door Prizes • Garden Market • Vendors

ALL TICKETS SOLD IN ADVANCE

March 26, 2026 • 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Rabun County Civic Center • 201 W. Savannah Street • Clayton, Ga.

Speakers

Victoria Carver
Firmly Rooted
Don't Dilly Dahlia

Augustus Jenkins Farmer
Author & Horticulturist
*Debunking Myths of
Modern Gardening*

Dr. Brodie Pennisi
UGA Professor
*Plant & Insect
Conservation*

Alvin Moore
Floral Designer
*Celebrate Spring
With Flowers*

FOR TICKETS

Contact Nancy at 706-982-1856
or visit us on Facebook
Mountain Ivy Garden Club

*All proceeds go to MIGC's Scholarship
Fund providing scholarships for
Rabun County High School Students*



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Irish Ramble on Bellevue Tickets are \$50.00

Saturday, March 28, 2026 at 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM EDT

[314 Academy Avenue, Dublin, GA 31021](#)

Join us for the Irish Ramble on Bellevue, a tour of historic homes, churches, and more in Dublin, Georgia. Organized by Erin Garden Club on behalf of the Camellia District of The Garden Club of Georgia, the tour is a fundraiser for The Garden Club of Georgia's Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Fund. Ticket also include \$10 in Chamber Bucks (if purchased by 3/10/26) 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.

Itinerary:

9:00 am - Pick up ticket packet at Theatre Dublin

9:30 am - Welcome and brief history by Joshua Kight, Mayor for the City of Dublin

10:00 am - Tour of homes begins

~Tour, enjoy lunch, and shop in Downtown Dublin

3:00 pm - Tour of homes concludes

~Tour sites: The Beckham House, The Birch House, The Brantley-Crocket House, Christ Episcopal Church, The Dublin Carnegie, First Baptist Church, The Lovett House, Old Dublin City Cemetery, The Page House, and Theatre Dublin.

Tickets may also be purchased via mail. Checks should be made payable to Camellia District with memo "GCG HLP Fundraiser" and mailed to: Brenda Wilson, 7033 Duffey Drive, Macon, GA 31216. Please include your telephone number and email address with your check.

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.

This event is a fundraiser for The Garden Club of Georgia's Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Fund. Ticket purchases are nonrefundable. The Camellia District of The Garden Club of Georgia is a 501(c)(3) organization.



Stonehedge Garden Club
Presents

Blossoms of Liberty

Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary

AMERICA
250

An NGC Small Standard Flower Show

— ★ ★ ★ —

Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center
2020 Clean Water Drive
Buford, GA 30519

April 16-18, 2026

Thursday, Apr. 16, 1 - 4 p.m. ★ Friday, Apr. 17, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., 5 - 9 p.m. ★ Saturday, Apr. 18, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

★ **FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** ★

9th Annual **GARDEN EXTRAVAGANZA**

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026

8AM - 3PM

**White County Agri-Science Ctr.
Hwy 129 North
at Claude Sims Rd
Cleveland, GA**

**FEATURING NURSERY
& GARDEN VENDORS!**

Garden Tools

Garden Art

Annuals • Perennials

Herbs • Trees • Shrubs

Vegetable Plants & more!



FREE ADMISSION • RAFFLE • FOOD AVAILABLE

**ALL PROCEEDS GO BACK
TO OUR COMMUNITIES.**



**SOQUE GARDEN CLUB
FACEBOOK PAGE**



Plant & Garden **SALE**

Saturday, May 16, 2026
8:30 am to 12:30 pm
Lions Club Pavilion
Rain or Shine

Huge Selection of Perennials
Shrubs • Herbs
Drought Tolerant Plants
Container Gardens
From some of the best gardens
in Gilmer County

Plus Great Raffle Items!



The Garden Club of Ellijay

Lions Club Pavilion
1729 S. Main Street
(Hwy. 5 south of town)
Ellijay, GA

The Magnolia Garden Club — Cartersville
2026 Pond and Garden Tour

Saturday, May 16, 9 AM - 4 PM

TICKET INFORMATION

Pre-Sale \$15 available at these

Cartersville locations:

- Sam Franklin's Furniture
- Periwinkle

Eventbrite Online Ticket Sales:

*2026 Pond and Garden
Tour of Cartersville GA*

Day of Event \$20

*available at host sites
on the tour.*

TOUR INFORMATION

Facebook:

*Pond and Garden
Tour of Cartersville GA*

Email:

MagnoliaGardenClub@ProtonMail.com

Call:

Vicki 770-547-3228

**Beautiful and private ponds and
gardens will be open for tours,
rain or shine.**

**Plein air artists and musicians
will be on site at most gardens.**

Proceeds fund grants and youth education in
Bartow County and other local service projects.

The Magnolia Garden Club accepts donations as
a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization.



*Everyone
Loves a
Garden*

Daylily Garden Tour

National Daylily Display Garden is open 2nd and 3rd weeks of June .

Garden is at the home of Steven and Serena Verner, Canton, GA. You are welcome to come by and tour the garden. Serena is president of Trayletaah Garden Club.

Email laureldistrictdirector@gardenclubofgeorgia.org if you would like Serena's address and contact information.



Cobb County Daylily Society Flower Show is on Saturday, June 6th, at 1:00PM.

The show is at First United Methodist Church in Marietta. Daylily plants will be for sale all day until they run out.

It is open to the public.



As promised, the Laurel District Executive Board has a new directive for **Raffle Baskets** donated by clubs at the Annual Fall Meeting.

Most people agree that the display of baskets and raffle drawing are among the most fun and exciting parts of the meeting!

The raffle is also the bread and butter for every Garden Club of Georgia district as it funds operations throughout the year. We are encouraging all our clubs to participate in the joy of supporting Laurel District through club creativity and collaboration.



Please begin planning your club's raffle basket. Our Annual Fall meeting is Tuesday, October 6, and we look forward to the show!

If it is not possible for your club to enter a basket, we ask for a donation to Laurel District of \$50 for small clubs (1-20 members), \$100 for medium clubs (21-50 members) and \$150 for large clubs (51+ members).

Club News



Conservation and Care of the Environment

Ball Ground Garden Club was busy in 2025 striving to be good stewards, caring for and conserving our environment.



Members of the club have participated in city wide events to clean up and help maintain our community. In October of 2025, the club was invited by the city to work with a local Boy Scout Troop to clean up

debris and litter from Ball Ground Creek and the roadside. The roadside clean-up started at the church where we hold our meeting and extended part way going into our town. We have also worked with Keep Cherokee Clean in the past.

Repurposed burlap and other repurposed materials were used to create the club's entry in the Scarecrow Contest sponsored by the City of Ball Ground.



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We held a Halloween Festival in the Garden for the community and surrounding area in October. The pumpkins used for the event were



donated to a rescue farm to use as food for the animals, the pine straw was reused for mulch in the garden and the straw was donated to a family with horses and used for the horses' beds.

Our club will continue to strive to be good stewards for the environment by recycling our plastic, glass and paper products used for refreshments/brunch at our monthly meetings.

Joyce Ward Johnson- Anetsa-Ga-Da Garden Club- Ball Ground

Anetsa-Ga-Da In the Community

Officer Gonzales and Lieutenant Young (respectively) of the Ball Ground Police Department accept the Ball Ground (Anetsa-Ga-Da) Garden Club's donation of hats, coats and scarves for the Ball Ground "Winter Coat Drive" from our own Mary Hrovatic.

Thank you to ALL who participated.!



Our club objective at Ball Ground (Anetsa-Ga-Da) Garden Club contains the phrase "aiding in the protection of forests, wildflowers, birds, and our natural environment." As the current holder of the office of president, I try to point out at all meetings, the ways we can accomplish this goal every chance we get. Our members are very willing to take this task to heart and we also look to the GCG and NGC for creative ways to help.

2025, we agreed to separate any hospitality refuse into recyclable and trash. We have also occasionally used compostable items for serving

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and tableware to lighten the impact of our trash. The cost for compostable serving dishes is relatively close to other disposable items.

We used many pumpkins to decorated our botanical garden for our Halloween event. Considering that about 30-40% of American food supply (roughly 60 million tons) ends up in landfills we chose to donate all of our pumpkins to a farm animal rescue. This was satisfying in so many ways! We also used a couple dozen bales of pine straw and wheat straw in the decorations. We reused the pine straw right in our garden as mulch and donated the wheat straw to a family who has three horses to be used for bedding.

We collect coats hats and gloves, whether new or gently worn and donate them to a county agency that cares for foster children and the adult clothing articles are going to a senior center. In the US 11 million tons of textiles, (mostly clothing), ends up in landfills instead of being repurposed. We joined forces with our local Chief of Police to deliver the collected items.

Earlier in the Fall several members were invited to work with our local Boy Scouts to clean up litter in our community. This is one of a few clean ups we help with in the county.

We decorate a float for the local Christmas Parade which is a Toys for Tots event. This year we repurposed flower pots into Christmas Bells and instead of using a live tree we used a donated artificial tree. We reused cardboard boxes wrapped up like gifts under our tree. We actually put together a nice float using all second-hand materials. In our Garden decorations we used timers to spare energy on our lighted areas.

Our goal is to find as many ways as we can to teach our members as well as our community that there are many ways to conserve beyond water bottles and usual household recyclables.

With Gratitude- Mary Hrovatic- Anetsa-Ga Da Garden Club- Ball Ground

A Month Focused on the Heart



Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women, yet many remain unaware of their personal risk. Prevention starts with education and everyday choices—maintaining a balanced diet such as the Mediterranean style of eating, staying physically active, managing blood pressure and cholesterol, avoiding smoking, prioritizing quality sleep, and reducing stress.

Women often experience heart disease differently than men. In addition to chest discomfort, symptoms may include nausea, jaw or neck pain, upper back discomfort, shortness of breath, or unexplained fatigue. Unique risk factors such as pregnancy-related complications (including preeclampsia and gestational diabetes) and menopause can also increase future cardiovascular risk. Common conditions like high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, and high cholesterol are often silent but serious contributors, making regular health screenings essential.

<https://www.goredforwomen.org/en/about-heart-disease-in-women/facts>

Heart-Healthy Reminders

- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.



- Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate activity each week.
- Monitor blood pressure and cholesterol regularly.
- Prioritize 7–9 hours of quality sleep.
- Discuss personal, family and pregnancy history with a healthcare provider.

Our February Projects

Our projects this month were immersed in the condition of the heart—whether young, old, or somewhere in between.

On February 2, we kicked off the month with our Winnwood project, where we mentor a garden club at an assisted living community. Inspired by meaningful Bible verses, participants enjoyed a hands-on activity creating heartfelt keepsakes using dried flowers and colorful accents, adorning cards shaped like hearts.

Marietta Daisies member, Jodi Schneider led the gathering, sharing reflections on the heart before guiding the craft demonstration.

Philippians 4:7, John 14:27, & Proverbs 4:23

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On February 3, our project at Marietta Middle School, led by Marietta Daisies member Deborah Hill, brought a joyful culinary experience. Participants assembled pizzas using heart-shaped dough and matching



pepperoni, followed by decorating cake pops with icing and festive sprinkles.

Marietta Daisies members provided demonstrations and hands-on assistance, with special care given to participants with additional needs.



Our official Marietta Daisies Club meeting on February 16 featured a Heart Health presentation led by Jodi



Schneider, beautifully weaving together the month's focus on caring for the heart—physically, emotionally, and through the strength of community. The

meeting also included a meaningful spotlight from two Daisies members who courageously shared their

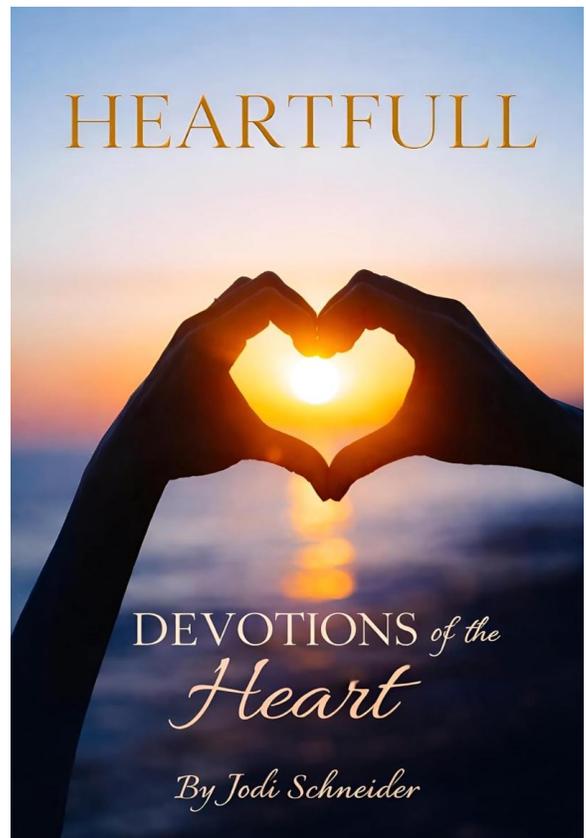
personal heart attack experiences, offering insight, encouragement, and hope.

Celebrating a Book Release 💕💕

We are also proud to celebrate Marietta Daisies member Jodi Schneider, a published author, who released her inspirational book this February.

Heartfull: Devotions of the Heart is a deeply reflective Christian devotional that invites readers to explore the spiritual and emotional landscape of the heart. Through Scripture-based insights and personal, real-life stories, Jodi gently guides readers toward understanding how God guards, heals, and renews the heart through every season of life—joy, loss, waiting, and restoration.

Written with warmth and honesty, this book speaks to those who have experienced heartbreak, spiritual fatigue, or a longing for deeper connection with God. Each devotion encourages thoughtful reflection, prayer, and personal growth, reminding readers that God meets us exactly where we are and lovingly leads us toward peace, wholeness, and trust in Him.



Perfect for personal devotion time, women’s Bible studies, or small groups, **Heartfull: Devotions of the Heart** offers encouragement, healing, and timeless biblical wisdom for anyone seeking a more wholehearted, Christ-centered life.

Available on Amazon: <https://a.co/d/09WXu8Gu>

Katryn Taylor- Marietta Daisies

Unsung Hero: Linda Fenner

For 21 years, the Garden Club of Ellijay has been lucky enough to have Linda Fenner as a member. Her bright smile, positive attitude, and welcoming demeanor



invariably lift the spirits of all around her.

Linda encourages everyone to feel like a hero.

Over the years, she has proven to be an outstanding mentor to new members as she quietly guides them into becoming productive club members. If there is a job to be done,

Linda is there. She shies away from the spotlight and prefers to be a team member rather than an official committee chairperson;

but, that does not mean she shuns any

committee that needs her. She just shows up!

In recent years she has served as committee chairperson for our Adopt-a-Road project, leading our Arbor Day Celebration with tree planting, has had a vital background role at both our annual plant sale and flower show, and is always part of our Beautification Committee which has three local planted projects. Linda even brings the club a very special bonus: her husband, Bob. Bob showed up for years at our annual plant sale, ready to quietly step in and lend his help as the one and only non-member there. When either Linda or Bob sees a need, they just take on the task with terrific work ethics. The Garden Club of Ellijay is a better club because of Linda's grace and beautiful spirit and we treasure her as a very special member and friend.

Joanne Waddey- Garden Club of Ellijay

Christmas Luncheon at Chattahoochee Country Club

Fleur de Lis Garden Club in Gainesville had a Christmas luncheon at Chattahoochee Country Club on December 3. We collected stuffed animals to give to firefighters for children facing trauma and tragedy. God bless our firefighters!

Patricia Amidei- Fleur de Lis Garden Club- Gainesville



Exciting news from Gainesville!

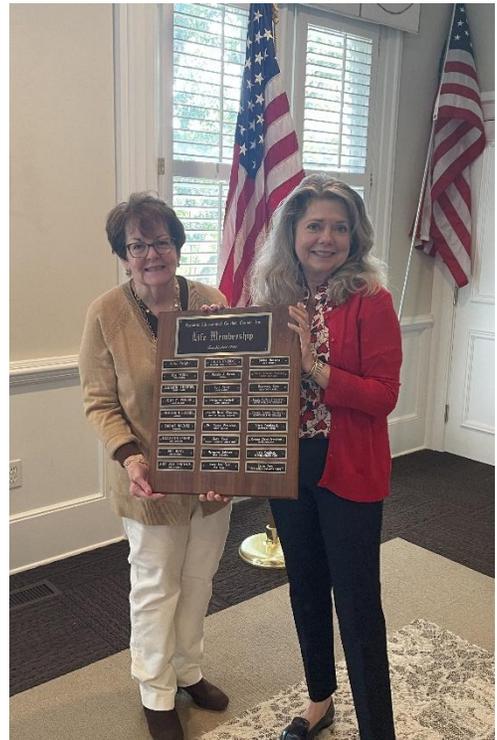
The Fleur de Lis Garden Club is happy to announce the merging of their group with the Crabapple Garden Club also of Gainesville. Fleur de Lis welcomed new members Shantha McDonald, Leslie Chapman, Nancy Draffin, Donna Gray, Gail Greene, Becky Hollingsworth, Gaylan Nix and Stephanie Presley. We look forward to working, playing and sharing together!

Patsy and Sandy- Fleur de Lis Garden Club- Gainesville

Marietta Council Life Members

It is with immense pleasure that I wish to share some significant news regarding two esteemed members of the Honeysuckle Garden Club, Angela Coffey and Margaret Schmidt. We are delighted to announce that both Angela and Margaret have been formally recognized and inducted as Marietta Council Life Members.

This prestigious acknowledgment comes in profound gratitude for their truly exceptional and unwavering dedication to our club. Each of these remarkable ladies has committed an extraordinary twelve years of service, demonstrating steadfast commitment and tireless effort. Margaret Schmidt diligently served as our Club Secretary for twelve consecutive years, meticulously managing our records and ensuring the seamless flow of our administrative duties. Simultaneously, Angela Coffey expertly handled the responsibilities of Treasurer for twelve years, overseeing our financial health with meticulous care and strategic foresight.



Their combined leadership and relentless contributions have been absolutely pivotal in cultivating a vibrant, engaged, and well-structured organization. Angela and Margaret were not merely fulfilling roles; they were instrumental in guiding our club's direction, fostering its growth, and maintaining its positive trajectory throughout their tenure. Their legacy of service has undoubtedly enriched the fabric of the Honeysuckle Garden Club.

We are incredibly proud to celebrate their achievements and are deeply thankful for their exemplary commitment.

Kathy Kelly- Honeysuckle Garden Club- Marietta

Laurel Garden Club's Special Project

The Laurel Garden Club of Canton has worked in conjunction with the Cherokee County Family Violence Center for the last 3 years to complete a special project in December, using funds donated by the chapter's members in lieu of exchanging gifts. This year's project was to



purchase all supplies and put together birthday cake kits for children who are served by the CFVC program (either in the crisis center or in the supported apartments that may provide shelter). We purchased 9x13 aluminum pans, various kinds of soda (used in the cakes instead of eggs and oil), 3 flavors of cake mixes, 7

different kinds of frosting, candles, matches, and plastic knives for cutting. We also attached labels to the assembled kits wishing the young recipients a very special day. Our total contribution was 42 cake kits, with 6 labeled specifically as gluten-free.



Jan Komara- Laurel Garden Club- Canton

Unsung Hero- Cindy Smith

Cindy Smith is one of the most active members of our club. Most would not immediately see how much she gives because she is quiet, unassuming and works behind the scenes. Cindy spends an inordinate amount of time researching and composing our monthly newsletter. This newsletter contains an article of interest to gardeners based on the month and news from the club as well as the district. Monthly garden tips from the Georgia Gardner/University of Georgia are also included along with any other information that might interest members.

Cindy coordinates the preparation of special gift bags for Rebecca Blaylock Child Development Center for Easter and Christmas each year as well as other special treats for holidays during the year. Gift bags are hand decorated with original designs appropriate for the children and the items in the bags go along with the decoration theme. Along with the bags, Cindy chooses educational books and activities as well as teacher resources to support the theme of the bags. For example, one year every gift bag focused on pollinators. Another year, the focus was on a specific flower associated with holidays.

Cindy makes an original wreath to donate to Cancer Navigators for their Christmas holiday wreath sale each year.

Each garden club in Rome has a garden spot that we sponsor and Cindy helps select the plants to purchase for the Mountain View garden in front of the Cancer Center. She also works in the garden.

Currently, Cindy is co-secretary for our club, is listed as a backup for devotionals and serves as a hostess one month of the year at our regular meetings.

This may read like a long list of activities but it is also the quality in which she executes these projects that is exemplary! Cindy's creativity bursts forth like a fresh bloomed flower.



D'Ann Downey- Mountain View Garden Club- Rome

Rome's Day in May



Day in May in Rome celebrating 75 years as a Federation was held on May 6, 2025. A time of celebration of last administration and installation of new officers. History review, awards presented, honors given and a most delicious lunch in beautifully decorated venue. Special guests- Merrell and Diane Hunter- a day to remember!

Anita Bridges- Rome Federation of Garden Clubs

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Welcome to our Newest Garden Club, Rooted Together!



The newest club will be a member of the Marietta Council of Grden Clubs and is being sponsored by the Marietta Magnolias Garden Club. They are meeting at the Marietta Educational Garden Center and have held led their first official meeting in February. As of right now, there are seventeen members!

Mikel Vann- Laurel District Co-Director

Design Contest for the 9th Annual Garden Extravaganza (GE) event!

Starting in 2025 the **Soque Garden Club** sponsored an original floral/garden design contest for art students at **White County High School**. It was so successful that this year we sponsored the **Habersham Central High School** art students to compete. Art teacher, Mrs. Amber Lewis was instrumental in encouraging the students to compete. The student who wins the design is awarded \$250. The art department also is awarded \$250.



This year we were impressed with Christie Walden's detailed design and adorable toad. Christie even took the time to research the native vine that she included in her painting.

We then applied the winning design in most of our media materials to help promote our annual Garden Extravaganza (GE) event in May. Her design is also featured on our GE information flyers, Facebook page, local media, etc...

This competition is just one example of how the **Soque Garden Club** is engaging with our communities. We're hopeful this will help encourage students to have an interest in nature and gardening.

LeeAnn Childress- Soque Garden Club- Cleveland

Buford Holiday Parade



On Saturday, December 6th, the Stonehedge Garden Club participated in the Buford Holiday Parade and Festival. Community groups, bands, local businesses, nonprofits, youth organizations and schools were participants in the parade.



The club's banner was "Come Learn & Play in the Dirt with Us!" The float's theme was "Santa's Secret Garden". Club members



decorated the float in festive decorations, including a



Christmas tree as well as garden tools such as a wheel barrow, garden rake, and watering

can. Members dressed as elves and rode on the float and had a delightful time. Of course, the good Stonehedge elves distributed candy to the parade onlookers.

Joyce Laben- Stonehedge Garden Club- Buford