



Congratulations to these Volunteers Of the Month

May
Sally Wright

June
Stacy Heath

July
Sheri Kennedy

August
Marj Leinbaugh

September
Christine Cotter

October
Lisbet Phillips

November
Laura Deming

December
Jeremy Cohen

And to Gainesville's Volunteers of the Quarter

Becky Bush

Joy Staeck

Diane Korzeniewski

Alice Pugh Named 2024 Volunteer of the Year

By Josh Todd

Each year at our annual Thanks for Giving Luncheon, we announce the Garden's Volunteer of the Year, one special person selected from our pool of 430 volunteers who exemplifies outstanding service to Garden visitors and staff. At this year's March 1 luncheon, the Garden gratefully recognized Alice Pugh as the 2024 Volunteer of the Year.



A smiling face around the Garden since 2006, Alice Pugh doesn't know how to say "no"... which puts her in good company among Garden volunteers and makes her one of my favorite people! A regular and trusted docent and greeter for years, she eagerly helps with events like Garden Lights, Scarecrows, Kinder in the Garden and family programs galore, always with a twinkle in her eye and a smile on her face.

It was in January 2007 when Alice attended the children's tour docent training and immediately became a treasure of a tour guide. Starting that spring during the Big Bugs and Killer Plants Exhibition as she began guiding children's groups around the Garden, our education team knew they had a terrific docent in the program. Alice is beloved within the docent group and has assisted on countless committees, serving as Docent Chair in 2014. As a greeter she sets the standard. She is enthusiastic and welcoming, helpful and caring. She gives tips and advice on what to see, where to go, and what not to miss. We know our guests are in good hands with Alice. A Centennial since 2008 and Volunteer of the Month back in 2012, she has proven to be one of the Garden's most reliable, energetic and beloved volunteers.

Thank you, Alice, for all that you have done at the Garden for nearly 20 years. You have made an impact in the lives of staff, volunteers and visitors. You have taught children about the natural world and made sure they had memorable experiences. You have welcomed visitors with your trademark smile. Congratulations on being named the 2024 Volunteer of the Year to one of our very best, Alice Pugh.



CENTENNIAL CLUB

Centennial Club volunteers are core volunteers who donate at least 100 hours during the year. This year we welcomed 20 new members into this group, the 34th class of Centennials. Each new member receives a Centennial Club name badge, and all Centennials receive library book checkout privileges, 50% discount on a class, and Garden-sponsored parking at the SAGE facility in 2025.

The Garden thanks these dedicated volunteers for their many hours of service!
The Garden would not be the same without you!

Bev Adkins
Karen Ahrens
Yvonne Arrington
George Aycock*
Katherine Bass*
Tom Baydala
Jo Ann Bertrand
Leslie Blythe*
Stan Bokoski
Wanda Bokoski
Denise Bomberger
Ann Bonislawski
Gretta Boshara*
Anne Boyte
Pat Bras
Kathy Bronaugh
Joan Brown
Shawn Burns
Janet Cantrelle
Heather Carraway*
Bret Carruthers
Robyn Carter
Danny Caudell*
Chandra Chopra*
Jerry Jones Clark
Kim Cody
Jeremy Cohen
Stephanie Cooper
Sally Crowe
Johnette Crum
Penny Crump
Cathy Curley
Paul Cushing
Jessica Dark
Vicki Davis*
Laura Deming
Debbie Demoss
Hayes Doane
David Ellwanger*

Tatyana Fershtat
Chris File
Bob Fox
Cyndy Franklin
Rick Fritz
Kathy Gallo
Vince Gallo
Jim Giambrone
Pat Gianelloni
Barrie Gibby
Roberta Grant*
Ashlie Hale*
Elise Halpern
Toni Harrington
Mary Ann Hart
Donnie Hayes
Stacy Heath
Deedi Henson
Elaine Hentschel
Sally Hilton
Linda Hirsch
Bob Holmes
Louise Horney
Susan Hurley
Lin Inlow
Sandra Jones
Gene Kalin
Cindy Kelly
Sheri Kennedy
Steve Kilgo
Kathryn King
Diane Korzeniewski
Jo Kroger
Carolyn Lantelme
Mary Lawton
Marj Leinbaugh
Mark Lewis
Randi Lewis
Mikiko Lockwood

Ning Lu
Claudia Macdonald
Jim Mallory
Amber Malloy
Lynn Malone
Patti Marcus*
Laura Martin
Carrie Mayhan
Theresa McDugald
Ruth Ann McGehee*
Lisa McNaught*
Barbara McRoberts
Angie Meadows
Burrelle S. Meeks
Charlotte Miller
Agnes Miller-Landers
Greg Mills
Jeanne Muhlberger
Tom Mullally
Barb Musolf
Pat Musolf
Debbie Newsholme
Bruce Newton
Allison Nicolle
Olivia Niemczuk
Jack Nolen
Merideth Northcutt
Carolyn Packard
Venetia Perry
Lisbet Phillips
Roy Pinkston
Lynda Pollock
Bonnie Poulin
Ray Porter*
Alice Pugh
Rebecca Rahm
Stan Ray
Kay Roane
Patricia Robinson

Amy Rothenberg
Andrea Rutherford
Bhavani Saravanan
Rachel Scott
Micah Sharer*
Denise Siegel
Susan Slemenda
David Smith
Marge Smith
Alice Soder
Raenell Soller
Holly Sparrow
Heidi Stani-Wolski
Michael Stanley
Joy Staeck*
Judy Steffy
Renee Steinke
Lisa Stewart*
Heather Tangren
Gale Thomas
Trace Ussery
Beth Vaughan
Ken Vesey
Lu Wang
Nancy Waterfill
Jack Weeks
Sue Weinschenker*
Clark Weisner
Paula White
Susan Wood
Sally Wright
Emily Yarosz*
Chuck Young
Marlene Zwier

* Denotes First Year

THE BICENTENNIAL CLUB

In 2011, the Garden began recognizing a special "Bicentennial" group of volunteers for donating over 200 hours during the year. Now in the 14th year of this award, we have 33 members including 9 first-time volunteers. Each of the following receives, in addition to the Centennial Club benefits, a lapel pin in recognition of this achievement.



1st Year

Cathy Curley, Laura Deming, Donnie Hayes, Kathryn King, Ning Lu, Pat Musolf, Lisbet Phillips, Stan Ray, Lu Wang

2nd Year

Jerry Jones Clark, Sheri Kennedy, Kay Roane, Amy Rothenberg

3rd Year

Bev Adkins, Karen Ahrens

4th Year

Paul Cushing, Lin Inlow, Marj Leinbaugh, Susan Wood

5th Year

Elise Halpern, Rebecca Rahm

6th Year

Chris File, Agnes Miller-Landers, Marge Smith

7th Year

Bhavani Saravanan, Marlene Zwier

8th Year

Janet Cantrelle, Kathy Gallo

9th Year

Diane Korzeniewski, Jim Mallory

10th Year

Susan Slemenda

11th Year

Charlotte Miller

13th Year

Johnette Crum

THE ROOTS OF THE GARDEN

THE TOP HOURS AWARD



Chris File

With 316 hours this year, Chris started volunteering in 2012 in the Orchid Center, an easy fit for this Orchid Specialist whose love of these plants came from her mother who regularly won blue ribbons for her orchids and had “the greenest thumb of anyone I’ve ever known,” Chris says. She added the docent role in 2018 and is one of our go-to docents for Orchid Center tours. She has helped on numerous docent committees, and in addition to all this, she has been a tremendous help to the staff in GardenHouse, doing weekly shifts in the accounting office. A Centennial since 2013, a six-time Bicentennial, and a Volunteer of the Month in both 2013 and 2021, Chris this year earns her fourth Roots award, having received the distinction in 2019, 2022 and 2023.

Marj Leinbaugh

With 377 hours, Marj began volunteering in 2009 after attending a Garden Maintenance training and has been digging in the dirt ever since. She helped in a few of the outdoor areas, but quickly found a home in the Children’s Garden, and then added a second day in Storza Woods. More recently, she has also found a place in the Orchid Center, helping the staff with weeding, clean up, pest management, and anything else the staff needs, including helping to set up this year’s Orchid Daze Exhibition. She was a Volunteer of the Month in 2017 and 2024, a 12-time Centennial Club member, and has four years of giving over 200 hours. The staff in the Orchid Center says her enthusiasm and excitement are contagious, and she is a real force of positivity and motivation. This is her first Roots Award.

Charlotte Miller

With 540 hours this year, Charlotte volunteers for nearly every staff person in every department. Beyond her usual roles as a docent, GEM volunteer, Discovery volunteer, class assistant, amphibian and greenhouse volunteer, she also helps with events from the membership and development department, like the Garden of Eden Ball, and signs up for other events, festivals, programs, and one-time opportunities. Starting as a volunteer in 2013, she has made Centennial Club every year and 200+ hours since 2014. She is a two-time Volunteer of the Month, in 2015 and 2018, and was the Garden’s Volunteer of the Year in 2018. Described as invaluable, passionate, engaging and knowledgeable, this year Charlotte is earning her tenth consecutive Roots Award.

Janet Cantrelle

With a total of 605 hours, Janet began volunteering in April 2016 in the Discovery and Garden Maintenance roles and also helped with the Chihuly glass cleaning that summer. She now spends her time in the Woodlands for GEM duty and chatting with visitors on the Tree ID and Amphibian Discovery Stations. She also leads tours as a docent, tends to plants and displays in the Orchid Center and even helps with exhibit installs in that space. She is a regular Centennial, a 200+ hour volunteer since 2017, a Root of the Garden the past seven years, a Volunteer of the Month in both 2017 and 2021, and the Garden’s Volunteer of the Year for 2021. With the top hours in the volunteer program last year, Janet is to be congratulated for earning her eighth Roots Award.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

Volunteers of the Month are nominated by their staff supervisors for showing exceptional devotion and enthusiasm, for being reliable and committed in their volunteer roles, and most of all for their friendship. These are the folks who make the staff look forward to coming to work each day. They are recognized in **Digging In** and have a book placed in the Garden's Library in their name.

2023

Beth Vaughn
Karen Ahrens
Paul Cushing
Anne Kerner
Sandra Jones
Gale D. Thomas
Jeanne Muhlberger
Debbie Newsholme
Alice Pugh
Patricia Robinson
Elaine Hentschel
Stephanie Cooper

2024

Amber Malloy
Hayes Doane
Wanda Bokoski
Tom Baydala
Sally Wright
Stacy Heath
Sheri Kennedy
Marj Leinbaugh
Christine Cotter
Lisbet Phillips
Laura Deming
Jeremy Cohen

The Gainesville Garden recognizes
Volunteers of the Quarter

2023

Jana Flurry
Susan Hurley
Stan Ray
Amy Rothenberg

2024

Mike Hogan
Becky Bush
Joy Staeck
Diane Korzeniewski

SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to Nancy Waterfill, Garden Gift Shop volunteer for 35 years and the Garden's Lifetime Achievement Award recipient in 2019, for her support of the Volunteer Program and the Thanks for Giving luncheon with the Nancy Allen Waterfill Fund.



Meet the Volunteers of the Month

May 2024
Sally Wright



A fixture at the Garden since *forever*, Sally Wright began her volunteer "career" here in 1989 when the Conservatory first opened. Through the years, she's been one of the Garden's most reliable and loved allies, recognized as Volunteer of the Month in 1995 and 2005, as Volunteer of the Year in 1995 and honored with the Garden's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010. These days she continues as a docent, having served in many of the group's leadership roles including Chair in 1995, and with the Garden's special events but finds greeting people in the Conservatory especially rewarding. Paul Blackmore can't say enough good things about Sally: "She is always dedicated and never gets hot and bothered regardless of the heat or humidity!" For her years of dedication, her calm and caring manner and her ever-present smile, the Garden salutes Sally as May's Volunteer of the Month.

June 2024
Stacy Heath



Stacy came to the Garden two years ago after retiring from the restaurant business, ready to get her hands dirty. Since then she's been a "reliable potting machine" says the Garden's David Ruland who describes her as an invaluable volunteer and a friend in the greenhouse. For Stacy, working alongside David and the rest of the staff, whether it's repotting plants or whatever, is why she comes to the greenhouses every Friday. "Everyone is so friendly and they make me feel like part of the team. It's very productive and rewarding!" She has definitely found her niche and, consequently, logged enough hours to be Centennial Club both in her first year, 2023, and in 2024. Grateful for her potting expertise and all that she does as part of the team, the Garden recognizes Stacy as June's Volunteer of the Month.

July 2024
Sheri Kennedy



Retiring after 40 years with BellSouth, Sheri Kennedy knew she needed to find a way to keep busy. Knowing her love of the outdoors, a friend talked Sheri into coming to volunteer at the Botanical Garden, and that was it. That was late fall, 2022. Since then, she's been planting and weeding as a GEM, welcoming visitors as a greeter, manning a variety of Discovery Stations and lending a hand with events, classes and children's activities galore. Described by staff as dependable, enthusiastic and always ready to help, Sheri loves her new life at the Garden and, not surprisingly, has been a Centennial volunteer for these last two years, with over 200 hours last year. The Garden is grateful that Sheri found her new home with us and names her Volunteer of the Month for July.

August 2024
Marj Leinbaugh



Marj Leinbaugh is one of those Garden loyalists who never says no. First starting as a GEM in 2009, Marj has been happily digging in the Garden's dirt ever since, finding her special place first in the Children's Garden where she can be found two mornings a week. It's no surprise that she's logged Centennial Club hours every year since 2010, with 200+ hours in four of those years, and in 2024 earned Roots of the Garden distinction with 377 hours. For the last year, she has joined the Orchid Center volunteer group as well, most often alongside Garden buddy Lisbet, doing everything from weeding and cleanup to pest management, always with a big smile. For her enthusiasm, sense of fun and never-say-no attitude, the Garden tips its hat to Marj Leinbaugh by naming her August Volunteer of the Month.

Meet the Volunteers of the Month

September 2024
Christine Cotter



Christine started as a volunteer at the Garden in 2012 with Garden Lights because "I was too cheap to buy a ticket," she says with a laugh, but she quickly discovered she loved being at the Garden. At the first opportunity

Christine signed up for Discovery training and soon thereafter added the docent hat. A Centennial for five years, with 200+ hours in 2019, these days she focuses her efforts on helping with Garden events, especially the Garden of Eden Ball. "She's a force of nature, working from sun-up to sun-down the week of the Ball," reports staff. For that positive energy and leadership, the Garden salutes Christine as September Volunteer of the Month.

October 2024
Lisbet Phillips



Lisbet Phillips says it is always a good day when she comes to the Garden. Since 2013, she has been a regular twice a week volunteer, counting enough hours to make Centennial Club every year. As a longtime GEM in the Children's Garden's, she partners with August Volunteer of the Month Marj Leinbaugh and together they are a "dream team," says staff. For the last several years, Lisbet has also been a diligent helper (with Marj) in the Orchid Center, taking on the role of Integrated Pest Management volunteer for the Orchid Center. Ask her what that entails! Orchid staff say they couldn't do without her. For her loyalty and dependability, the Garden taps Lisbet as October Volunteer of the Month.

November 2024
Laura Deming



Laura Deming started her Garden volunteer life in August 2022, first training as a docent. A retired elementary school counselor, she soon signed on to help with children's programs too, where she's now counted on as a smiling helper with crafts in the Children's Garden nearly every week, often going the extra mile by helping with the prep work at home. As one who loves cooking, Laura found that volunteering with children's cooking camps and as an OKRA were also right up her alley. A Discovery volunteer too, Laura has logged Centennial hours since joining the volunteer ranks with over 200 hours in 2024. The Garden thanks Laura for her dedication, eagerness and friendship by naming her November Volunteer of the Month.

December 2024
Jeremy Cohen



Longtime Garden members, Jeremy Cohen and his wife have been regular visitors to the Garden for over twenty years, so after retiring from IBM a few years back, he knew exactly where he wanted to spend more time. Starting out as a Discovery volunteer in January 2023, Jeremy has been a friendly, engaging interpreter at a variety of stations, admitting that the Conservatory post is his favorite. He interacts easily with guests young and old, never meets a stranger and has an arsenal of frog jokes at his disposal. This past year he added a new role as an OKRA where he eagerly pitches in to make sure things are done right. For his enthusiasm, friendliness and for being an all-around nice guy, the Garden salutes Jeremy as December Volunteer of the Month.

Meet the Gainesville Volunteers of the Quarter

Second Quarter Becky Bush



Becky Bush began volunteering with the Gainesville Garden in April 2024. Nominated by our Education Coordinator Rebecca Abdou for her willingness to assist with all things in Children's Programming, Becky is always happy to lend a hand with everything from Storytime and Sensory Bin to Fairytale Friday to Garden Magic Camp. Becky also volunteers as a Garden Ambassador and with Special Events. "I love greeting people, taking their pictures and helping them identify the many plants and flowers along the way." Thank you, Becky, for being an outstanding Gainesville Garden ambassador!

Third Quarter Joy Staeck

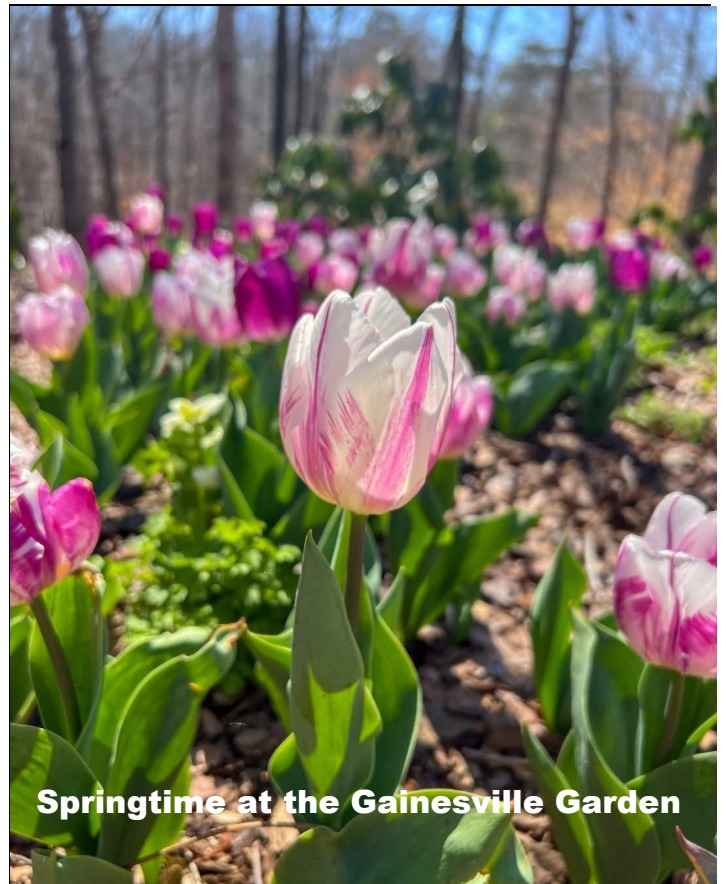


Joy Staeck began volunteering with the Gainesville Garden in February 2024. She was nominated by several staff members for her volunteer work in Conservation, Garden Essential Maintenance, as a Garden Ambassador, and with Special Events. In just the first seven months of service, Joy donated over 100 hours of her time to ABGG. "Gardening is very gratifying and uplifting to me," she explains, "especially here where I have the opportunity to do what I love to do - gardening, learning and giving back to the community." The Gainesville Garden salutes Joy for being such an enthusiastic volunteer!

Fourth Quarter Diane Korzeniewski



Diane has volunteered at ABGG for 20 years, 10 years before the formal opening, contributing over 4000 hours. Through the years, she has filled countless roles: GEM, Garden Ambassador, Docent, Greenhouse Volunteer and Lobby Greeter; has worked special events galore; and even helped out in the Conservation Nursery a few times. She has given generously to our children's library and led Story Time. In immeasurable ways, our Garden is made more beautiful by her contributions. The epitome of a volunteer, she brings her knowledge, expertise, curiosity, energy, sense of humor and love to whatever task is needed. She was our first ever Volunteer of the Quarter and is the perfect choice again as we go into our 10 year celebration. Thank you, Diane, for giving your all!



Springtime at the Gainesville Garden

Docent Corner

What's on the mind of the outgoing and incoming Docent Chairs



Flexibility in Giving Tours

By Heather Tangren, 2024 Docent Co-Chair

The Garden's Drop-In Tours are primarily in the control of the individual docent. Although we are well versed about the past, present and future history of the Garden through our training and monthly Docent Updates, docents also share with guests their knowledge and love of what's growing in the Garden and, let's face it, there are certain months when that becomes challenging due to the Garden's being in transition.

April would be one of those months. Orchid Daze and Atlanta Blooms events close in early April. The winter annuals change over to summer annuals. The summer exhibit is being installed and many pathways are cordoned off and need to be avoided. This is when I ask myself where is the WOW and COLOR that the majority of our visitors request? I have come to realize that this offers the opportunity to promote areas of the Garden that often get missed on regular tours but are also magnificent and show off beautifully. Spending more time in the Rose

Garden, the Rock Garden, the Conservation Garden and the Perennial Garden offers a different tour but has worked well for me in the past and my tour visitors have been delighted.

October would be the other "transition" month with the summer exhibit being dismantled, the summer annuals being changed over to winter annuals and the massive exhibit install for Garden Lights Holiday Nights occurring. Where did my tours take me in October? Of course there were the thousands of pumpkins and hundreds of scarecrows that visitors love and want to see. But this past October I thought it might be nice to promote our Fuqua Conservatory and spend more time pointing out certain plants in the Tropical Rotunda, The Desert House, the Orangerie and the orchid conservatories, so that's what I did. I learn something new each time I go there, and I am certain our visitors do too.

Every year there is more and more interest to share in our Garden and it is our job to help visitors enjoy themselves so much that they want to return again and again, no matter what is in season.



Springtime in the Garden

By Hayes Doane, 2025 Docent Chair

Late winter and early spring are a special, quiet garden time for us here in Georgia. When I wander through the Garden in January and February, one plant I always enjoy spotting is Hellebore, sometimes known as Christmas Rose or Lenten Rose. These lovely, relatively compact members of the Ranunculaceae family bloom when most of our flowering plants are resting up for later in the year, and they boast as much variation in color as our beloved camellias.

We're so fortunate that Hellebore enjoy our mild winters and, once established, can spread to create a lovely ground cover, though judicious thinning will probably be needed at some point. They give us beautiful pops of purple, pink, white, yellow, red and green at a time when our gardens tend to be fairly muted. *Hellebore orientalis*, with its purple-pink flowers, is readily available in garden centers and nurseries and makes a lovely addition to any shady or sun-dappled spot in your garden.

One of my favorite aspects of this plant is the rich mythology surrounding it. It is, you may know, toxic to people and animals and can also cause skin irritation when handled. However it was once considered a "cure" for various maladies during ancient and medieval times and was thought to be a valuable tool in balancing the body's "humours" and relieving "melancholy distress." While that treatment is best left in the past, I certainly feel a little lift of my spirits whenever I encounter this charming plant. If you are interested, there is a fascinating blog post called *Hellebore: the History of a Toxic Medicinal 'Remedy'* published December 6, 2023 and available from *A Place Between the Trees*, a fantastic resource written and maintained by the Whitworth Visitor's Team of Manchester's Whitworth Park.

I hope to see you soon in the Garden!

What's Happening in Gainesville

By Trish Andrews
Gainesville Volunteer Coordinator

The transition from winter to spring is a beautiful time of promise at the Garden. Camellias bloom bravely, magnolia buds swell, and bulbs push through the earth. The year 2025 has begun with cold, rainy weather, interspersed with sunny days, along with the non-glamorous garden chores necessary to prepare for spring.

On any given week at the Garden, the staff and volunteers at the Conservation Nursery are tending to bog plants. The horticulture team and volunteers are weeding, pruning and potting in the greenhouse. Skilled horticulturists are trimming the grasses at the entry. Our devoted GEMs care for containers and ensure the Garden is ready for visitors. Dedicated Garden Ambassadors brave the weather to greet visitors and answer questions, while our faithful Lobby Greeters welcome members and guests, pointing out the magnolia blooms and the fragrant witch hazel near the entrance. Guest Experience staff are ensuring pleasant experiences, and our Education Manager offers learning opportunities for our community, encouraging homeschoolers to explore ecosystems and community gardeners to learn pruning basics. Our Sales and Events Coordinator is enabling diverse special events to run smoothly, and our Docents patiently await spring blooms and the return of school children and other groups. All the while, we watch the garlic growing in the Edible Garden and the bees buzzing about.

As the Garden enters its tenth anniversary year, we have so much to be grateful for: the Smithgall's generous donation that made the Garden possible, the plans and vision that allow it to continue evolving as a place of beauty and conservation, and the dedication of our wonderful volunteers, whose contributions are vital to every aspect of the Garden's operation.

Looking ahead, we're excited about plans for summer and fall exhibits, including our second annual JuneFest with the "Forest Forms: Woodland Creatures" exhibit, as well as the inaugural Lanterns and Luminaries holiday light display starting in November. It's a great time to visit and volunteer at ABGG!

News from the Volunteers at

Atlanta Botanical Garden,
Gainesville

By Diane Korzeniewski



Ten Years Old!!

Time flies when you are having a good time! The Gainesville Garden has grown and matured in the ten years since opening to the public, as have the volunteers! We are a larger and more experienced group now. Our responsibilities have grown to include conservation, garden ambassadors, container maintenance, and "other assigned duties." We are already looking forward to future changes and growth: exhibits, events, concerts, edible garden, lanterns and luminaries, and always the new plants coming out of the greenhouse and trial garden.

One thing remains constant. The staff is always knowledgeable, fun to work with, and I never leave without getting a thank you. I think I speak for many volunteers when I say we are happy to be here and get more out of it than we give.

Welcome, Trish Andrews!



Trish Andrews joined the Gainesville Garden in January as the new Volunteer Coordinator. She combines a background in education with a passion for nature. "I am excited to embrace a role that merges my love for the Garden with my commitment to supporting its incredible volunteers."

Welcome aboard, Trish!

NOTES FROM MARY PAT

INSIGHTS FROM MARY PAT MATHESON
THE ANN AND HAYS MERSHON PRESIDENT & CEO



This last year was incredibly fulfilling and successful for the Garden. As expected, Alice in Wonderland and Mosaiculture, International delivered in a big way with an 18% increase in attendance over 2023. This very special exhibition has a unique draw to bring in people from all walks of life.

Now 2025 is underway and I wanted to share what's ahead with our upcoming exhibitions. The first of the year, as always, was **Orchid Daze**, which just wrapped up its 22nd year! This year we departed from showcasing local artists and instead used a multitude of spheres that were designed to mirror the beauty of the orchids. The team worked hard to find shiny and highly reflective spheres that could be stacked on armatures to create those amorphous shapes draped in colorful orchids. It was a daring exhibition that was bold, colorful and surprising. People seemed to love it!

Atlanta Blooms is always a crowd pleaser and this year has been no different with brilliant and changing displays of tulips, daffodils and other bulbs. It was a challenging year for the bulb growers in Holland due to an enormous amount of rain. Amanda and her team learned to be flexible as many of the bulbs we carefully selected were unavailable due to crop failure. Our colleagues in Holland came through for us with replacement bulbs so the show should be stunning, but it was challenging for our design team. It's becoming so much more commonplace for the effects of climate change to impact our lives at the Garden: this is an example of that. I hope you noticed a new display of species tulips under the crepe myrtle allee, a more permanent bulb display that will bring beauty for years to come. Species tulips are typically long lived and don't have to be treated as annuals. They are small, beautiful and have a special charm that I have always loved.

Alice returns in early May of 2025, and we believe that she will deliver another blockbuster season for us. But, as many of you know, we always have a new twist or surprise up our sleeves. We have the amazing opportunity to be the first Garden to premier Patrick Shearn and Poetic Kinetics' new **Enchanted Trees**. In early May, ten sizeable and colorful sculptural trees will be installed throughout the Garden. Patrick was so enchanted by our Garden when he was here to install his Dream Flora piece in 2022 that he was inspired to make his own trees from metal and dichroic glass and plastic. All of the trees will reflect light off of their colorful leaves sending prisms of colors to reflect off of people, plants and objects around them. Imagine visitors standing in that reflected light with colorful rainbows on their clothes! It will be a delightful exhibition and a perfect pairing with the plant-focused Alice in Wonderland show.

I was fortunate to travel to Colorado Springs in December to see Patrick's **Enchanted Trees** which were standing in the snow under groves of ponderosa pines. It was just magical to see his version of a quaking aspen, flowering dogwood and Japanese maples. They truly were enchanting and when the wind blows, their leaves will flutter or spin like tops.

As always, we are grateful for the time and service each of you provides to the Garden. I love running into you in the Garden and seeing so many of you at our Thanks for Giving Luncheon which has always been one of my favorite events of the year!

Best regards,

Mary Pat

Digging In is published for the volunteers of the Atlanta Botanical Garden.

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