
WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED GARDEN CLUB?

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



<http://gardenclub.uga.edu/membership.html>

MEMBERSHIP

What Is This Thing Called Garden Club?

As nearly 200,000 men and women of all ages and backgrounds across the nation can attest, the rewards of belonging to a garden club go far beyond the pure pleasure of growing things. While joining a local garden club is indeed a great way to “green” your thumb, membership also provides an opportunity to expand your interests and build lifelong friendships while bettering the community and the environment.

You are invited to join the Garden Club of Georgia. The membership is on the increase because individuals are aware of the many benefits. The Garden club of Georgia has room for you and every family member! There is something for everyone

- Landscape Design
- Floral Design
- Community's Environmental Issues
- Horticulture
- Educate the community about specific gardening practices
- Beautification of the local community/park
- Work with youth to ensure the next generation of gardeners

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

BENEFITS

BEAUTIFICATION

Make flower arrangements for homes, churches and civic groups.

Enter flower shows.

Roadside beautification by planting of annuals, perennials and wildflowers.

Beautify parks and vacant lots.

Place permanent monuments such as the Blue Star Memorial to honor US Armed Forces along highways. Veteran facilities and parks.

CONSERVATION

Protect native plants, wildlife and natural beauty.

Conserve natural resources.

Litter control and clean up

Recycling

Clean Water Practices.

Restoration work in watersheds.

EDUCATION

Environmental Studies

Courses stressing understanding the environment; to cherish, protect and conserve the living earth.

Flower show schools and flower show procedure.

Courses which include study of horticulture and floral design.

Gardening Study

Courses to stimulate interest in horticulture and gardening.

Select and study plants

Study soils

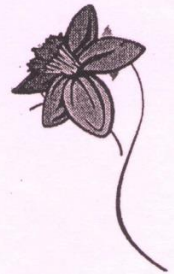
Teach youth gardening, conservation and to protect the environment

Landscape Design

Courses to promote awareness and appreciation of landscape design, natural and built.

Study landscape architecture

Study horticulture.



INTRODUCTION

Did you know it all started in Athens, Georgia in 1891? That's right; the first garden club in American was founded in Athens by the twelve members of the Ladies' Garden Club.



The Ladies' Garden Club is still a member club of the Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. Those twelve pioneering women set a course for beautification, conservation, and education. The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., cordially invites you to join a member garden club of our organization, start a new club in your area, become a [Subscribing Member](#), or become a [Corporate Member](#). Plant Societies in Georgia may also join and become affiliated with GCG.

Benefits of Membership: As a member of a garden club which is affiliated with the Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., you become a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc. This international organization has over 243,000 members.

You will receive our award-winning quarterly publication, *Garden Gateways*. This publication contains news of the state organization and member clubs, announcements for various seminars, and plenty of garden-related information. The greatest benefit of all will be your education! The opportunities for personal growth and knowledge are endless . . . as we have something for everyone.

Come join us today! It will be the first step in a wonderful journey. We have a commitment to excellence in the Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., and we invite you to help us share our dream.

Our Grant and Scholarship programs play an important role in the Garden Club of Georgia's mission of "Beautification, Conservation, Education."

Some of the programs that GCG members focus on are listed below:

Community On My Mind Program

In 2005, the Community On My Mind Program was established with monies provided by the Georgia Power Foundation to help and encourage local garden clubs and councils to implement civic improvement projects which provide public benefit.

Flower Show Grant Program

GCG has established a matching grant program to encourage garden clubs who have never sponsored a flower show (or have not sponsored a flower show within the past five years) to undertake such a project. Please access the application form and specific guidelines in [PDF](#) or [MS Word](#). The Designers Club in Redbud District has published a Flower Show 101 booklet that will walk everyone through each step of producing a quality flower show.

Historic Landscape and Garden Grant

The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. partners with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division, the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service, the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center, and the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDecD) to provide this grant. Funding is provided in the form of 50/50 matching grants at a maximum of \$3,000. Grants are funded for a one-year period.

When you join your local club you are also a member of:

The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.
Deep South Region
National Garden Clubs, Inc.



LAUREL DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

The Laurel District promotes membership through presentations by Suzanne Wheeler, State GCG President, posters on display locally and statewide, and development of a rack card that featured the membership pin. These are just a few of the activities conducted.



Kathryn Litton at the Hiawassee Flower Show standing at with an educational display on attracting pollinators. More photos are available at the Laurel District website.





WEBSITE OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to **Cumming Garden Club**
Winner of the GCG Small Club Website of the Year award for 2014-2015
Small Club (29 or fewer members)



WEBSITE OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to **Spalding Garden Club**
Winner of the GCG Medium Club Website of the Year Award for 2014-2015
They also received 1st place at National.
Medium Club (30-59 members)



WEBSITE OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to **The Landings Garden Club**
Winner of the GCG Large Club Website of the Year award for 2014-2015
Large Club (60-99 members)

These award winning websites are frequently updated. This is
must for new and prospective members to become
knowledgeable about activities.



AZALEA DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP IDEAS



Raised beds make for easier gardening for Senior citizens.



Ginny Allen coordinated Vegetable Planting Day at the Golden Harvest Masters Table. All of the beds are now planted with vegetables for use by the soup kitchen. Many Augusta Council of Garden Clubs members and Master Gardeners helped.

<http://gardenclub.uga.edu/azaleadistrict.html>



OLEANDER DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

1. Distribute professional garden club informational 4x5 cards to realtors or chamber of commerce as an outreach to new residents in the area. Include information about youth programs encouraged by GCG and NGC and take them to the schools to let the teachers know you are interested in starting a program at the school.
2. Invite, Invite, Invite! Print invitational business cards for members to give out to their friends and hold a contest for the member who brought the most guests to the meetings throughout the year. Contact prospective members by phone and visit their house, if possible. Have a Membership team 'welcoming' at the membership table during the entire meeting and program to greet anyone coming through the door. Have members available to talk and invite a "newbie" to sit at their table. (Never want to see a visitor standing by themselves.)
3. Hold an evening, 'open meeting' for the public (in coordination with another local Organization, if possible) to host a program promoting the NGC 2013-2015 theme. (Guests were given seed packets and a seed catalog to promote gardening.)
4. Promote YOUR club in the newspaper! Submit articles detailing the club's beautification projects, community garden, monthly programs, GOM (garden of the month), flower arranging classes, litter pick up program, contributions to other volunteer organizations, holiday fund raisers- tour of homes or "A Red Bow on Every Mailbox", hosting parties at the local nursing homes, sponsoring a booth in Peaches to Beaches Yard Sale or other events, sponsoring the Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest in your elementary school and the Boys & Girls Club, and high school scholarships in the newspaper. Try to have one or two articles each month to 'keep it fresh on the mind' - always ending with an invitation to join or e- mail for more information.
5. Social media and the Web! Create an organization Facebook page and "friend" as many people as you can! As your page grows, others will ask to "be your friend." Create an inexpensive web page, start simple, but keep it updated! Make sure to post the activities your club does... i.e. projects, programs, garden of month, special events....posting before and after the event, including pictures!



Every December, members from each of the six Bulloch County Garden Clubs decorate a tree in the Bulloch County Courthouse and a tree in the Courthouse Annex. The Courthouse tree is traditional and the Annex tree is a patriotic tree.



CAMELLIA DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

Change your by-laws to open up the membership, if your Club has a limited membership. Then offer a prize for the member who brings in the most members for the year.

Encourage members (gracefully) who are no longer able to participate or attend meeting to take Honorary or Inactive Member status. They will still be able to attend when they are able, but would not be required to host or participate in activities they are no longer able to do.

Invite prospective members to all meetings, but sometimes a special event such as the Club's annual Christmas luncheon and/or May luncheon would be a wonderful icebreaker event. Silent auctions or other fund-raiser is also a great time for prospective members to get involved.

Have your club listed with the Chamber of Commerce and local Welcome Wagon.

Have your club's meeting date and time in the newspaper for upcoming events (Tifton Gazette is called "Your Agenda") End with "visitors welcome."

<http://gardenclub.uga.edu/cameliadistrict.html>



Valwood School students involved with the Smokey Bear Woodsy Owl contest enjoyed seeing Smokey Bear visit their school.



Macon Federation hosted a lovely dinner for the GCG Board at their historic headquarters. Pictured are Jan Thiese, Naomi Gerson, Dot Williams, and Federation President Flo Mellard



Sharing friendship and roses at a District Workshop: Connie Ewing, Virginia Pennington, and Sherri McLeod



MAGNOLIA DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

The Azalea Garden Club of Cuthbert will be presenting “A High Tea” in September. There will be a program presented by a renowned flower designer and flower show judge. The event is open to the public and information about garden clubs will be available.

Beautiful View Garden Club in Buena Vista will be doing a program in November on tablescapes with a meal to invite new prospects.

Two public events in Americus have attracted prospective members.

The Sumter County Federation of Garden Clubs holds an annual plant sale with members simply bringing plants from their gardens to sell. It is advertised and well attended. Garden Club members are available to offer advice on growing the various plants. Prospective members are identified by the interest shown. An annual Camellia Flower Show is a very popular event, cosponsored by the Federation and the Americus Men’s Garden Club. People who attend often develop an interest in garden clubs.

Garden Week in Georgia and National Garden Week offer opportunities to spotlight garden clubs by displaying floral designs or other projects which are also publicized. Brochures explaining garden club membership are made available. Village Green GC in Byron, Town and Country GC in Leslie and Dogwood GC in Americus report that they have had the most success in attracting new members simply by members inviting friends and neighbors. Clubs who have good programs and are active in the community have the best chance of attracting new members.



Members of Early Bloomers GC of Americus did a "spring cleaning" of the Sumter Humane Society flower beds: raking, mulching and pruning, to spruce up the entrance and sides of the building. Early Bloomers also purchased a large conifer to plant in the front yard, to be used as a live Christmas tree, with an ornament displayed for every pet housed at the Society that year.



DOGWOOD DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

One very successful membership tool has been to hold meetings at a local nursery. This provides the nursery with exposure and provides the members with opportunities to browse, shop, and gather information on different plants. We encourage the nursery's customers to sit in for all or part of our program. We have a person appointed at each meeting to partner with anyone dropping in to give additional advice about the club and send them home with contact information for future meetings.

An exciting tool is to do a "Make and Take". Advertise with your members to let them know in advance that the meeting is going to include hands on creating! Both members and visitors love to make floral designs, pot e fleur, dish gardens, ornaments, yard art, and flower pounding etc. We always have visitors interested in this type of program. It can be done several times a year to keep interest up.

Something crucial in this day and age is being mindful of working women. We need to be user friendly to accommodate this large group of potential Garden Club Members. One such club meets late afternoon with "tea type refreshments", the reason for this is that they have a substantial number of school teachers in their club. This allows these ladies to participate fully in the Garden Club while continuing with their career. Other clubs have considered evening meetings and Saturday meetings to encourage those that would love to be a Garden Club member but cannot fit it into their busy day.

Field trips are always another way to get visitors to attend with one of your members! People always love to see a beautiful garden, visit a fantastic nursery or pick fresh produce at a local U-Pick farm. This is an easy meeting to invite visitors to just add a sack lunch and it is a unique meeting. Involving your member's families helps promote deeper friendships and encourages those you invite to include their family members as well. Have an evening social with spouses or friends in the spring to wind up the Garden Club year. Another at the Holiday times gives everyone something to look forward to. Focus on projects that could include member's children or grandchildren. This also lends itself to inviting others with children or grandchildren to participate. Once they experience a fun, informative event it is likely they will continue to return!

<http://gardenclub.uga.edu/dogwooddistrict.html>



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Each year, our four wonderful garden clubs in Douglasville produce an award winning flower show in conjunction with the Penny McHenry Festival the first week in June. This is always outstanding!



REDBUD DISTRICT YOUTH MEMBERSHIP IDEAS

Redbud encourages youth by publicizing the Wild and Wonderful Experience.

**The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. Wild and Wonderful Experience
Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center Mansfield, Georgia**

The Forest is calling; why make her wait? As children prepare for a very special date!

The Wild & Wonderful Experience Camp is knocking at their door; But the forest still beckons,
“Please, send some more!

For I have lots to show, to teach and share much. They will never grow bored from daylight to dusk. Come explore my canopy, my boughs and my floor. Oh send me your children; let them learn what’s in store!

And when the day is over, we’ll await the next sun.”

Yes, the Forest is calling for campers to come

Won’t you find one or two; let them join in our fun?

<http://gardenclub.uga.edu/redbuddistrict.html>



At the NGC Environmental Studies Tri-fresher held September 2012 at UGA Griffin, the class learns about an environmentally planned parking lot at Senoia.



Smoke Rise Garden Club members annually wrap shoe boxes with Christmas paper, fill the boxes with toys, and deliver them to the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta/Egleston for distribution to the children.



The Green Thumb Garden Club in Thomaston placed a Blue Star Marker as a tribute to the Armed Forces who have defended our country.



Garden club, an all-volunteer organization, provides opportunities for fellowship, winning awards, and community service.

GEORGIA MEMBERSHIP GENERAL INFORMATION

The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of the State Chairs of our various programs, District Directors, State Officers, and former Presidents. We have seven geographical Districts: Laurel, Azalea, Oleander, Camellia, Magnolia, Dogwood, and Redbud. These seven district groups carry out the state program on a local level throughout Georgia. State Presidents serve two-year terms and provide the leadership necessary to manage such a large all-volunteer service organization.

You are encouraged to contact us and ask for additional information. We are an all-volunteer organization with dedicated and accomplished members working hard for a better quality of life for all Georgians.



State Membership Chair/4th Vice President, GCG

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