



MISSION: BEAUTIFICATION ... CONSERVATION ... EDUCATION

Planting and Nurturing

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Environmental Issue: Mary Lovings, Editor

Environmental Edition: May, August, November, February - Mary Lovings, Editor

Gardening Edition: June, September, December, March - Linda Doiron, Editor

Landscape Design: July, October, January, April - Suzanne Finger, Editor

Yes, late - unintentionally so - little has happened on schedule or as usual for nearly a year. More hurricanes than the letters of our alphabet could handle resulted in the need to go use the Greek letters for naming storms; camellias and bulbs here have bloomed unexpectedly early; and holiday and other celebrations have been approached and celebrated differently. However, Zoom truly has bloomed profusely, and if meetings scheduled do happen, they are likely Zoomed as way to stay in touch that has become part of life. Circumstances have changed lives in many aspects and in unexpected ways. Consequently, the ways garden clubs meet and communicate have evolved, and continue to be adapted to changing circumstances.

This editor has hoped for years that the U.S. Supreme Court would finally bring up and hear the sword of Damocles case, the seemingly endless attempts to define and to clarify withdrawal and release of waters flowing through the Chattahoochee/Flint basins into Florida's Apalachicola River and into the Gulf of Mexico. Much of those waters' release is determined by the Army Corps of Engineers' decisions about opening or closing dam release gates to release or retain water. Rising water levels resulting from global warming are part of the situation. Overfishing and increased oyster harvesting have exceeded available amounts being produced. Cities have reduced water consumption through conservation efforts such as requiring low flow toilets and limiting outdoor watering. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution has announced that **Florida's Supreme Court case against Georgia is scheduled to be heard in February**. No date has yet been set. Meanwhile, legal costs including attorneys, staff salaries, travel, meals, printing, and related expenses have consumed multiple millions of taxpayer dollars that could have been spent more wisely.

Recent months have been challenging, and have changed at least most of our lives in unexpected ways. What we in The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. are about is our Mission: *Beautification ... Conservation ... Education*. Under the PLANTING umbrella and consequently its quarterly newsletters, GCG adds information to supplement and/or update topics covered in three NGC schools. We are encouraged to take courses sanctioned by National Garden Clubs, Inc., namely Environmental School, Gardening School, Landscape Design School. Completion of any of the four course series in each of those areas brings a Consultant title. Continuing such school attendance can provide Master certifications in each area. Refresher courses keep members updated in the four areas.

FROM THE NGC WEBSITE: *Our schools provide members and non-members with a range of educational opportunities with a range of educational opportunities on the art and science of the environment, gardening, landscape design and floral design.*

NEW! Take one of our schools from your home. Many of our Landscape Design, Environment and Gardening schools are offered virtually online. Check each school for dates and to determine if it is virtual or in person. Remember, you may take a course offered by any state. No hotel, driving or travel expense required and wear your PJs if you like!

Pertinent information is also available in the Winter 2021 issue of The National Gardener, a quarterly provided to club presidents and by subscription for NGC for life members and others. [Offered on-line to everyone. Click here and select which version you wish to read: [The National Gardener Online](#) |

National Garden Clubs, Inc.] See page four of the current issue for Gay Austin's President's Message. It is hoped that the issues and information therein are shared with clubs and members. Some club presidents take copies to club meetings to pass around during the meetings. It is hoped that such practice can soon be resumed. Encourage your members to read it on-line.

Keep in mind the Dr. Seuss Lorax's statement: *I speak for the trees for the trees have no tongues.* Legislation speaks for Conservation. When a conservation matter becomes a General Assembly Bill with a number and sponsors, to be brought up in the General Assembly, it then becomes part of GCG Legislation and is part of the responsibilities of the Legislative Chairman. GCG members can speak, write, email or text or text individually to elected officials for the many tongueless parts of nature. Legislation makes conservation happen, and the Legislative Chairman covers General Assembly activity.

Background: as a courtesy: All GCG members should know who their elected officials are. In fact one of our wiser GCG presidents suggested knowing one's elected officials well enough to be on a back and forth first name basis. Elected officials' District numbers are on all Voter Registration cards. Contact information for elected officials is available on the Georgia General Assembly website. Keep in mind that GCG members as such do not ever take partisan political sides or use names of political parties. Our IRS not for profit status depends on that. We are volunteers and are not paid. We base our recommendations and requests for votes on the principles and contents of our eight Position Papers available on our website. And yes, we often work in cooperation and/or partnership with conservation organizations with similar legislative goals and interests in conservation.

Email is highly recommended for contact because copies of the messages go to hard drives of computers. Sometimes, elected officials say that messages have not arrived, and phone call requests may or may not be passed along to elected officials. USPS letters generally are delayed and/or checked for toxic chemicals they may include.

Among organizations with which GCG and its members have worked in partnership for decades are Georgia Sierra Club, Georgia Conservancy, Georgia Wildlife Federation, Georgia River Network, and many others with regional and national affiliations including Arbor Day Foundation and Audubon and other societies. All have websites with pertinent information and national affiliates, publications, events, and, yes, dues. Much information is available through their websites and more through their membership postings and periodicals.

Instead of photos and other graphic inclusions for this issue, take time to read explore among the organizations listed above.