INSIDE

Awards! | Historic Garden Week 2023 | Annual Meeting Highlights | Daffodil Day
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6:00 – 8:00 pm
Reception, Book Signing and Vendor Gallery

**THE PARAMOUNT THEATER — CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA**

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Lecture followed by Book Signing

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Quirk Hotel Charlottesville is offering a discount on reservations for the Design Forum attendees.

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Attracting butterflies to your garden

SUMMER 2023        ESSENTIALS

SUMMER 2023  |  Volume LXVIII  |  No. 2

Contents

ESSENTIALS

6  Spotlight: Cover Artist—Gail Doyle Smith, The Garden Study Club
7  President’s Message
9  Editor’s Letter
10  Fresh Produce & News You Can Use: Common Wealth Award nominees, Bartlett Tree Tips, Incanto at LGBG and more
14  Passing: Farewell to Rudy Favretti, GCV’s former landscape architect
15  Applause: Awards & Accolades
• Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement
• de Lacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation
• Missy Buckingham, immediate past president. Photo by Edie Hessberg. See more HGW coverage starting on page 22.

FEATURES

18  Historic Garden Week in Photos
22  Daffodil Day Heads to the Beach
26  Annual Meeting in Winchester

SNIPS

28  Club News: Clubs in three GCV districts spotlight their programs

END NOTES

32  How To: Attracting butterflies to your garden
33  GCV Calendar

Don’t Miss Our Triple Treat!

Read all about GCV’s THREE BIG SPRING EVENTS, starting on page 18.
Martinsville. Nestled in rural Patrick County, Fairy Stone was one of special memories for me and many people from my hometown of Martinsville. The park was also the beneficiary of the GCV’s Centennial Project, funding that established a Pollinator Waystation in partnership with The Martinsville Garden Club, The Garden Study Club and The Garden Club of Danville.

Gail now lives on the Brunswick River in coastal North Carolina with her husband and fellow artist, Wright. She says it’s a part of the world that provides endless inspiration. “Wright and I are continually awed by water and marsh and sky views just outside our window. The variety of landscapes, shore birds, wildlife and flowers that I see all day long, and all through the seasons, inspires me.” Other subjects she captures reflect her Virginia roots, and her grandchildren inspired a series of children’s paintings. Gail is also an enthusiastic flower arranger, a bug she happily caught from her mother, Lil Doyle. “For years, she and I teamed up to create arrangements for Historic Garden Week,” Gail says. “Since her death in 2020, I have begun a cutting garden in her memory.” She admits that she’s continually learning which of her favorite plants from Virginia can survive in North Carolina’s coastal climate. “The rubrum lilies that were a memorial gift and start of my garden are the heartiest of all,” she observes, adding, “I am doggedly working to grow peonies in Zone 8, and each year I get a couple of lovely specimens.”

—Madeline Mayhood

NEW! GCV NOTECARDS
GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA: PRESERVING VIRGINIA’S CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH HISTORIC GARDEN RESTORATION

Since 1929, the GCV has preserved and restored more than 50 public historic landscapes and gardens throughout Virginia. This important work is possible due to the efforts of GCV members who produce Historic Garden Week tours in their communities.

This first set in a series represents a selection of our projects through photos taken by GCV members and friends. The photos have been digitally converted to a lovely watercolor effect.

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District 6 (2023-2025): Stephanie Broadwater, The Nansemond River Garden Club

Executive Director: Andrea Butler
Immediate Past President (Ex Officio 2022-2023): Missy Buckingham, The Boswood Garden Club

A MAGNIFICENT AND MEMORABLE GCV SPRING

I couldn’t have been a more splendid spring for the Garden Club of Virginia, with our delightful Daffodil Day, an extraordinary Historic Garden Week and an inspiring Annual Meeting. GCV members across the commonwealth have been busy working their magic!

By all accounts, and for me personally, the 90th Anniversary of HGW was magnificent and most memorable. In mid-February, after browsing the pages of the 2023 Guidebook, I had a plan. Two HGW statewide passes were better than gold...it would be the perfect spring vacation, traveling the state through the lush landscapes and gorgeous gardens across Virginia. My husband bought the idea, and on April 14th we pulled out of the driveway for our 10-day trek!

The plan covered nine tours in eight days beginning with a stroll through two centuries of Warren County history in the charming town of Front Royal. We zigzagged our way across Virginia on picturesque back roads and through quaint historic towns. Every day was a new adventure as we toured unique homes adorned with spectacular floral arrangements and walked through beautiful expansive gardens. From a gospel sing-along at Rock Spring Baptist Church in King William County, an inspiring speech by Virginia’s own First Lady, Suzanne S. Youngkin, at Flowerdew Hundred in Hopewell, and the sunset over Little Oak Spring in Middleburg to our final visit on the Eastern Shore at National Historic Landmark Eyre Hall, our trip was nothing short of perfection.

I am grateful to all of you for your dedication, hard work and gracious hospitality, making HGW 2023 one for the record books.

I believe you will see, within the pages of this Journal, photographs, articles and exciting announcements that capture the incredible energy and enthusiasm of our membership. We are poised for another wonderful year for the Garden Club of Virginia, and I look forward to seeing you in the coming months. Have a wonderful summer and happy gardening!

Debbie Lewis
GCV President, 2022-2024
Since late 2020, I’ve enjoyed shepherding the GCV’s Journal into new territory. We changed our format, our design, our paper, and our process. We have a rock star graphic designer, Whitney Tigani, who can be credited for elevating our pages to soaring heights. We all hope you’ve enjoyed the re-do over these last 12 issues. And by the way, we did most of this in the darkest days of Covid. Was it determination or insanity? You be the judge.

In spite of all the changes, much of the Journal has remained true to its roots since the first issue was published. We continue to address the interests and promote the activities of the Garden Club of Virginia and its member clubs by focusing on the GCV’s mission of conservation and beautification, horticulture, restoration and education.

From the get-go, this issue of the Journal—our summer edition—stays true to those roots. First up, we bring you the lovely cover image of Fairy Stone State Park’s falls, courtesy of Gail Doyle Smith from The Garden Study Club. We are so grateful to Gail for sharing her talent with us. Our Fresh Produce section is full of news you can use. Don’t miss articles on Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden’s Incanto exhibit, Legos in the garden at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, and Tree Tips—on sycamores—from our friends at Bartlett Tree Experts. Plus, GCV medal recipients are profiled in our Applause section. And we dive into butterfly gardening, thanks to Clara Aus, LGBG’s butterfly expert and coordinator of the garden’s M&T Bank Butterflies LIVE! exhibit, which runs through early October.

Then we pivot to chronicling three of the Garden Club of Virginia’s most important events in three features—on Daffodil Day, Historic Garden Week and the Annual Meeting. We’ve recorded much of these highly successful events in photos, so enjoy this romp through spring, starting in March with daffodils galore in Virginia Beach, exploding statewide in April with Historic Garden Week and ending with the Annual Meeting in Winchester.

Our Snips section is where clubs shine. Take a look at what GCV clubs are up to, from celebrating centennials to showcasing especially engaging programs. Send us your news. Tell us what your club has been up to.

I’d share more, but instead, I might suggest you find a comfy spot and spend an evening this summer savoring our pages. If you enjoy this issue, have something to recommend or have a story idea, we’d love to hear from you. Thanks, as always, for your support.
Nominees Announced for the 2023 Common Wealth Award

The Common Wealth Award Committee is pleased to announce three impressive proposals for the 2023 Common Wealth Award. Each project demonstrates CWA criteria of conservation, beautification, horticulture, preservation and education.

GCV club presidents are encouraged to review in depth each nominee and then bring that information to their membership. Understanding the details of each project and what they bring to communities across the commonwealth is an important step in casting informed votes.

The Boxwood GC, The James River GC, Three Chopt GC, & The Tuckahoe GC of Westhampton

The Virginia War Memorial Public Green Space | Downtown Richmond

The Virginia War Memorial pays tribute to nearly 12,000 Virginia veterans from World War II through today’s War on Terrorism. The names of these veterans are inscribed on the walls of the Memorial’s outdoor pavilions and are listed by county, city, or town. The Foundation supporting the Memorial is a 501(c)(3) organization, forming a remarkable public/private partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The five-acre property in downtown Richmond, on Belvideere at the Lee Bridge, is barren. There is no shade. There are no native plantings or pollinators. Appropriate commemorative gardens are severely lacking. Creation of a public greenspace closely aligns with GCV’s mission of promoting interest in conservation, beautification, horticulture, preservation, and education. The project would be of interest to all Virginians.

The Memorial also is in keeping with GCV’s history of support for our military. During WWII, proceeds from fundraising, Historic Garden Week, and individual GCV members facilitated many war relief efforts, including “adopting” the village of Ver-sur-Mer in Normandy. GCV paid for the restoration of 10 windows at the Church of St. Martin where there is now a plaque, listing the names of sons of GCV members who lost their lives in the D-Day invasion of Normandy. There is a street named “Rue de Garden Club of Virginia.”

Gabriella Garden Club: HOME Pocket Park—A Perennial Garden Oasis Within Its Urban Setting | Downtown Danville

During much of the 20th century, Danville was a leading industrial city in Virginia and home to one of the largest textile mills in the South. But by the new millennium, those industries had essentially disappeared, leaving the city with high unemployment, neighborhood blight, and dilapidated buildings. Over a decade, Danville has striven to rebuild itself, adopting the moniker, “The Comeback City.”

HOME Pocket Park is in a rapidly growing area of Danville’s downtown district. The space currently houses the “HOME” sign, which was part of a larger sign for the now-shuttered Dan River Fabrics. In addition to its historical significance, the sign has become a symbol of Danville, frequently photographed and used for marketing materials.

The land, however, is under-utilized, lacking appeal and functionality. Gabriella Garden Club envisions this to be an interactive and multifunctional space of natural beauty within its urban location. A plan has been developed utilizing a combination of hard and soft scape materials, with perennials providing color throughout the year. It also includes places to gather for outdoor dining, individual reflection, and community events.

Funds from the Common Wealth Award would be used to transform the space into a welcoming and beautiful respite hopefully making all the visitors feel at home.

The Garden Study Club and The Martinsville Garden Club: The Nature Garden Along the Smith River Paw Path at the Smith River Sports Complex | Martinsville

In 2015, The Martinsville Garden Club and The Garden Study Club developed the Paw Path conservation project, a trail for pollinator plants along the Smith River and within the Smith River Sports Complex in Martinsville/Henry County.

The Paw Path has been extremely successful, with over 30,000 visitors annually, and has become a destination for numerous student field trips. In order to enhance and expand the Paw Path and continue the clubs’ goals of conservation, preservation, and education for locals and visitors, a Nature Garden will be established along the Paw Path. The garden will convert an unsightly space full of invasive species into an array of native pollinator plants.

As part of implementing the Nature Garden, native plants such as Virginia bluebell, wild ginger, and cranefly orchid will be identified, protected, and transplanted if needed. Creating a beautiful and serene setting for respite, renewal, and learning, this project will be a living lab and open-air classroom, where all ages can become educated about the importance of native pollinators, in nature and in their own gardens. Funds from the Common Wealth Award will be used for site preparation and plant costs for the Nature Garden.

—Becky Farrar, Common Wealth Award Chairman, The Martinsville Garden Club

TIPS FOR TOMATOES

As the summer marches on and your tomatoes mature, you may notice leaves starting to turn yellow. This is probably early blight, a common soil-borne disease. It is not fatal but fruit production will decrease. You can minimize the problem by doing two things: Cut off affected leaves, and mulch the soil to minimize splash-up. Grass clippings, leaves or hay will help. They also keep the roots moister in dry times.

INCANTO:
An Oasis of Lyrical Poetry

The world premiere of Incanto: An Oasis of Lyrical Poetry opened to critical acclaim throughout Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in April and continues through Oct. 9. These original works of sculpture and poetry explore human nature and invite guests into a transformational space of self-inquiry. Each sculpture of Incanto emerges out of the garden landscape in dialogue with a poem, with the intention of creating a sacred container where words—as questions and even incantations—activate the space and spark creative thought among guests.

Award-winning sculpture artist Kate Raudenbush, who emerged out of the creative vanguard of Burning Man, created Incanto in partnership with poet Sha Michele. Both artists incorporate a range of cultures, symbols and mythology in their work, and most of the sculptures invite guests to step inside. With heights reaching up to 17 feet, they serve as portals to other worlds of thought, meaning and healing.

LGBG is open daily 9 A.M.-5 P.M. with extended summer hours of Wednesdays through Saturdays till 9 P.M. as well as evening drinks and dining. Dramatically lit from within, the stories sculpted offer multi-sensory experiences inviting further exploration at night.

GCV AWARD DEADLINES

Don’t miss these important deadlines for GCV’s awards. For details, nomination forms and additional info, visit GCVirginia.org

NOVEMBER 1, 2023
• Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award

DECEMBER 1, 2023
• Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement

MARCH 1, 2024
• Common Wealth Award
• de Lacy Gray Memorial Award for Conservation
• Horticulture Award of Merit
American Sycamore—*Platanus occidentalis*

The American sycamore tree, also known as buttonwood, is easily identified from other trees by its mottled bark which flakes off in great, irregular masses, leaving the surface mottled and gray, greenish-white and brown. The sycamore is widely used as a shade tree; it can grow to massive proportions, typically reaching up to 98 to 131 feet high and 4.9 to 6.6 feet in diameter when grown in deep soils.

In 1770, in present day West Virginia, George Washington recorded a gigantic sycamore in his journal. “Just as we came to the hills,” wrote Washington during his tour of the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers, “we met with a sycamore about sixty yards from the river of a most extraordinary size, it measuring three feet from the ground, forty-five feet round, lacking two inches; and not fifty yards from it was another, thirty-one feet round.”


**CULTURE**
- Large deciduous tree (100+ ft.) that tolerates urban growing conditions.
- Grows in a wide range of soil and pH conditions; performs best in deep, wet and slightly acidic soils.
- Commonly found along streams and rivers and in floodplains.

**CONCERNS**
- Sycamore anthracnose, which causes defoliation and branch dieback, is the most common problem.
- Sycamore scale, leaf beetles, and defoliating caterpillars are also of concern.
- Can be killed by canker stain, a disease spread by insects and human activity, and bacterial leaf scorch.
- Some people report respiratory and skin allergic reactions.

**BARTLETT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**
- Manage anthracnose with preventive foliar or injected treatments.
- Treat for scale insects, defoliating beetles, and caterpillars as needed when populations are detected.
- Utilize antibiotic treatments for bacterial leaf scorch.

The American Sycamore: aka Buttonwood

Due to its fine-grained wood and resistance to splitting and cracking, sycamore trees are often called “buttonwood.” Historically, the strength of the wood made it the perfect material to make long-lasting buttons for shoes and clothing.

**TREE TIP: BARTLETT TREE EXPERTS**

The American sycamore tree, also known as buttonwood, is easily identified from other trees by its mottled bark which flakes off in great, irregular masses, leaving the surface mottled and gray, greenish-white and brown. The sycamore is widely used as a shade tree; it can grow to massive proportions, typically reaching up to 98 to 131 feet high and 4.9 to 6.6 feet in diameter when grown in deep soils.

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The 2023 Massie Medal Recipient

Ann Gordon Evans Receives GCV’s Prestigious Award at Annual Meeting in Winchester.

To a packed crowd in the elegant ballroom in Winchester’s historic George Washington Hotel, Ann Gordon Evans received the 2023 Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement at the Garden Club of Virginia’s Annual Meeting on May 17, hosted by the Winchester-Clarke Garden Club. The medal’s inscription to Ann Gordon Evans reads: For her inspiring leadership, wise counsel and enduring grace.

A resident of Hampton, Ann Gordon has been a member of the Huntington Garden Club since 1986. Her first assignment as a new member was as Historic Garden Week ticket sales chairman. It became clear then that Ann Gordon possessed the leadership and organizational skills as well as the kind and gentle presence needed to get the job done well. She continued to serve the Huntington Garden Club in many positions—from treasurer and president to Garden Week chairman. While she was chairman of the Civic Project Committee, the Huntington GC received the Common Wealth Award for the permanent botanical exhibit, Virginia Botanical History 1607 to Today, at the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News. During her time with the Civic Project Committee as well as service on the board, the Huntington GC was grateful for her guiding hand on the St. John’s Church Cemetery Landscape Plan and the renovation project at Lee Hall Mansion, a GCV restoration site, which involved restoring period fencing and trees on the property.

Ann Gordon served in offices of the GCV, including Director-at-Large, Recording Secretary, Second Vice President, Parliamentarian, as well as Chairman of the Common Wealth Award Committee. She was also on the Outlook Committee and the Nomination Committee. She was President of the GCV from 2012-2014 and continued to be a leading force, establishing a Long-Range Planning Committee with a focus on plans for the GCV’s Centennial. As part of the 2000 Centennial plan, the GCV initiated a partnership with Virginia State Parks, providing $500,000 in grants over five years. Additionally, under her watch, the Conservation and Environmental Studies Fellowship was established. Both projects support the GCV’s mission of beautification and conservation in Virginia. The Green Arrow Society for planned giving was also conceived during her term. She provided initial support and guidance for the newest member club, the Three Rivers Garden Club, based in New Kent and Charles City counties. Her tireless and intelligent leadership, welcoming and inclusive style, and dedication to the GCV is an inspiration to all.

—Candy Crosby, Massie Medal Chairman

Albemarle Garden Club

The 2023 Massie Medal

Ann Gordon Evans

Sheer research, splendid drawings, numerous books, and a life devoted to horticulture and landscape architecture.”

Preliminary Plan for The Grove Monticello, Charlottesville, VA

Preliminary Plan for The Grove Monticello, Charlottesville, VA

LEFT: Three of Favretti’s books on historic landscape preservation. BELOW: Proposed Scheme for Tiffany Castle

Rudy Favretti, 1932-2023

Rudy J. Favretti, landscape architect for the Garden Club of Virginia, a position he held from 1978-1999, passed away on April 13, 2023, at age 90 after a prolonged illness.

Favretti shaped the field of landscape design history and the preservation of historic gardens. He was dedicated to his long teaching career at the University of Connecticut, where he founded the nationally accredited landscape architecture preservation program and published more than 20 books. In private practice, he restored hundreds of gardens throughout the United States and Europe.

His projects with the GCV included many famous landscapes such as Monticello, Mount Vernon, and Montpelier. Favretti’s plans and related materials are part of the Archives of American Gardens at the Smithsonian Institution.

Born on December 3, 1932, and raised in Mystic, Connecticut, to immigrants from the Dolomites of northern Italy, Favretti was influenced by his father, a skilled carpenter who restored historic New England buildings, and by his experience working as a farmhand. He earned degrees from the University of Connecticut, Cornell and the University of Massachusetts in horticulture and design-related fields, all the while expanding his interest in landscape preservation.

Over 50 years, Favretti developed around 100 individual and collaborative designs, master planning and preservation projects that resulted in the restoration and rehabilitation of a wide range of significant historic landscapes. While practicing professionally, Favretti remained strongly committed to academia. In the early 1970s, he became professor of landscape architecture at the University of Connecticut. One of his greatest contributions to the profession was his work as author of and contributor to more than 20 books and countless publications, including some of the first how-to manuals for the treatment and management of historic sites.

Favretti had a deep sense of community, serving in various roles in Mansfield and Mystic, Connecticut, and was also the de facto local historian of his Italian ancestral village of Forno di Zoldo and the Val Zoldana region.

Historic garden restoration is one of the GCV’s most important focuses, and to ensure generational succession in this important field, the GCV established graduate level fellowships in 1996 in areas relating to landscape architecture and historic preservation. The Rudy J. Favretti Fellowship is named in honor of Rudy J. Favretti, landscape architect for the Garden Club of Virginia.

—Adapted from The Cultural Landscape Foundation’s obituary. TCF.org

Ann Gordon Evans receives the 2023 Massie Medal at the Annual Meeting in Winchester.

HISTORY OF THE MASSIE MEDAL

The Massie Medal is the Garden Club of Virginia’s oldest and most prestigious award. It was inaugurated by Susan Massie Williams Massie during her presidency in 1928 and was given by her until her death in 1952. Since then, it has been presented by the GCV in her memory. The recipient of the Massie Medal may be an individual member or member club who have served the Garden Club of Virginia with unusual dedication and distinction. They must have been effective in promoting the betterment of the GCV, demonstrated excellence in horticulture, restoration, preservation or conservation of the commonwealth’s natural resources.

Proposals and endorsements from member clubs must be submitted to the Massie Medal chairman. Guidelines can be found at GCVirginia.org.

Proposals Due Dec. 1, 2023

Summer 2023 Essentials | 15

APPLAUSE: AWARDS & ACCOLADES

PASSING: RUDY FAVRETTI
Mary Louisa Pollard is 2023 Recipient of the de Lacy Gray Medal

Mary Louisa Pollard, of the Garden Club of the Northern Neck and a founding member of the Northern Neck Land Conservancy, received the 2023 de Lacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the preservation of Virginia’s natural resources and land heritage. The award was presented at the Garden Club of Virginia’s Annual Meeting hosted by the Windward Clarke Garden Club on May 17.

First presented in 1965 as a memorial to de Lacy Thompson Gray and originally given by the Dolly Madison Garden Club, this award recognizes an individual member or member club of the GCV for outstanding effort to further the knowledge of our natural resources and encourage their wise use. Mary Louisa was nominated by The Garden Club of the Northern Neck, and Mary Louisa’s journey towards conservation began in the 1990s when she and her brother placed a conservation easement on a large tract of woodland and meadows in the western part of Virginia through the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. This was the catalyst for the creation of the Northern Neck Land Conservancy (NNLC). Mary Louisa’s passion for conservation led her to convene interested residents in her home area of White Stone to collaborate and create the NNLC in 2004. NNLC’s mission is “to promote the rural heritage of the Northern Neck by conserving its lands, waters, economies, and culture for future generations.” She served as the first board president from 2004–2007 and was on the board until 2014. The group originally operated out of a small outbuilding at her home on Mosquito Creek. Her husband, Bill, jokes that he was booted out of his office.

In 2005, recorded easements totaled 301 acres. Today, the Conservancy holds 6,909 acres. She developed fundraisers and educational exhibits operated by Master Gardeners, Native Plant Society, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Department of Forestry, Oyster Growers Association, Raptor Conservancy, and others to engage the public. Together with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Mary Louisa and the NNLC identified a 19-mile stretch along Cat Point Creek as a Special Area Project for Land Conservation, which now provides an open space corridor between historic sites on the Potomac River and existing protected areas on the Rappahannock River. The GCV recognized the Garden Club of the Northern Neck and the NNLC in 2012 with the Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award. The award’s intent is to fund implementation of a conservation project to serve as a catalyst for community action and help generate public interest. This project continues to preserve the sense of place of historic sites such as Stratford Hall and Menokin Plantation.

Albemarle Garden Club Receives the 2023 Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award

Albemarle Garden Club is the 2023 recipient of the Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award. This distinguished honor, on which all 48 GCV clubs vote, was formally announced at the GCV annual meeting in Winchester last month. AGC is partnering with six local organizations to realize a shared goal: to cultivate conservationists. In partnership with the Botanical Garden of the Piedmont, the Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC), the Jefferson Madison Regional Library, Virginia Master Naturalists, the Piedmont Bird Club, and Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards, the collaborative project will promote native species, pollinators, and nature literacy at the Botanical Garden of the Piedmont.

The project has three focus areas. The first focus is to promote pollination through working with CATEC and local high school students as they design, build and install mason bee nests in areas adjacent to BGP’s wildflower meadow that attract pollinators and birds to the Garden. The second focus is to enable native species—and the fauna they support—to thrive as invasive species in new areas of the Garden are removed. Improvement has already been seen in the water quality of a stream traversing the site and the health of two rare buttenut trees as a result of these efforts. The third focus is to educate the public about the importance of supporting a healthy ecosystem. New trails and gathering areas will be created—outdoor classrooms—to host nature literacy and other educational programs focusing on pollinators, natural resource conservation, and protecting our environment. Additional books will be purchased, adding to the collection for the nature literacy program, “Explore to Read,” specifically addressing issues such as conservation, invasive plants and their impact on habitat, and pollinators.

—Marie Thomas, GCV Conservation Awards Chair, The Augusta Garden Club

Continued from previous page

The Garden Club of the Northern Neck has also been a key player in conservation under Mary Louisa’s leadership. The club applied for the 2017 GCV Centennial Grants to promote and assist the Belle Isle and Westmoreland State Parks by supporting permanent infrastructure in the new visitor center exhibits, landscape conservation for pollinator habitats, arborist support and education opportunities for youth. Mary Louisa organized Historic Belle Isle Work Days to clean up the overgrown gardens and held open houses to draw people to the park. She championed environmental literacy in a time when state parks were suffering from budget cuts. Mary Louisa also served a term in the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for the 99th district under the governorship of Tim Kaine. Her’s was a voice with experience in the conservation of land as the department of Game and Inland Fisheries is the largest land-owning agency in Virginia. Mary Louisa’s talent in creating a collaborative team enabled the NNLC to thrive. She garnered community support and has shown a quiet but determined voice for activism in conservation. The GCV is proud to recognize her work and her gifts to the state of Virginia. Mary Louisa’s commitment to conservation has had a lasting impact, and her efforts have ensured that future generations will be able to enjoy the natural beauty of Virginia’s Northern Neck.

—Marie Thomas, GCV Conservation Awards Chairman, The Augusta Garden Club

Who Was Bessie Bocock Carter?

Bessie Carter, GCV President from 1998-2000 was passionate about conservation. This monetary award, made possible by her family in her memory, funds the implementation of a conservation project within the state that will serve as a catalyst for community action. The award is presented annually to a GCV member club or the member club in association with another conservation organization for either natural resource conservation or environmental protection.

Proposals by members or member clubs must be submitted to the Conservation Awards Chairman. Guidelines can be found at GCVirginia.org. A resolution of the award will be announced at the GCV Annual Meeting.

Proposals Due Nov. 1, 2023

Above: GCV President Debbie Lewis (L) and Conservation Awards Chairman Marie Thomas (R) congratulate Catherine Bolen, incoming Albemarle Garden Club president, on receiving the Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award.
Proceeds fund the restoration of Virginia's historic public gardens and a research fellowship program. More than a fundraiser, Historic Garden Week is a cherished springtime tradition – for our members and for the nearly 23,000 people who attended.

The only statewide house and garden tour in the nation, Historic Garden Week is GCV's signature event. It promotes tourism while showcasing communities large and small across the commonwealth. Perhaps most importantly, this enduring legacy brings our membership together towards a common mission for eight days each spring. By all measures, 2023 was a banner year.

Photos courtesy of Terri Lawman
The sun sparkled, the flowers bloomed and the homes and gardens shared their glory for nearly 23,000 visitors to Historic Garden Week 2023, held April 15–22. Thanks to the meticulous planning and abundant hospitality of the GCV’s members, the 90th anniversary of HGW drew rave reviews.

Visitors hailed from 42 states and 12 countries, according to the ticketing data from Eventbrite. For those who traveled from outside of Virginia, 36 percent were from our neighboring states of Maryland and North Carolina. The HGW post-event survey received 2,319 responses, representing 25 percent of all ticket purchasers.

“The terrific response rate is indicative of the affection people have for HGW,” said Fran Carden, chairman of HGW 2022-2024 and a member of the Albemarle Garden Club.

“We use visitors’ feedback and input from our member clubs to make sure that the GCV is offering an extraordinary experience and providing valuable information for long-range planning,” she adds. Twenty-six percent of respondents attended multiple tour days, which helps with the overall economic impact of HGW through hotel stays, shopping and dining.

The top response from visitors? A whopping 51% requested that more gardens be offered on the tours. “They love seeing spectacular homes, but we clearly have many who appreciate horticulture and garden design,” adds Fran.

Here are some of the many comments shared by attendees of HGW 2023.

“Best house and garden tour in the country!”
John from Florida
Visited six days

“Thank you again to all the Garden Club of Virginia members. Your work is not in vain and has inspired me past any dreams I ever had for myself. I want to pursue my passion for horticulture and become a renowned horticulturalist.”
Zari St. Jean from Virginia
First time tour attendee moved from Florida

“I thoroughly enjoyed the homes, gardens, friendly people, and the weather was just beautiful. It was a fantastic week! I wish I could have fit in more tours.”
Guest from Pennsylvania
Visited four days

“I really appreciate the effort that goes into organizing this event. The hosts were great. The interior arrangements were fabulous. Thank you.”
Frances from North Carolina

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Zari St. Jean from Virginia
First time tour attendee moved from Florida

“A beautiful experience—thank you!”
Dana from Tennessee
First time attendee, visited Virginia three days

“My husband and I really appreciate the volunteers. They are very friendly, enthusiastic, and always ready to answer questions. They certainly express southern hospitality.”
Diane from Maryland

“I love HGW. My companions from California could not believe the Garden Club of Virginia has been doing this for ‘90 years and do it every year.”
Guest from Maryland
HGW fan of more than 10 years

“Loved it! Thank you to the owners for opening their properties. We got some great ideas while touring.”
Guest from Massachusetts

“For my first garden week, I was really impressed. Excellent properties were showcased, and it felt like a reasonable scope to see in one day.”
Anna from Alabama
Visited four days

“Thank you all for your hard work, from precision planning to outstanding execution. I always thoroughly enjoy the tours and am appreciative of the extensive work involved in coordinating the tours.”
Guest from Missouri

“I’ve already appropriated one of the ideas at my own home - a Mariken ginkgo tree in a planter on my deck!”
Amy from Illinois
Has been on HGW several times, she visited four days and three nights this trip

“How beautiful homes, amazing floral arrangements, friendly volunteers!”
Mary from Florida,
First time attendee, visited Virginia eight days

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“The Marianne Scruggs Garden Club of the Dallas Woman’s Club had the most wonderful time. The hospitality shown to us was beyond our expectations. We have never felt more welcomed or more cared for … the great state of Virginia went above and beyond … in return we left our mark in the shops …”
Elizabeth from Dallas, Texas

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From yellows to oranges to pinks and whites, daffodils were on parade at the Garden Club of Virginia’s 89th spring daffodil show. Hosted at Virginia Wesleyan University in Virginia Beach on March 29, Daffodil Day provided a wonderful opportunity for the 100-plus attendees to mix and mingle with fellow daffodil lovers. Participants enjoyed the creative and innovative ways GCV club members interpreted the show’s theme, Here Comes the Sun, in the artistic design and photography portions of the flower-filled event.

DEBBIE BONNEWELL, 2023 Daffodil Day Chairman, Harborfront Garden Club
What was your favorite part of chairing this year’s Daffodil Day?
My favorite part was that we actually got to have it at all! One month before the event that had been planned at Norfolk Botanical Gardens, we were told they could not accommodate us because of unexpected parking limitations due to construction. Virginia Wesleyan University (VWU) welcomed GCV with open arms and did everything they could to accommodate all our needs. They could not have been nicer. Before we finished cleaning up and packing, we were asked if we would like to hold Daffodil Day at VWU next year!

One added benefit was that the spaces we used for workrooms and the show floor were entirely open to view through the windows. Since we were in the student center, there was a continuous flow of interested faculty, staff and students, curious about the daffodils and the actual show process. When the doors were open to the public, they came to see the arrangements, photographs and specimens.

I think we were able to provide a real education to an audience GCV has never captured. At the conclusion of the show, we originally planned to use the daffodil specimens to make small arrangements for residents of a rehab facility close by. Because of the interest of all at VWU, we decided to allow anyone who wanted some flowers to help themselves. It was wonderful having basketball players ask us to help them pick out a bouquet for their rooms. Small vases filled with daffodils were distributed around the student center as well.

As one of the nation’s largest daffodil shows based on the number of judged stems, this year’s Daffodil Day included 62 horticulture exhibitors who entered 1,722 individual stems for judging. According to committee members working on Daffodil Day, exhibitors and judges raved about VWU. In addition, the spaces for the workrooms and the show floor were well lit and spacious.

Three club members, who were instrumental in ensuring Daffodil Day was a success, share their insights.

Head to the GCV website to purchase the newest Daffodil Collection, Joyful. Included in the collection are five of the 13 narcissus divisions for a total of 15 bulbs. Consider entering stems in the GCV Collection category at next year’s Daffodil Day, or simply plant them this fall to enjoy in your own spring garden.

The Joyful Collection $27 (NOT INCLUDING TAX).
Every year there is a new Interclub Collection class? takes to enter the Best Can you tell us about what it in thousands of different cultivars. The plant’s long American Daffodil Society- portions were judged by Horticulture and artistic design love daffodils, you appreciate all! prolific. It would be hard to boil a different bloom that is most following week’s show will have their peak season. And then the bloom because it happens to be You may see many of the same on the time of year and weather. perfection. What we see depends marvel at these tiny bits of the growers and spectators who contribute to the collection. All other classes require exhibitors to show only the blooms they have personally grown. The fun part about this class is that it creates enthusiasm within the club. Each member who contributes to the collection feels a part of the process. This class encourages growing, showing, as well as camaraderie. Daffodils were also showcased in a variety of arrangements that interpreted the “Sun King” in the French Baroque style; “The Sun Also Rises” in the Phoenix style, and “Keep Your Sunny Side Up” in the Casual Contemporary style in 36 stunning artistic design entries.

Are you noticing any trends in terms of shapes and colors that are popular? The newer cultivars are often very colorful, big and robust—real eyecatchers and showy. There is also a lot of interest in showing historic and classic cultivars that are often lovely treasures everyone wants to see. These classes encourage people to identify old blossoms found on older properties. The miniatures always delight the growers and spectators who marvel at these tiny bits of perfection. What we see depends on the time of year and weather. You may see many of the same bloom because it happens to be their peak season. And then the following week’s show will have a different bloom that is most prolific. It would be hard to boil the show down to a trend. If you love daffodils, you appreciate all! Horticulture and artistic design portions were judged by American Daffodil Society-certified judges. The plant’s long history of breeding has resulted in thousands of different cultivars.

Can you tell us about what it takes to enter the Best Interclub Collection class? Every year there is a new collection of daffodils to order in the spring for planting in the fall. These collections are grown and then shown to help us see how well each cultivar withstands the test of time and elements of nature. The GCV Daffodil Best Interclub Collection Class is meant to involve as many club members as possible. Daffodil chairman should preregister for the interclub class. This helps the show organizers know how much room to allow for the different entries on the show floor. It is the chairman’s responsibility to research the list of daffodils from the show schedule on the GCV website. After acquiring the list, each chairman may gather blooms from their club’s membership to create the collection. All other classes require exhibitors to show only the blooms they have personally grown.

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At any given GCV event, you may see official shutterbug Susie Lendermon wandering about, camera in tow. This Augusta Garden Club member’s GCV “job” is to document important GCV milestones like Daffodil Day and to encourage club members to enter photography shows. She’s happy to dispense advice, especially to those new to the art of photography who may have some trepidation about entering shows. In fact, she says, it’s not uncommon for some members to express being overwhelmed by the equipment many serious photographers own, feeling as though they need a fancy camera to participate in a show. “Absolutely not,” counters Susie. “Many of the photos that are entered in the photography section of Daffodil Day were taken with cell phones. Please don’t be intimidated. We love novices and would love for you to enter a photography show.”
GCV club members reflect on the 2023 Annual Meeting.

Splendid! Magical! A standout! These are just some of the ways in which GCV club members described the 2023 Annual Meeting in Winchester. Hosted by the Winchester-Clarke Garden Club and headquartered at the historic George Washington Hotel, the meeting featured dynamic speakers, much-anticipated award presentations and the fabulous fellowship that makes the Garden Club of Virginia such a collective treasure.

“This annual meeting was fun, friendly and informative! There was genuine camaraderie among the members and the festive mood that ensued was palpable. The presentations were remarkable. “They” say that speeches are 95 percent about presentation and five percent about content. Not true in this meeting. From the announcement of two new fall initiatives—Cultivating Conversations and History Blooms—to the great news about the net profit from Historic Garden Week, the wonderfully inspiring video by Zari St. Jean and her thoughts on what the Garden Club of Virginia means to her, the thought-provoking talk by Dr. Laurie Fox on phytoremediation and the poignant commentary by Liam O’Connor on his work on the beaches of Normandy, an area that is historically tied to GCV, this meeting was very substantive. And beyond all that, we got a hilarious story and a lead to an “angel of the road” who rescued our president when she was stranded with a flat tire on one of her many road trips on GCV business!”

—Edie Hessberg, Winchester-Clarke Garden Club, Membership News Chairman

“Many thanks to the Winchester-Clarke Garden Club for hosting the 2023 Annual Meeting! GCV is alive and thriving, with new events like History Blooms in October at the Virginia Museum of History & Culture and the new staff including Communications Director Sarah Blackburn. The presentation by Liam O’Connor, an architect who recently completed the British Normandy Memorial, was excellent and would be an excellent GCV trip in the future! The focus on phytoremediation—the process in which plants breakdown harmful pollutants in our soil—was a fantastic learning experience! But mostly, it was the fellowship with members of GCV that remains a standout. This was my first visit to Winchester, and I am already planning a trip back to explore this beautiful town in Virginia.”

—Kelly Armstrong, President, The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton, Richmond

“My first highlight of the annual meeting was the magical evening at Long Branch. From the spectacular setting overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains to dinner under the tent and even the bus ride, what a splendid launch into things. The most memorable moment was seeing Mary Louisa Pollard receive the de Lacy Gray Conservation Award. I have known the Pollards since I was a teenager, and it brought tears of joy to see her accept that honor for all the work she has done with land conservation. So many farms and rural properties are being gobbled up by developers that I think her work to preserve properties for generations to come should be applauded.”

—Latane Avery, President, Harbortown Garden Club, Norfolk
The James River Garden Club
RICHMOND
Supreme gardener and legendary garden writer Page Dickey was the guest speaker at the February meeting of the James River Garden Club. Held at the Dependency at Wilton House Museum in Richmond, Page’s engaging program included slides that captured the evolution of her gardens, Duck Hill in upstate New York, and her newest project, Church House in rural northwest Connecticut. She described in eloquent detail the constantly changing 34-year project at Duck Hill, and then discovering her next chapter at Church House, an 18th-century Methodist church, where she and her husband, Bosco Schell, now live and garden on its picturesque 17 acres of rolling fields and woodland.
Page is an honorary member of The Garden Club of America, is a director emeritus of The Garden Conservancy and serves on many horticulture-related boards. She is the author of eight books about garden design—from creating gardens that reflect their settings (Gardens in the Spirit of Place and Breaking Ground) to planning gardens as extensions of our homes (Inside Out) and each is illustrated by exceptional examples around America. Duck Hill Journal and Embroidered Ground are about Duck Hill and the process of making the garden there over three-plus decades, and her thoughts on gardening in general. Her newest book, Uprooted, reflects on the monumental transition from Duck Hill to Church House, chronicling her reboot and what it’s meant to start anew.
—Madeline Mayhood

The Ashland Garden Club
ASHLAND
Hats off to Ashland Garden Club’s 100 years! We’ve had a lot of fun celebrations this year in honor of our Centennial. In February, we hosted a lovely cocktail party in Richmond at the beautiful Kent-Valentine House. In March, we donned hats, pearls and gloves in 1920s style to enjoy a slideshow and fellowship celebrating the club’s centennial. Pictured here are 13 of the club’s presidents. (above)
AGC members assemble on the staircase at the Kent-Valentine House in February (below)
Photos courtesy of Sharon Stiles

In March, AGC members decked out 1920s style to enjoy a slideshow and fellowship celebrating the club’s centennial. Pictured here are 13 of the club’s presidents. (above)
AGC members assemble on the staircase at the Kent-Valentine House in February (below)
Photos courtesy of Sharon Stiles

Church House garden photo. Courtesy of Page Dickey

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Church House garden photo. Courtesy of Page Dickey

Page Dickey, author of Uprooted. Courtesy of Page Dickey
The Chatham Garden Club

The Chatham Garden Club surprised the residents of Chatham Health and Rehabilitation Center with flowers for Valentine’s Day. Over 80 arrangements were delivered bringing many smiles and much enjoyment to the patients. The arrangements are pictured here, along with Staci Wall, CGC Flower Show Chairman, and Kathy Anderson, club president.

—Kathy Anderson

The Hampton Roads Garden Club

HRGC members Kathy Hutcheson and Amanda Graham created and implemented “You’ve Been Bloomed.” Kathy, the artist, drew and painted the wooden flowers. Kathy’s husband, John, honorary team member, wielded the saw and determined how to make the flowers sturdy and impervious to the weather. The team experimented and conquered everything from how many coats of weatherproof paint and sealer to apply to how to create supports that could withstand wind, while not damaging anything in the recipient’s yard. A hand-designed card with a personalized message is left for the person being honored. Delivery is done in secret, whenever possible, adding to the happy surprise.

Club members were the first customers, placing orders to decorate the yards of family and friends. Then neighbors, as well as observers, read the accompanying signs, placed orders, and spread the word. Kathy and Amanda became road warriors right away, making weekly deliveries from Williamsburg to Smithfield and many neighborhoods in between. New members on the fundraising team have ensured that this effort will continue.

The proceeds of this project are used to connect with and support our community. A few examples are the refurbishing and re-landscaping of the courtyards at The Mariner’s Museum and the Hampton History Museum, sending a child to Nature Camp each year and connecting with residents of Newport Harbour Apartments by hands-on wreath-making and flower arranging for adult residents and lessons in plant identification for children.

—Linda K. Smith

The Martinsville Garden Club

The Martinsville Garden Club celebrated its 100th Anniversary in February at Chatmoss Country Club with dinner, dancing and a skit commemorating its milestones. A formal invitation captured the evening’s elegant theme.

—Heidi Pinkston
So You Want to Attract Butterflies?

**1. Start by choosing a spot that gets partial or full sun.** Butterflies are ectothermic, which means they rely on heat from their surroundings to keep them warm. In the early morning, they will often bask in the sun to warm up before they start flying around. Consider placing some flat rocks in the sun where they can bask and warm up. Also, think about adding a bird bath or rainwater collecting source because butterflies get many of their needed salts and nutrients from groundwater that they cannot get from nectar sources.

**2. Pick out a variety of nectar-producing plants for the garden.** Many butterfly species rely heavily on nectar as their main food source. Choose plants that produce large amounts of nectar to support multiple butterflies. Examples are buttonbush, Joe Pye weed, goldenrod, bee balm, wild bergamot, zinnia, sedum, butterfly weed, milkweeds, coneflower, zinnia, sedum, butterfly weed, milkweeds, coneflower, and peas. Some common host plants include milkweeds, coneflower, zinnia, sedum, butterfly weed, milkweeds, coneflower, and peas. Some butterflies will cater to a variety of host plants, while others will only cater to the right one to lay their eggs.

**3. Decide which native butterflies you want to attract to your garden.** Are you aiming to attract Monarch? American Ladies? Black Swallowtails? Common Buckeyes? Eastern Tailed Blues? Mourning Cloaks? Painted Ladies? Why stop there—the varieties are nearly endless. Find out what their host plants are and use that information to plant accordingly. Pipevine Swallowtails are partial to Dutchman’s pipe, and Virginia snakeroot. Pearl Crescents prefer asters as their host plant, while voilets are the host plants for Great Spangled Frittillaries.

**4. Choose a variety of butterfly host plants for the garden.** Female butterflies will taste plants with their feet until they find the right one to lay their eggs on. While some species are generalists and their caterpillars can feed on many different plants, other species are specialists that only have one host plant. Butterflies often hang around their host plant, mating, laying egg, and feeding from its flowers.

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