

GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA JOURNAL

Spring 2025 | Volume LXX | No. 1



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GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA JOURNAL

Spring 2025 | Volume LXX | No. 1

THE GCV JOURNAL

The Garden Club of Virginia *Journal* is published quarterly and is designed to address the interests and promote the activities of the Garden Club of Virginia and its member clubs. Organized to enhance and strengthen communication within the GCV, the *Journal* focuses on the mission of the organization: conservation and beautification, horticulture, restoration and education. Approximately 3,500 copies of each issue are mailed to members and subscribers.

A PDF version is available online at gcvirginia.org.

SUBMISSIONS

The *Journal* welcomes submissions by GCV committees, clubs and club members, as well as article ideas related to the GCV's mission and its initiatives and events. As a matter of editorial policy, all submissions will be edited for clarity of expression, space, style compliance, grammar, syntax, structure and messaging. Unsolicited material will be considered, but submission does not guarantee publication. For questions, please contact journal@gcvirginia.org.

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For a rate sheet or more information, visit the GCV website at gcvirginia.org or contact *Journal* Ad Sales Manager at journalads@gcvirginia.org.

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THE MISSION OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA:

To conserve the gifts of nature, to restore and preserve historic landscapes of the commonwealth, to cultivate the knowledge and love of gardening and to lead future generations to build on this heritage.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

The ownership, management and circulation of the Garden Club of Virginia's *Journal*, published four times a year in Richmond, Virginia, is hereby stated.

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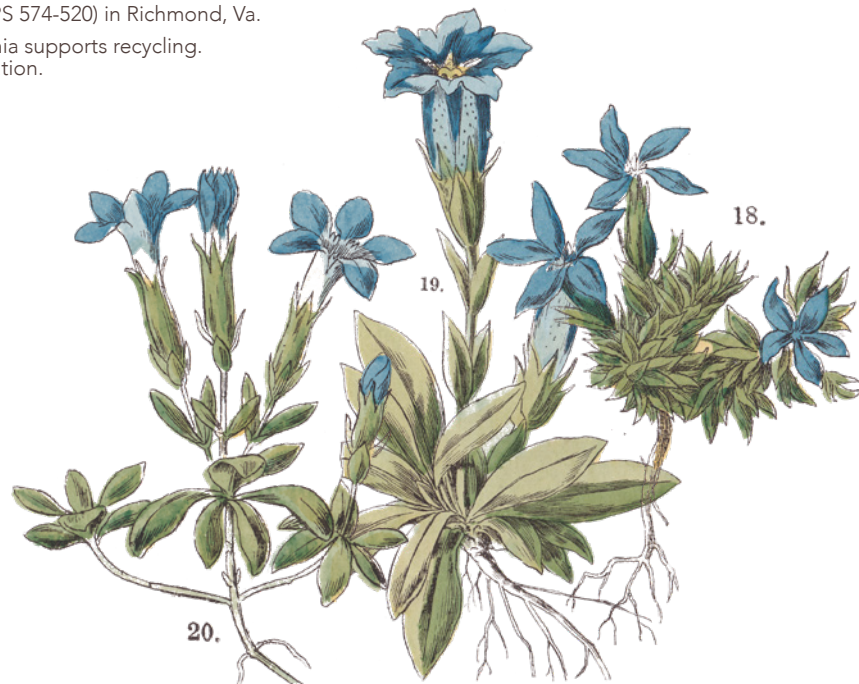
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Madeline Mayhood, *Journal* Editor
c/o Garden Club of Virginia
12 East Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23219

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2/28/2025



ABOVE LEFT
Tag from Mill Mountain Garden Club's rhododendron propagation fundraiser

ABOVE RIGHT
Dolley Madison Garden Club member Carla Passerello, on her farm with her flock

COVER ART:
Giverny, by Tenley Raitbel, The Huntington Garden Club, Newport News; Oil on board



Sign marking the pollinator garden at Montgomery Hall Park in Staunton



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ON THE COVER: ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

TENLEY RAITHEL

The Huntington Garden Club, Newport News



After retiring from teaching, artist Tenley Raithel focused her energy on painting. She channeled her creativity through vibrant oil paintings in her 1890s Yorktown home studio, which she shares with her husband and rescue cat.

Her journey spans an international life as a Navy wife and now includes active membership in Newport News' Huntington Garden Club, where she contributes to Historic Garden Week and Flowers After Hours events. "There are so many nice, creative ladies in this group," she says of her garden club membership.

"Our current culture seeks not just beautiful art, but art that moves them," says Raithel, whose work ranges from representational to abstract. Her painting "Giverny," inspired by a visit to Monet's garden, exemplifies her passion for bold colors and impressionist

influences. She creates with a blend of spontaneous gesture and careful reflection, often pausing with tea in hand to contemplate her next brushstroke.

Beyond painting, which she now teaches to adults in her community, Raithel expresses her creativity through gardening and cooking. She approaches her art with

spiritual mindfulness, crediting divine inspiration for guiding her work. Through her masterful use of color and composition, she aims to bring balance and emotional resonance to viewers' lives. 🌿

— Madeline Mayhood,
The James River Garden Club

TOP: Tenley Raithel, The Huntington Garden Club, Newport News

ABOVE: *Giverny*, Oil on board

GREEN ARROW SOCIETY

The GCV's Green Arrow Society encompasses loyal members and friends who support the GCV's future with planned gifts. Much like the iconic green arrows that point the way along Historic Garden Week tour routes, members of the Green Arrow Society help point the way to a bright and sustainable future for the GCV. We are grateful to the members for their support.

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For information on the Green Arrow Society, contact the GCV Development Committee at Development@GCVirginia.org



+ deceased

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"The first blooms of spring always make my heart sing." — S. BROWN

There is always joy in my heart when I see daffodils and bluebells emerging from the ground. It is a sign that the colder days of winter are winding down with warmer days around the corner. As spring ushers itself in, GCV will host one of the largest daffodil shows in the country. Daffodil Day,

held in Virginia Beach, provides our daffodil enthusiasts competitive opportunities in artistic design, horticulture, and photography. As the calendar turns the page to April, we will welcome visitors from across the country and world to GCV's signature event, Historic Garden Week. I thank each of you for your hospitality and efforts. I hope to see many of you as I visit several tours. In May, mark your calendars for Horticulture Field Day on May 16, and on June 18, The Garden Club of the Northern Neck will host the lily show, "Flourish," in Irvington.

As I travel across the state, I have been inspired by all the work of our member clubs in their communities. In this edition, read about the two finalists for the Bessie Boccock Carter Conservation Award. These projects are an example of how impactful our members are in their work. The winner will be announced at the Annual Meeting hosted by The Lynchburg Garden Club.

With deep appreciation, I would like to thank Madeline Mayhood for her time as GCV's *Journal* Editor. Madeline was instrumental in creating the revised *Journal* format, elevating the content and visuals of GCV's signature publication, which has been enthusiastically received by our membership. Madeline's career at *Virginia Living* is pulling her away from her role as *Journal* editor, so we wish her the best and thank her for all that she has given. We are grateful that Madeline will continue to lend her writing skills and keen eye as a *Journal* contributor for the foreseeable future.

The *Journal* will continue to be a publication that connects us all. I hope you find inspiration in these pages and all that the GCV has to offer.

My best,

Kris Carbone

Kris Carbone
GCV President, 2024–2026



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A MEMORABLE JOURNEY



*I*t was spring 2020. The world was shutting down. I was in my car—likely hunting for KN-95 masks or nitrile gloves—when Missy Buckingham called. We’d known each other through our garden clubs for years.

As incoming president of the Garden Club of Virginia, she asked if I’d take on the *Journal*. I’m from the “always say yes” camp—a value my mother drilled into my DNA. I didn’t even pause: Of course I would.

What followed was extraordinary. In five whirlwind years, we

navigated a global pandemic, redefined socializing, mastered Zoom, and thanks to visionary leadership, strengthened the GCV and secured its future. And along the way, the *Journal* was transformed from A to Z—new size, paper, binding, and content. Though always an integral part of the GCV, I hope I’ve left my mark.

But nothing lasts forever. My expanding “real job” demands more attention, and I refuse to do anything halfway. As hard as it is, it’s time for me to step down.

I’ve been blessed with incredible support from GCV’s presidents, staff, committee members, board liaisons, and many contributors since 2020. Whitney Tigani, our graphic designer (and new Boxwood Garden Club member!), is among the most talented people I’ve ever worked with.

My byline may appear occasionally, but now I entrust the *Journal’s* future to long-time contributors, writers, and editors who are passionate about sharing the good news of the GCV. Thank you all for joining me on this remarkable journey.

Enjoy the season.

Madeline Mayhood

Madeline Mayhood, *GCV Journal Editor*
Journal@GCVirginia.org
The James River Garden Club

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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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AT THE KENT-VALENTINE HOUSE AND SELECT GCV EVENTS.



The 2025 Garden Club of Virginia's Horticulture Field Day will be held in Fredericksburg on May 16 from 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m. The day will feature gardens at four GCV restoration sites including Belmont, Kenmore, Mary Washington House, and Mary Washington Monument.

Several special private gardens showcasing native plants, formal beds, and vegetable beds will also be open to tour. Brief educational horticulture demonstrations will be presented at each location. A photography workshop is scheduled for 8-9:30 a.m. at the Fredericksburg City Cemetery. This hands-on session will be limited to 25 pre-registered GCV participants.

A National Historic Landmark, Belmont was built c. 1795. The estate was enlarged to its current size and the garden was laid out in the 1850s. Belmont sits atop a hill and offers spectacular views overlooking the falls of the Rappahannock River.

In 1916, American Impressionist artist Gari Melcher and his wife Corrine assumed ownership of the estate and created a stately ambience and horticultural artistry. Belmont's formal grounds and gardens from the Melcher era were restored by the GCV in 1994.

One of Virginia's finest 18th-century houses, Kenmore was built by Lewis Fielding and his wife Betty, sister of George Washington. The grounds include a long, tree-shaded lawn edged with a Wilderness Walk featuring native plants. The rear garden is planted with an array of



authentic perennials in an 18th-century formal plan.

Kenmore's grounds were the first Garden Club of Virginia restoration project, utilizing funds from the first Historic Garden Week in 1929.

Located at the corner of Lewis and Charles Streets, Mary Washington House was originally purchased in 1772 by George Washington for his mother, Mary Ball Washington, to be near family at Kenmore.



The residence and outside kitchen remain, along with an interconnected brick walk system and a double row of English boxwood. The GCV first restored the interesting cottage style garden in 1969, including a vegetable and flower garden, and undertook additional projects in 1994 and 2003.

The Mary Washington Monument marks the 1789 resting place of George Washington's mother, Mary Ball Washington, and stands on part of the original Kenmore estate. After the original stone erected on her grave was destroyed by souvenir hunters, and after many years of neglect through the Civil War era, the Mary Washington Foundation of Fredericksburg and National Mary Washington Association led the successful effort to restore and erect the monument. The GCV first planted the grounds in 1938, and in recent years added plantings along the brick walk to the monument with shrubs and trees to enhance the lawn.

Please mark your calendar for May 16 and make plans for a fun day brimming with great new ideas for your garden at the 2025 GCV Horticulture Field Day in Fredericksburg. Registration is open! 🌱

—Patsy Smith, GCV Horticulture Committee Chairman, Winchester-Clarke Garden Club and Megan Ames, The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore

GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA
Award Nominations Deadlines

JUNE 1, 2025

Conservation Educator Award
Dugdale Award for Meritorious Achievement in Conservation

The Helen and Tayloe Murphy Conservation Leadership in Government Award

NOVEMBER 1

Nomination deadline for Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award

DECEMBER 1

Nomination deadline for Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement

For award descriptions, nomination details and forms, past recipients, and additional information, visit GCVirginia.org



Join us for "Flourish," the 2025 Lily Show.

When: June 18, 2025

Where: Chesapeake Academy, 107 Steamboat Rd., Irvington

Theme: Flourish

Hosts: The Garden Club of the Northern Neck

This show is dedicated to the memory of the late Helen Murphy. She was the epitome of the theme "Flourish" and was dedicated to the mission of GCV. She also loved lilies. Her devotion to growing and showing her prize-winning lilies, her commitment to conservation, her service on numerous GCV committees, and her mentorship to new members were hallmarks of her over 50-year active membership in GCNN and GCV.



Helen was a founding member and a past president of The Garden Club of the Northern Neck, and from 1992-1994, served as president of the Garden Club of Virginia. The GCV honored Helen and her husband, Tayloe, by establishing and naming The Helen and Tayloe Murphy Conservation Leadership in Government Award in 2024.

Join us in celebrating the remarkable legacy of Helen Murphy. Registration and theme schedules will be posted the first of April on the GCV website. 🌱



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The Collaboration of Augusta Garden Club & Staunton Civic Groups: NURTURING PUBLIC SPACES & ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION



Members of The Augusta Garden Club in Staunton understand the power of collaborating with other local civic groups to nurture their shared landscape. With a long history of restoring, preserving, and enhancing Staunton's parks, watersheds, and other public spaces, the AGC has recently partnered with the Augusta Bird Club, the local Beverly Garden Club, and the City of Staunton to establish a native pollinator garden in Staunton's historic Montgomery Hall Park. AGC is also working with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee, the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Rotary International, Shenandoah Green, Staunton Tree Stewards, and city/school officials to create a nature trail and outdoor learning space at Staunton High School. The ripple effect of their combined efforts is evident as the projects thrive and unforeseen benefits for the city emerge as a result.

Designed and planted in the fall of 2022, Montgomery Hall Park's pollinator garden now contains additional native plants from Hummingbird Hill Native Plant Nursery in Charlottesville, added in 2023. The Beverly Garden Club added a flagstone trail leading visitors through this colorful and peaceful space, and the AGC installed an interpretive sign, giving visitors more information about the importance of pollination to our fragile ecosystem and food supply. The sign includes a QR code so visitors can learn more about the role of native pollinators in a healthy environment. Volunteers are developing

additional curriculum material about pollinators for use in the local schools. They continue to maintain the garden as well.

In a similar effort to support the flora, fauna, and people who call Staunton home, AGC and its partners devised a plan in 2023 to create a nature trail and an outdoor learning/sanctuary space at Staunton High School. As the work groups were clearing brush and debris to make way for the new space in 2024, they uncovered a small stream that had been hidden by overgrowth. Students working with club volunteers learned in real time about issues associated with the growth of invasive species. They also found a damaged bridge that is now being restored by the engineering students at the school. Students are designing trail markers, and the carpentry class is designing a pavilion

that will be built this year. AGC recently donated folding chairs and a storage bin so that students may use the space while the pavilion is completed. The pavilion will be located close to an extant greenhouse and garden behind the school, establishing a vibrant outdoor learning community for all students to enjoy. The school's Ecology Club will oversee maintenance of the trail, and AGC volunteers will help the students learn about invasive species and the plant life that is worth saving.

Both projects have encouraged others in the community to help breathe new life into their habitats and provided new educational opportunities for all Staunton citizens to enjoy. Staunton city engineers have even been able to resolve a previously unknown sewer line leak that the high school project also uncovered, and which could have been harmful to the stream. AGC and partner group members are collaborating on educational programming in both cases that will result in hands-on, outdoor learning experiences for students and other city residents. "It is always helpful when different civic groups are willing to work together on a project," observed Staunton's City Horticulturalist Matt Sensabaugh. "It minimizes the expenses for everyone," he continued, "and I have found it very helpful in the follow-up care and maintenance for the projects." AGC members enjoy the continued benefits of both collaborations. 🌿

— Sheila Byrd Carmichael,
The Augusta Garden Club

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Historic Garden Week's Impact Report

This past fall, the Garden Club of Virginia received the results of its third economic impact study of its signature event and discovered something many of its 3,400 members already knew: Historic Garden Week packs a big punch. It's the largest ongoing volunteer effort in Virginia that promotes communities of all sizes, and this updated analysis helps validate that work.

As the nation's only statewide house and garden tour, Historic Garden Week (HGW) draws visitors to 29 Virginia communities each spring and significantly contributes to the state and regional economies. Last year, HGW hosted over 24,000 visitors, including those from 43 states and 16 countries.

As anyone can imagine, quantifying Historic Garden Week's cumulative economic impact over its 92-year history is daunting. Virginia's population and economy have undergone tremendous transformations over the decades. The GCV keeps meticulous records at the Kent-Valentine House, but reliable data concerning tour revenue only dates to 1969.

In partnership with Virginia Tourism Corporation and through generous sponsorship from Bartlett Tree Experts, consulting firm Chmura Economics & Analytics conducted the first survey in 2014 to determine HGW's economic impact. Among the methods of data-gathering were statewide intercept surveys, in-person interviews with 540 tour attendees, and surveys of ticket purchasers, homeowners, and

executive directors of GCV's restoration properties.

In 2019, as we approached GCV's Centennial, Bartlett Tree Experts sponsored an update of the original study. In 2024, after having had to cancel HGW in 2020 for only the second time since WWII due to COVID-19, we hired Chmura again to update its report, adding 2020-2024 data. Additionally, we conduct our own post-event survey of HGW visitors every year since Virginia Tourism's initial survey in 2013. Combined, these provided invaluable data and insights regarding this popular fundraiser.

Tourism injects more than \$33 billion into Virginia communities every year,

and HGW is estimated to contribute a total economic impact or financial ripple effect of \$13.3 million annually. This figure includes event preparation, visitor spending, gift expenditures, and the impact of money spent on Garden Club of Virginia restoration projects made possible through HGW.

In 2014, Chmura reported that the cumulative impact of HGW on Virginia from our earliest verifiable data in 1969 was \$425 million. Translated to current dollars and adding in the years from 2015 to 2019 added \$63 million more, which includes the GCV's Centennial gift to Virginia's State Parks as well as significant restoration projects that took place in that time frame. With the recent analysis completed last year, which includes 2020 through 2024 data, we are proud to share that the current cumulative economic impact of HGW is an impressive \$679 million.

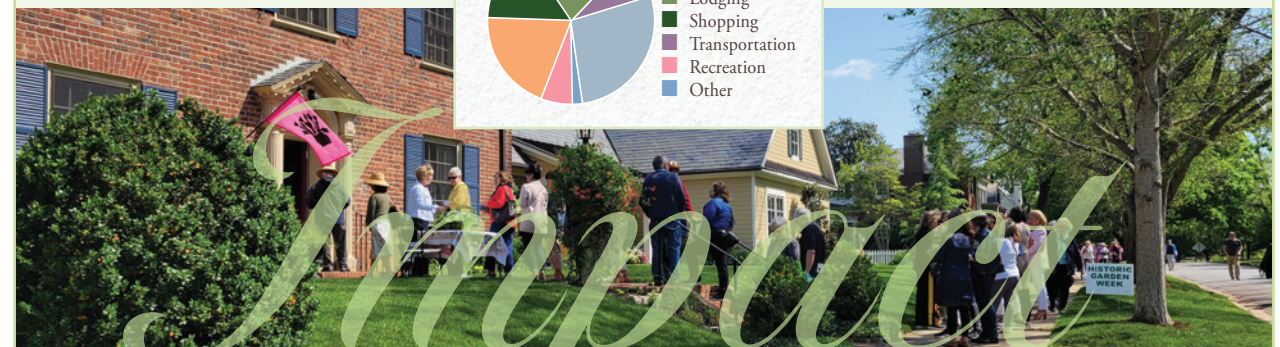
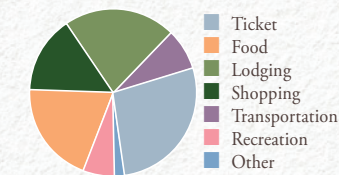
HGW benefits the communities where our members host tours as well as the commonwealth in general. By helping ensure its success, each member of GCV personally gives a gift to the state of Virginia. As we anticipate the tours taking place this spring, we wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you.

The digital version of the Economic Impact Study brochure, explaining the study results, is available on both the HGW website (VAGardenWeek.org) in the Pressroom section and the GCV website (GCVirginia.org) in the Member Resources section. 🌿

— Karen Ellsworth, HGW Director



WE ARE PROUD TO SHARE THAT THE
CURRENT CUMULATIVE
ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HGW IS
\$679 MILLION.
VISITORS DINE, SHOP, AND STAY
OVERNIGHT, GENERATING IMPACT
THROUGHOUT THE STATE.



Spotlight on Centre Hill Mansion, Petersburg

A GCV RESTORATION SITE

The Garden Club of Virginia's portfolio of restoration sites includes Centre Hill Mansion, a historic jewel that overlooks the Appomattox River in Petersburg. The Petersburg Garden Club has a long history as faithful stewards and caretakers of this property, and, in 1978, they asked for GCV's help with the landscaping.

History of Centre Hill Mansion

Centre Hill Mansion was built in the Federal style between 1818 and 1823 by Robert Bolling. For generations, the Bollings had vast land holdings in Virginia, and Robert Bolling acquired much of his wealth through his ownership of tobacco warehouses in Petersburg. After his death in 1839, his son, Robert Buckner Bolling, inherited the property and modernized it in the 1840s to reflect the Greek Revival style. Later, Colonial Revival styles also were incorporated.

During the Civil War, the mansion served first as headquarters for Confederate Lt. General James Longstreet, and later for Union Major General George Hatsuf. President Abraham Lincoln visited in April 1865, after the fall of Petersburg and Richmond, and just 11 days before his assassination. Presidents John Tyler and William Howard Taft also visited Centre Hill.

Petersburg attorney Charles Hall Davis bought the property in 1901, but by 1910, his fortunes had changed and he sold off lots on the

grounds. Housing development encroached three sides of the property, and the home was sold at auction in 1936. After changing hands several times, Centre Hill was deeded to the City in 1972. Today, this historic landmark operates as Centre Hill Museum and is open for tours. It was also used as film sets for *Killing Lincoln*, *Turn* and *Mercy Street*.

Garden Club of Virginia's Role

When The Petersburg Garden Club asked for assistance in 1978, GCV's landscape architect at the time, Rudy J. Favretti, focused on transforming an uninspired brick walkway leading to the house from North Adams Street. He lined it with lindens, shrubs and seasonal flowers. Parking was limited at Centre Hill, thus this lovely allee provided visitors with a pleasant approach.

In addition, the stately iron fence surrounding the property was restored. Trees including tulip poplar, cherry laurel, water oak, crape myrtle, willow oak, and white oak were added. Shrubs included in the restoration were

Otto Luykens laurel, winterberry holly, blackhaw viburnum, and boxwood. Care was taken not to disturb a tunnel that was once used to bring food and supplies up the hill from Henry Street near the Appomattox River.

In 2007, under the direction of (former) GCV Landscape Architect William D. Rieley, the City of Petersburg was making plans to mitigate serious drainage issues around the foundation. This project gave the mansion a new lease on its old life. During this period, a tulip poplar, a willow oak and a yellow-wood were added to the landscape. Further plantings included replacing the blackhaw viburnums, adding weigela, plum yews, Otto Luykens laurels, periwinkle, hypericum and, most recently, osmanthus. Mr. Rieley also coordinated the selection of two Charleston-style light fixtures, donated by The Petersburg Garden Club, for the south portico.

In 2021, The Petersburg Garden Club obtained a grant from the City of Petersburg to plant New Gen Boxwood along the path from the circular drive on the south side of the house leading to the current visitor



Photo courtesy of Visit Petersburg

BARTLETT'S DAY OF SERVICE: CENTRE HILL

The Garden Club of Virginia's partner for many programs, Bartlett Tree Experts, performed a "Day of Service" on Oct. 31, 2024, at Centre Hill to improve the health, safety, and appearance of several trees on the property.

Bartlett's certified tree experts and arborists had previously mapped out a plan to prune and provide supplemental support to trees. Then they showed up with tools and manpower to make this plan a reality.

Their pruning work helped to reduce and remove over-extended branches that were growing toward the mansion as well as those that were interfering with ground clearance; establish proper branch spacing; and reduce the risk of branch failure due to weight.

Tree species that benefited from these prunings include Willow Oak, *Quercus phellos*; Kentucky Coffeetree, *Gymnocladus dioica*; Crape Myrtle; Viburnums, *Viburnum sp.*, and Weeping Willow, *Salix babylonica*.

In addition to pruning, Bartlett installed three supplemental brace rods in a dual-stem Willow Oak to limit the stem movement and reduce the risk of stem failure.

"Brace rods consist of steel threaded rods that are inserted through holes drilled into stems or branches, and we fasten them with nuts and washers," said Perry-Lee West, an arborist and horticulturist who assessed the needs of the trees. "They can help increase the lifespan of certain trees, however, they still require periodic inspections to verify their functionality and look for any signs of fatigue," he added.

"We appreciate and respect the work that the GCV does to restore historic landscapes, and our Day of Service provides an opportunity to contribute to that body of work," said Rob Allen, Bartlett's division manager for Virginia and Tennessee. "These services provide the properties with much-needed landscape services while also providing an educational opportunity on maintenance and care."

The president of The Petersburg Garden Club, Bettie Guthrie, and the club's Centre Hill chairman, Ronda Baers, brought lunch and refreshments to the Bartlett team during their Day of Service.

"Our club has nearly 50 years of history in stewarding Centre Hill, and to know that others care about maintaining it like we do means a lot to us," said Guthrie. "We always know that these treasured properties are in good hands with Bartlett."

entrance, where previous ground cover plantings had failed. In the fall of 2023, the GCV's Restoration Committee funded and arranged the installation of 18 New Gen "Independence" Boxwoods along the path to the museum entrance.

"The boxwood installation is one example of the many ongoing efforts GCV makes to support our restoration site partners," said Deneen Brannock, chairman of the Restoration Committee. "Thanks to the funds generated by the member clubs through Historic Garden Week, GCV is able to enhance the beauty of special historic public landscapes throughout Virginia."

Visiting Centre Hill

The mansion is open on Sundays from 1-4 p.m., or by appointment by calling 804-854-0870, and is located at 1 Centre Hill Court in Petersburg.

— Janet Rosser, GCV Restoration Committee Liaison to Centre Hill, The Ashland Garden Club.



Photos courtesy of Janet Rosser



Your Daffodils are Blooming – What to Do Next?

That welcome harbinger of spring, the daffodil, is blooming well right now. So it's time to think about the next steps in enjoying your bulbs.

By Janet Hickman,
Hillside Garden Club

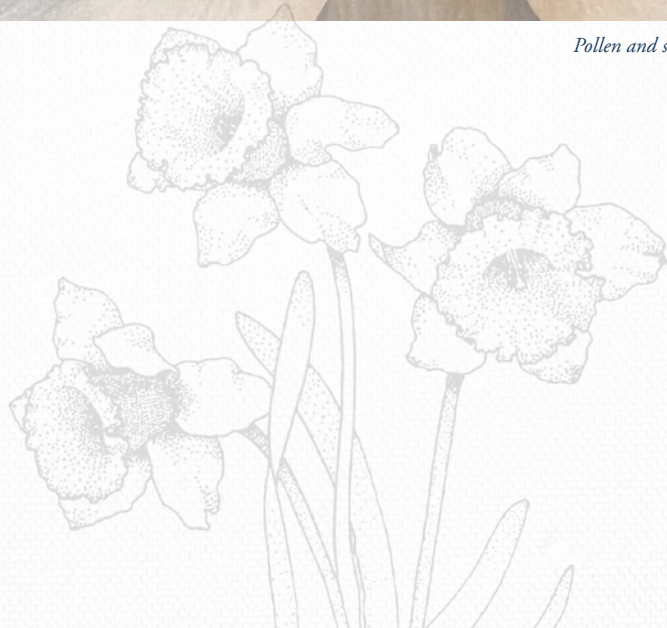
FIRST

Taking the best blooms to a daffodil show is a great first step. One of the largest in the country is the GCV's annual Daffodil Day, held this year on March 26, 2025, in Virginia Beach. There are also other American Daffodil Society-approved shows in Virginia including: the Virginia Daffodil Society Show, March 22-23, at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond; the Upperville Garden Club Show in Upperville on April 1; the Washington Daffodil Society Show in Alexandria, April 5-6; and the Gloucester Show, also April 5-6.

Each of these shows welcomes both novice and experienced exhibitors. The GCV website has links to printed and video information about how to enter a show, and each show has experienced exhibitors who are glad to offer help. You'll find these under Horticulture Resources.



Pollen and stigma



NEXT

Encourage the health of your bulbs for the best blooms next year. Allow the leaves to do their work of recharging the bulb. Let them grow at least six weeks or, even better, until they are brown and dry. Resist the temptation to “tidy up” by mowing, cutting, braiding, or tying the leaves.

Continue to water the daffodils while the leaves are growing. Daffodils like lots of water—but only when they want it. At least one inch per week is good while they are growing, but then let them stay dry for the summer. Staying too wet in the heat, for example, from automatic sprinkler systems, promotes fungal basal rot.

Daffodils generally do well without extra fertilizer. However, if they have been in the ground several years or aren't blooming as well as they used to, sprinkling on a low-nitrogen (10-20-30) fertilizer may be beneficial.

Another reason for decreasing blooms can be overcrowding as the bulbs increase and divide. Let the leaves finish their work before digging and separating crowded bulbs. In our area, June is a good month to dig bulbs. The dug bulbs can be separated and replanted immediately or stored in a cool dry place over the summer and planted in the fall (and shared with friends.)

TRY HYBRIDIZING

Another engaging activity with your blooming daffodils is trying hybridizing. It doesn't take any fancy equipment or arcane knowledge to create new daffodils. In fact, many famous show winners have been originated by amateur gardeners. It does take some time and patience, but it's fun to see a new daffodil from seeds you've tended.

The first step is fertilizing the bloom. If you look closely into the cup of the daffodil, you'll see six anthers with yellow pollen and one tube-like structure in the middle—the stigma. Once the pollen is looking fluffy, you take the pollen from one kind of



Don't strangle the leaves!

daffodil and dab it onto the stigma of a different variety. Tweezers or a tiny paintbrush works well for this step. Not all attempts will succeed (not all varieties are fertile), but if the cross is successful, the ovary—the bulge just behind the flower—will begin to swell in a few days. As the flower fades and dries up, the ovary will continue to swell, eventually cracking open and showing round, black shiny seeds. Rather than letting those seeds scatter to the ground, before the ovary opens, protect the maturing seedpod with a net bag.



Bagged seed pod

Harvest the seeds when the seedpod opens. Advice varies on the best timing for sowing the seeds: they may be planted immediately or stored for a few weeks. They can be planted in a bed but it is easier to watch them if started in a pot. Water when first planted and again in the early fall,

then keep slightly moist. The seedlings will look like a thin blade of grass at first.

PATIENCE

Now comes the part that takes patience: it can take three to eight years to see the first bloom. If you grow them the first two years in a pot, then the seedling bulbs should be large enough to plant in a bed, but will still need time to get large enough to bloom. It is very exciting when your seedling finally puts up its first bud.

Sometimes a bee will do the hybridizing naturally. It is not necessary to deadhead daffodils after bloom. Occasionally you will find a daffodil that has made a seedpod without help. (When my husband was a beekeeper and had hives near my daffodil beds, I would see more naturally pollinated daffodils.) These open-pollinated seeds are fun to grow just like the ones you deliberately hybridize.

Clearly, it is smart to begin hybridizing as young as possible to see the results of your experiments. I encourage doing this with children. But if you make new crosses every spring, eventually you will have a steady succession of new daffodils each year. Last April, when I was in Northern Ireland on the World Daffodil Tour, I was encouraged to see that Brian Duncan, one of the world's most famous hybridizers, is still collecting seeds from his daffodils at age 95. So, it's never too late to start.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT GROWING AND HYBRIDIZING DAFFODILS,

visit the website of the American Daffodil Society at daffodilusa.org.



The 2025 Virginia General Assembly Legislative Session

Garden Club of Virginia members from across the commonwealth braved the winter weather on Jan. 22, 2025, to gather in Richmond and advocate on behalf of the GCV mission during the 2025 Virginia General Assembly Legislative Session. Our members joined with other advocates from the Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) in St. Paul's Episcopal Church. GCV had a sponsorship table promoting our advocacy efforts and providing support for our members. After breakfast and presentations from VCN leaders, members headed to their representatives' offices for previously scheduled meetings.

Some members started the day in the House Agriculture Committee meeting where several bills supported by GCV were up for review, including the Invasive Plants Retail Signage bill. Other members headed to a meeting with Representative Betsy Carr from Richmond. After the Committee meeting, Delegate Holly Seibold greeted our group. Other advocates met with Senator Mark Peake from Lynchburg and Senator Scott Surovell from Fairfax.

After quickly regrouping at St. Paul's, the GCV advocates turned

their attention to working with Virginia's executive branch. We walked to the capitol and had a brief meeting with Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears. Then we had a thoughtful working meeting with Travis O. Rickman, deputy secretary of agriculture and forestry.

Throughout the day, our GCV advocates were greeted by their representatives with generosity. Senate leaders thanked GCV for past collaborations and suggested other projects on which the GCV could partner with state representatives to advance the common goals. It was an exciting day filled with GCV camaraderie and inspiration created by combining our voices, talents, and resources for the betterment of the commonwealth.

The day ended with a delicious lunch and wrap-up sessions organized by VCN. After lunch, Bootsie Rogers and Diane Thomas visited new members of the House and Senate to introduce GCV. They handed out background materials about GCV as well as details of our positions and supported bills for 2025. We hope to cultivate relationships with a broad bipartisan network for future partnership.

We continue to track legislation and encourage members to check the GCV website for updates and details on how they can add their voices in support of our mission and legislative policies.

The success of Legislative Day was made possible by the Legislative Subcommittee of the Conservation and Beautification Committee. Bootsie Rogers led the efforts of Anna Aquino, Kris Carbone, Eva Clarke, Olivia Garrett, and Sarah Hellewell to create the GCV Positions on 2025 Legislative Issues and curated a list of 25 bills for particular support by GCV advocates. Both are posted on the GCV website. Members had folders containing these documents and other information about GCV to share with their representatives. Laura Francis provided a beautiful display of dried native plants to decorate our table. 🌿

— Diane Thomas, GCV Conservation Committee Chairman, The Garden Club of Alexandria

The Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award Finalists

Two projects representing two distinct parts of the state are finalists for this prestigious GCV award. Once club votes are tabulated, the winner will be announced at the GCV Annual Meeting in Lynchburg in May.



1 The Elizabeth River Garden Club Eco-Landscape the Wilderness at Hoffer Creek Wildlife Preserve Portsmouth, Virginia

The Elizabeth River Garden Club (ERGC) has partnered with Hoffer Creek Wildlife Foundation (HCWF) for 25 years to conserve a unique 142-acre urban wildlife preserve in the city of Portsmouth. Myriad native wildlife is supported by this natural oasis. Outdoor enthusiasts, birders, nature photographers, students, researchers, and even those leery of wild spaces have free access to walking trails and scenic views six days per week, year-round. In recent years, ERGC funded a pollinator garden of native shrubs and perennials at the

gates to the preserve. The garden beautifies the entrance and provides food for pollinators. Butterflies flutter amongst the flowers, bees buzz about, and birds feast on seeds. However, the entrance to the trail system—an old road—regularly floods, and its openness undermines the surrounding natural habitat. The Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award will fund the planting of native trees and shrubs to absorb rainwater, naturalize the area, and enhance wildlife habitat. Benches and plant identification signs will provide an immersive and educational experience for all

visitors, especially those with disabilities, or unable to navigate the trails. This eco-landscape garden will create a sanctuary accessible to the public in the heart of the metropolis of Hampton Roads.

ABOUT THE BESSIE BOCOCK CARTER CONSERVATION AWARD

Established at the 2009 Annual Meeting, to fund implementation of a conservation project that will serve as a catalyst for community action, the Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award recognizes clubs that embrace projects relating to natural resource conservation or environmental protection within the commonwealth. This monetary award is voted on by GCV member clubs and announced at the GCV Annual Meeting.



Access to Nature and Outdoor Learning on the Cosby Trail Hillside Garden Club Lynchburg, Virginia

Camp Kum-Ba-Yah Nature Center (KBY) began as a summer day camp in 1950, which generations of children from all city neighborhoods have attended over the last 70+ years. In 2021, the 42-acre property was placed in a conservation easement, and the camp became the only nature center in the city expanding its mission to provide year-round natural space and environmental education for the entire community.

The 1.2-mile Cosby Trail is newly opened to the public and circumnavigates the property with accessibility to local neighborhoods from three entrances. The trail lacks a comprehensive marking system and identification of flora and fauna that would be of interest to hikers of this urban forest. Way-markers will encourage community visitors and school groups (including an adjacent 500-student elementary school) unfamiliar with hiking in the woods and invite currently hesitant residents to use the trail.

The Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award will fund interpretative signs identifying trees, plants, and habitat to promote familiarity and appreciation for wooded, natural areas, and conservation in a city with limited and dwindling outdoor space. KBY is the location of Lynchburg's Historic Garden Week Tour "marketplace" and children's activities so the Way-marker project will be featured to HGW visitors.

The Rise of Falling Gardens

GCV Fellowship to Study Historic James River Landscapes

by Candy Crosby, GCV Historic Landscape Fellowship Committee Chairman, Albemarle Garden Club

Nearly 30 years ago, the Garden Club of Virginia Restoration Committee awarded its first fellowship for the study of historic landscapes in Virginia. Funded by Historic Garden Week tour proceeds, the fellowships honor former GCV landscape architects Rudy J. Favretti and William D. Rieley.

The subject of study for the 2025 fellow are three National Historic Landmark properties located along the James River in Surry County: **Cedar Field Farm, Four Mile Tree, and Pleasant Point.**



Fellowship Committee field trip to Cedar Field Farm, Surry County, July 24, 2024



*ABOVE: View from Pleasant Point
RIGHT: Pleasant Point, Surry County*



Terraces at Pleasant Point

PROGRAM: Since 1996, the Garden Club of Virginia has supported 35 Fellows through the GCV Historic Landscape Research Fellowship Program.

OVERVIEW: In a continuing effort to build a comprehensive record of historic gardens in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Garden Club of Virginia offers research Fellowships in areas relating to Landscape Architecture and Historic Preservation for graduate students currently working towards an MLA or equivalent degree. The fellowships promote research and documentation of historic Virginia gardens.

Each completed comprehensive paper is published upon conclusion of the fellowship. Printed copies of the reports are held at the library of the Kent-Valentine House, the Virginia Museum of History & Culture, and the Cherokee Garden Research Library at the Atlanta History Center. To date, 32 published reports and site plans may be viewed on the GCV website.

SCOPE OF WORK: Under the guidance of professional landscape architects, students will:

- Travel to historic Virginia sites and gain valuable fieldwork experience.
- Create a comprehensive site record through compilation of research documentation, drawings and historical archives.
- Publish a comprehensive paper upon conclusion of the fellowship.
- Have their work represented in the Garden Club of Virginia's growing record of historic gardens, available on the Garden Club of Virginia's website.

FUNDING: Fellows receive a stipend for their work as well as compensation for project-related lodging and travel expenses.

SITE SELECTION: Sites are selected and reviewed carefully by the GCV Fellowship Committee and the GCV Restoration Committee and approved by the GCV's Board of Directors.

The GCV Historic Landscape Research Fellowship is funded by net proceeds from GCV's Historic Garden Week. The program supports the Garden Club of Virginia's mission to conserve the gifts of nature, restore and preserve historic landscapes, cultivate the love and knowledge of gardening, and lead future generations to build on this heritage.

For a list of the GCV fellows and their work, please visit GCVirginia.org

The landscapes of these Colonial era sites all share one common feature: a historic "falling garden," so called because the land by the house was terraced down to the James River.

The views of the sky and water are spectacular from these sites. A comparative study of these terraced landforms will be undertaken by a qualified graduate student in landscape architecture, historic preservation, landscape or architectural history, archeology, anthropology, history, or horticulture. In order to attract high caliber students, the net is cast wide. A generous stipend of \$10,000, in addition to lodging and travel expenses during three months of intense summer research, generates significant interest.

The fellow will be supervised by a team from Nelson Byrd Woltz, GCV's landscape architecture firm in Charlottesville, led by Jen Jessup, associate principal, and Jenny Lauer, project designer and cultural historian. The student will gain valuable fieldwork experience while compiling research documentation, measured drawings, and historical archives to create a comprehensive site record.

MEET THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE:



The Historic Landscape Research Fellowship aims to inspire a new generation of landscape architects, historians, and preservationists, exposing them to the skills and knowledge necessary to document and preserve historic sites. Here is what a student team wrote about their summer as restoration fellows:

“In addition to providing a unique educational experience, the Garden Club of Virginia is performing a valuable service for future scholars. The pace of development is fast today. The beautiful house and garden down the road may well be lost by tomorrow.”

— Penelope Heavner, George Washington University and Courtney Hinson, North Carolina State University

Garden Club of Virginia members, through their support of this fellowship, demonstrate their enduring dedication to preserving the state’s historic gardens and landscapes and creating a lasting legacy for generations to come. 🌿

- Candy Crosby, Chairman**
Albemarle Garden Club, Charlottesville
- Kris Carbone**
President, Garden Club of Virginia
The Garden Club of Danville, Danville

- Deneen Brannock**
Chairman, GCV Restoration Committee
The Augusta Garden Club, Staunton

- Anne Baldwin**
The Garden Club of Alexandria, Alexandria

- Staci Catron**
Director, Cherokee Garden Library
Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, Georgia

- Gordon W. Chappell**
Landscape Architect
Williamsburg

- Jack Gary**
Executive Director of Archaeology,
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Williamsburg

- Peter J. Hatch**
Gardener, Historian
Charlottesville

- Ann Heller**
Communications Coordinator
Garden Club of Virginia, Richmond

- Jen Jessup**
Associate Principal
Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects
Charlottesville

- Jenny Lauer**
Project Designer, Cultural Landscape
Historian
Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects
Charlottesville

- Calder Loth**
Senior Architectural Historian
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Richmond

- Nicholas M. Lucchetti**
Principal Investigator & Archeologist
James River Institute for Archaeology Inc.
Williamsburg

- Judy Perry**
The Elizabeth River Garden Club
Portsmouth

- Sue Thompson**
The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton
Richmond

The Fellowship Committee, a sub-committee of the Restoration Committee, chooses the sites and the fellows. The committee is composed of GCV members and an enthusiastic and generous group of professionals in the fields of landscape architecture, horticulture, historic preservation, archaeology, and education. Midway through the summer, the fellow will present their initial findings to the committee for feedback. At the end of the three-month period, another presentation is made. If circumstances allow, the fellow will present their findings at the GCV Board of Governors Meeting.

A requirement of the fellowship is a final report, which details the findings and summarizes the research. This comprehensive document is added to the collection of Restoration Fellowship reports on the GCV website (GCVirginia.org) which, to date, has 32 reports. The sites studied span the state, from Blacksburg to the Northern Neck, Critz in Southside, to Alexandria and points in between. This archive is an invaluable contribution to the study of Virginia’s rich cultural heritage and is freely shared with GCV members, academics, and public audiences.



ABOVE: Four Mile Tree, Surry County—Nick Lucchetti, Willi Graham, Calder Loth in foreground
HERE: View from Four Mile Tree



Four Mile Tree interior under restoration



GCV DISTRICT 1



The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton

RICHMOND

The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton gathered for two botanical arts hands-on workshops on Jan. 22. Fellow member and botanical arts expert extraordinaire Peyton Wells led us through the basics and mechanics of botanical arts. We all came away as “Dogwood Divas” and enjoyed learning together in a small setting, discovering new botanical artists in our midst.

—Ellen Buoyer



The Hampton Roads Garden Club

HAMPTON ROADS

The Hampton Roads Garden Club held its annual Poinsettia Sale again this fall. For more than 40 years, members have sold poinsettias to family, friends, businesses, and churches as one of the club’s fundraisers. The first week in December brings Pick Up/Delivery Day which is a fun workday for our members. Partnering with our local garden

center, cars line up to pick up orders and deliver them.

The Poinsettia Committee and volunteer members complete the orders with colorful poinsettias and load them into the trunks of cars and beds of

trucks to be delivered to customers to enjoy during the holidays. The sale has proved to be a wonderful way for club members to reconnect with annual customers who have supported the club’s community projects for many years.

—Mary Johnson



GCV DISTRICT 3



The Garden Club of Gloucester and Mathews

GLOUCESTER

Members of the Garden Club of Gloucester & Mathews collected over 200 pieces of winter outerwear for men, women, and children for Gloucester and Mathews Counties. The club’s efforts were led by board member and past president Lynn Hornsby with the intention of

specifically donating the items to our local community. “Helping the community at this time of the year was particularly gratifying,” says Lynn, “and we hope to continue our club coat drive in future years.

The Beautification Committee of the Garden Club of Gloucester

and Mathews also assembled and donated over 40 wreaths for residents of Sanders Assisted Living, the historic district in Mathews County, and the Courthouse historic buildings, and hung 225 linear feet of fresh pine roping. “Our garden club members look forward to the holiday decorating of the historic districts of Gloucester and Mathews every year,” said Beth Tripp, holiday co-chairman with Eleanor Gardner.

—Lynne Bohon Manning



The Garden Club of the Northern Neck

NORTHERN NECK

The Garden Club of the Northern Neck gathered at Stratford Hall in early December for its annual greenery workshop and Christmas luncheon, a highly anticipated tradition that marks the beginning of the holiday season. Members met in the Council House to create wreaths and swags to adorn the buildings and grounds of this historic landmark. Afterward, everyone enjoyed lunch prepared by board members in the DuPont Library, celebrating friendship and festive cheer.

—Vicki Levering





GCV DISTRICT 3

The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club

FREDERICKSBURG

2024 was the Centennial Celebration year for Rappahannock Valley Garden Club! We kicked-off our year with a meeting in the shadow of the Mary Washington Monument, a GCV restoration site. The site has a rich history and is currently the subject of a capital campaign, of which many of our members are involved, that has raised over \$1,000,000! The picture left depicts The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club at our September meeting, celebrating this local restoration project.

—Erma Baker



The Martinsville Garden Club

MARTINSVILLE

One never knows what networking conversations at a GCV meeting may inspire. The Martinsville Garden Club has implemented a fundraising idea picked up from just such a gathering. For the past two years our club has hosted a White Elephant Sale near the beginning of November, just in time for the gift-giving season.

For the sale/auction, each club member is asked to donate an item or group of items that have a minimum value of



\$50.00. Members can elect to gift \$50.00 instead. We have been fortunate that the innovative ideas for contributions have included expressing some members' talents, such as art, needle work or a collector's vintage collectable. The holiday season led way to many gift baskets that well exceeded the \$50.00 minimum.

The sale event is a social evening held in a spacious and well known inn. Club members,

spouses, and invited guests meandered through the rooms of displayed items, wine in hand, and put their name and bid amount on a form placed by the displayed item. A few bid wars have ensued!

This event has not only brought in profit for the club, but also full participation and continued camaraderie for members.

—Becky Farrar & Shar Peitz



GCV DISTRICT 4

The Garden Club of Danville

DANVILLE

On a warm December day, seven ladies of The Garden Club of Danville gathered at the Old Grove Street Cemetery to plant about 200 native plants. Of these plants, 100 were Virginia bluebells, which is our official club flower. They were planted such that blooms will resemble a waterway flowing down the hill. We all determined that a cordless drill with an auger on the end is the BEST gardening tool!



In September 2023, our club embarked on a project titled, "The Preservation, Conservation, and Restoration of the Old Grove Street Cemetery." The first phase was the installation of a pathway meandering through the property, a brick pad area with seating, and another seating space in the back of the area. The second phase of the project was the development of a landscaping plan that contained mainly native plants to attract pollinators with an emphasis on low maintenance.

In November 2024, 29 trees and 49 shrubs were planted. That, along with the December perennial planting, completed about 75 percent of the landscaping phase.

Restoration of the tomb boxes, brickwork, and tombstones is the next phase of the project. The final phase will be the restoration of the ironwork. The property will be showcased during Historic Garden Week, featuring local actors as some of the Cemetery's more famous residents.

—Lisa Wintrode



Mill Mountain Garden Club

ROANOKE

Greetings from the Mill Mountain Garden Club in Roanoke! We wanted to share the results of an amazing collaboration between our Horticulture and Wildflower Committees. We have been experimenting with propagating native plants in our own wildflower garden. *Rhododendron maximums* were the most successful, and at a local council meeting last fall, we sold 10 of these plantings and now have pre-orders for 50 more for spring of 2025. We created several propagation beds at our wildflower garden and have planted the remaining 2024

young rhododendron for visitors to observe as they enjoy our beautiful garden.

With the success of the propagation trials, we assembled a mighty group of members to begin a more massive propagation this fall. Garden club members learned how to cut, shave, prepare and pot over 100 more rhododendron cuttings from our own mature shrubs. Currently the plantings are under grow lights at our Horticulture Chairman's home where they will live until spring when we plan on packaging and selling more of these at our Historic Garden Week tour headquarters.

—Sallie Lake





GCV DISTRICT 5

Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club

FAUQUIER AND LOUDON

Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club welcomed our new Provisional member, Sophie Langenberg, just in time for a creative wreath-making workshop using natural elements presented by Susan Parkinson. Please enjoy photos from the event.

—Elizabeth Court



The Little Garden Club of Winchester

WINCHESTER

A favorite Little Garden Club of Winchester activity is a workshop, working in teams to create an arrangement from Member Resources, Contemporary Floral Styles, and setting out horticulture. As we work, we discuss what judges might look for and the guidelines for that style. Then the different arrangements and horticulture are judged, and we learn from each other and more experienced members.

—Jackie Koirtyohann



Leesburg Garden Club

LEESBURG

In August, the Leesburg Garden Club hosted a flower show at Spring Arbor, a senior Assisted Living community in Leesburg. Organized by June Hambrick, Linda MacLean, and Tracy Coffing, the show followed GCV guidelines with an Artistic Division (four classes, 24 entries) and a Horticulture Division (eight classes, 59 entries). Points earned will be put toward the LGC annual awards for Artistic and Horticultural Achievement. Members of two local garden clubs also participated.

Tremendous effort by several club members established a professional show with GCV judges from the Fauquier & Loudoun and Winchester-Clarke garden clubs. The Spring Arbor staff and many residents were effusive in their praise for the event. The residents enjoyed



placing small hearts next to their favorite arrangement or specimen. LGC members were gratified and humbled by many compliments and smiles all around.

There is already talk of doing another local community show next year. The LGC certainly

encourages other GCV clubs to hold shows to share their talents with their communities. And it encourages community involvement and club camaraderie... a great, memorable day!

Leesburg Garden Club member Suzi Worsham received a 2024



GCV Horticulture Award of Merit. Suzi has served in leadership roles with the American Daffodil Society and played an active role in GCV's 2024 Horticulture Field Day. Suzi's property, where she has planted more than 34,000 daffodil bulbs over the years, provided the venue for HFD's luncheon and speaker.

Suzi, who is nearing the end of her GCV Board of Directors term as a District at Large representative, also serves on the GCV's Horticulture and Lily committees. She chairs LGC's Horticulture committee and promotes the lily and daffodil collections. She also received LGC's Chamberlin Bowl for outstanding horticulture achievement. Suzi serves on the Boards of the Washington Daffodil Society, the Potomac Lily Society and is an active member of the North American Lily Society.

—Judy Gerow



GCV DISTRICT 5

The Warrenton Garden Club

WARRENTON

It has been a busy time at The Warrenton Garden Club! Lots of travel and meeting wonderful smart women across Virginia.

A favorite field trip was held in November at the Carver Center Food Enterprise Program—a reclaimed school with a historic past that now feeds our communities with a multi-level approach. I would absolutely recommend a garden club visit to this astounding facility. It is a hidden gem.

At our most recent meeting, we held a conservation forum on native flowers that was open to the public. The Clifton Institute made a wonderful presentation as did a newer foundation—Sustainability Matters. This is an organization that wants our county landfills to grow native wild flowers on their defunct landfills. Using local talent, it's working. Andrea McGimsey may be coming to your area and please welcome her.

—M. Douglas Wise

The Nansemond River Garden Club

SUFFOLK

This past year at our annual Christmas Party we “crowned” two of our members for more than 50 years of service to our club and GCV. Mary Lawrence Harrell and Nita Bagnell have been a united force that has led us through the years with their talents, love of



GCV DISTRICT 6



The Elizabeth River Garden Club

PORTSMOUTH

Members of The Elizabeth River Garden Club met to arrange flowers for The Elizabeth River Project's Star Business

Recognition Luncheon. The rare Portsmouth snow didn't make it easy, but we got it done, creating more than 40 arrangements! And a good time was had by all!

—Jane Cherry



gardening, knowledge, and support. Both are past presidents of our club and served in many capacities. Can you imagine all the HGWs they have participated in through the

years? Wow! And Nita's daughter, Betsy Totten, just became a member of NRGV!

So we Salute Our Garden Queens, Mary Lawrence and Nita
—Linda N. Minnix

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT CONVERSATION

A Celebration of Historic Garden Week

May 23, 2025

10 a.m. · Zoom



Each session features small group discussions and a Q&A session with our subject expert(s) and promises to delight and inspire conversation between fellow nature-lovers.



GARDEN CLUB
OF VIRGINIA

CULTIVATING CONVERSATIONS

FREE! GCV MEMBERS-ONLY MONTHLY VIRTUAL LEARNING SERIES,
PRESENTED BY MEMBER EXPERTS

Carla Passerello

DOLLEY MADISON GARDEN CLUB

Journal:
Tell us about yourself.

Carla: My husband Kevin and I live on our 100-acre farm in Orange, Virginia, near Montpelier, which we bought in 2013. Our house is circa 1840. I'm the one who always wanted a farm. My husband's idea of green space is a country club. But he has come around! Our eldest daughter lives in Washington, DC; our youngest and her family live in Richmond, and our son lives in Alexandria.

We are not old school farmers. We have chickens, horses and I keep honeybees. My honey is sold at Barbourville Vineyards. I have an orchard and grow a vegetable garden and play around with landscape design. But about 30 acres of the farm are wooded with another 25 acres we have turned into native plant meadows. Our objective with the farm is to create habitat for native wildlife. One big success has been to create "rough edges" surrounding the fields and buffering the woods. This habitat project has brought us a success seven years in the making now that native quails have returned to the property. We can hear them calling "bob white!" When you steward that much land, you come to understand the complex and interconnected relationship between the creatures that live there and understand how much we depend on them for our own quality of life and survival.



I have been a member of Dolley Madison Garden Club since 2013. I've served as the Conservation Committee chairman three times, chairman of HGW in 2022, was vice president, and president of the club from 2019-2021, and chairman of the Visiting Gardens Committee. Our club is also a Garden Club of America club. I have been working in the conservation arena for both GCV and GCA.

By training and trade, I am an interior designer and have worked professionally, still dabbling, in that field. But my love of gardening has developed into a love for garden design. I am a "fair flower designer" and I love horticulture. I would love to do more in the horticulture side of garden club.

J: You are well known as a conservationist and environmentalist in GCV. What inspired your passion for our planet?

CP: My conservation work came about through my love of gardening. It's in my DNA. My grandfather farmed in Preston County, West Virginia, which until the Civil War was part of Virginia. He was a naturalist who took us into the fields and showed us what to look for in nature. He taught us the names of the surrounding trees by bringing the knowledge to us simply by walking in the woods. He said when we saw a tree with "mittens" you know that's a sassafras. My dad was a "gentleman" farmer, whose career was in New York City. He would give us a pack of seeds and say 'There's a good spot of dirt over there. Go see what you can grow.' They showed us throughout life it was our responsibility to respect and preserve nature.

J: DMGC is also a GCA club. How do you balance that work?



CP: It's hard at times. But GCV and GCA have both allowed me to pursue conservation. I think that has been mutually beneficial to both organizations. My first loyalty is to Virginia, but a national perspective is critical to the work.

J: What leadership roles have you held in the conservation and environmental arena?

CP: As I said, I was Conservation Chairman at DMGC. I've served on the GCV Conservation & Beautification Committee and the Legislative Subcommittee, represented GCV on the Virginia Invasive Plants Working Group for the past four years and remain involved with GCV as a conservation legislative advocate. I am currently co-chairman of the GCA National Affairs & Legislative Conference which draws 300 members to advocate for conservation and environmental legislation at the federal level.

J: Can you expand on your work with the Invasive Plants Working Group?

CP: The working group was formed because of legislation that directed the state to examine the scourge of invasive plants plaguing Virginia. It was costing the state millions of dollars to try to control and/or eradicate these plants. Farms, gardens, wetlands, and backyard vegetable plots have all been impacted by invasive non-native plants. The Working Group comprises 25 conservation and industry groups that have argued and hashed out over four years what each entity needed and wanted. The plant nursery industry had to be considered and maintain viability. The

conservationists wanted to eradicate invasive plants and the damage they cause short and long term. What could be done?

I brought this opportunity to serve on the task force to then-GCV President Missy Buckingham and then Conservation & Beautification Committee Chairman Allison Clock. In line with GCV policy, Missy and Allison assessed the opportunity weighing all sides of the issues for GCV to participate via me in this critical conservation work. It makes me very proud that GCV is willing to expand the scope of our work to continue to make a difference in conservation in Virginia. A similar situation started with Heidi James' passion for the Bee City initiative. GCV has now embraced Heidi's work and inspired member clubs to work to make their cities Bee Cities. I see these two initiatives as examples of GCV's courage and vision now, just like the ladies who started in the 1920s.

J: Of what volunteer achievement are you most proud?

CP: Certainly, helping to create a network of like-minded conservationists across the state. There's strength in numbers and when organizations like GCV, Audubon Society, Wetlands Watch and Chesapeake Bay Foundation join forces we educate and inspire people to act. Networks are created whenever people work together but GCV has a friendlier, diplomatic approach.

J: If you could move forward in time 5-10 years, what would you like most to achieve?

CP: I would love to see every homeowner doing work in their own backyards to build habitat for wild things. I am currently working to create a network of stakeholders in Fairfax and Loudoun counties, and my sister is engaged with this work in Charlottesville to influence HOAs to remove invasive plants and plant natives. As housing developments expand exponentially in our region,



HOAs represent acres and acres of green space as do the individual residences. If we all work together to plant natives in common green spaces and in homeowners' yards, no matter how small, we can achieve Doug Tallamy's vision of restoring wildlife habitat in urban and suburban areas. This would go a long way toward helping our wildlife, birds and pollinators who are really struggling to survive right now.

J: Do you have any time for hobbies? If so, what are they?

CP: I'm a botanist at heart. I dream of walking my own land to journal, draw, and paint what I see. I want to be Nancy Lancaster in my 80s, wearing my Wellies in my garden with a spade. I am an old house enthusiast, too. We've just bought a 1910 Albert F. Hunt designed house in Richmond. It's a money pit! I love to get right in there and strip woodwork and tile! I also love to cook, to make something from my garden and have a glass of wine with friends.

J: Tell us the person, place or experience that formed you into the person you are today.

CP: Easily my grandfather and my dad. My dad was the most intellectually curious person I have ever known. He gave us the sense we could do anything if we tried. My grandfather gave me my love of farming and getting lost in the woods.

J: If you could go back in time, where would you stop and why?

CP: Probably the 1880s. It was a time of exciting progress with electricity, radio, automobiles, industrialization. I'd want to

caution people to be careful and not lose sight of what you love. Progress often threatens what we value most long term.

J: What is your best trait?

CP: Determination.

J: What is your worst trait?

CP: Impatience. I'm a terrible golfer!

J: What characteristic do you most value in a friend?

CP: Compassion for others. Not necessarily for me, but definitely for others.

J: When and where are you at your most creative?

CP: The morning. The beginning of the day outside. Even if I am working inside, I have to at least look outside.

J: If you were to host a dinner party and invite five guests (alive or dead), who would they be and what would you serve them?

CP: Thomas Jefferson. I want to ask him how he kept his love for gardening despite his many garden failures. Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*. Beatrix Ferrand, Victorian female landscape architect. Henry David Thoreau, and John Muir. I would serve something from my garden—there's nothing better than a fresh tomato.

J: What living person do you most admire?

CP: Probably José Andrés. His World Central Kitchen is on the spot for every major disaster doing extraordinary work to feed the world's poor and marginalized. And he is a truly joyful person. Of course you can't get into his restaurant in DC... 🌱

A Force With Nature

Master floral designer Ariella Chezar was the presenter for GCV's Flower Arranging School at History Blooms on Feb. 28. Her creations have graced the covers of major lifestyle magazines, and she is a leader in the "farm to flower" movement.



Cathy Lee from The Boxwood Garden Club shares her thoughts on Chezar's most recent book, "Home In Bloom."

From the moment you open the pages of Ariella Chezar's book, "Home in Bloom," you are inspired and mesmerized. The photographs of her designs draw you in and you want to see more. Just reading the chapter titles, *A Walk on the Wild Side, Welcome, Nourish, Celebrate, Pause, and Wilding,* one can hardly wait to see what comes next.

The designs she creates are a feast for the eyes: graceful and overflowing, bold, yet soft.

They have a sense of place and natural style. They are lush yet have an air of simplicity. Her style was formed from roots tracing back to her Dutch mother's love of flowers. Chezar remembers creating Christmas wreaths and selling them on the street in New York city City at age 18. She has always incorporated wild elements in her designs, and encourages arrangers to explore in their own yards, the woods, fields or even city parks. It is not the perfect bloom but nature itself that speaks to her. "Bring nature into your home and it will bloom," she says. 🌿

HERE ARE A FEW OTHER ARRANGING TIPS CHEZAR ENCOURAGES READERS TO THINK ABOUT:

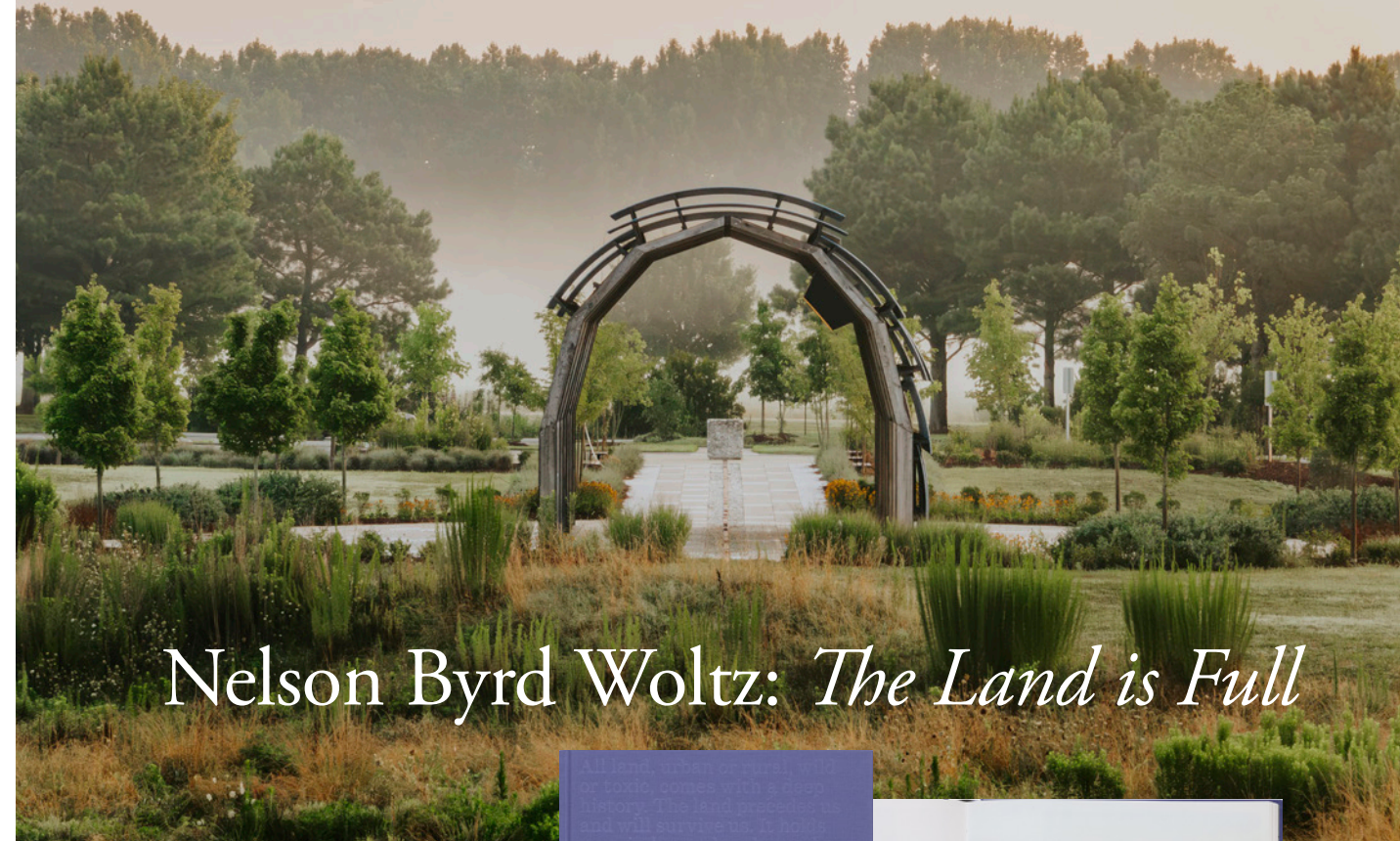
- Color is the first concern when choosing flowers for a room.
- Color is also paramount when combining flowers.
- The right vase is as important as the flowers or stems which fill it.
- Sometimes less is more.
- Single blooms are effective – variety comes from massing the flowers in different heights.
- Always work with the season.

She incorporates many other suggestions in the pages. Perhaps you will want to try some of them in your next arrangement. I invite you to turn the pages of this book and be inspired to create from nature.



"My favorite homes welcome guests with flowers" says Chezar. What a lovely and inviting thought — one our Garden Club of Virginia arrangers understand so well as we welcome guests for Historic Garden Week.

Photos courtesy of Ariella Chezar



Nelson Byrd Woltz: *The Land is Full*



Photos courtesy of Nelson Byrd Woltz.

"The NBW process happens through research and dialogue, with space to assess and then respond with respect in hearing the stories and understanding of history."

This celebration of parks and public gardens is the latest book by Nelson Byrd Woltz, one of the most in-demand and respected landscape architecture firms, as well as the GCV's landscape architect. *The Land is Full* was published last year by Phaidon.

In it, 12 of NBW's projects are profiled and accompanied by essays from noted scholars and experts. Each illustrates the power of design to create vital public realms at the heart of communities.

Through the firm's process, ecological and cultural histories are revealed and integrated into meaningful public experiences. Featured projects range from the revitalization of Memorial Park in Houston, a 1,500-acre landscape that interweaves city infrastructure with a vibrant ecology, to the reclaiming of a burial ground adjacent to the Brooklyn Naval Yard as a contemplative meadow filled with native plants, pollinators, and birds. 🌿

SAVE THE DATES

2025

- March 26** | Daffodil Day, Virginia Wesleyan University, *Virginia Beach*
- April 26–May 3** | Historic Garden Week
- May 5** | Photography Workshop: Spring Bird Photography
- May 16** | Horticulture Field Day, *Fredericksburg*
- May 19–21** | GCV Annual Meeting, *Lynchburg*
- May 23** | Cultivating Conversations: A Celebration of Historic Garden Week
- June 1** | Nomination deadline for Dugdale Award for Meritorious Achievement in Conservation
- June 1** | Nomination deadline for Conservation Educator Award
- June 1** | Nomination deadline for the Helen and Tayloe Murphy Conservation Leadership in Government Award
- June 2** | Photography Workshop: Outsmarting your Smart Phone
- June 18** | *Lilies in Bloom*, hosted by The Garden Club of the Northern Neck, *Irvington*
- June 24** | Presidents Day, *Richmond*
- June 25** | HGW Boot Camp, *Richmond*
- October 14–15** | Board of Governors, hosted by The Brunswick Garden Club, *South Hill*
- November 1** | Nomination deadline for Bessie Bocoock Carter Conservation Award
- December 1** | Nomination deadline for Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement

CALLING ALL GCV ARTISTS!

Garden Club of Virginia members are a creative bunch, and featuring the work of GCV artists on the cover of the *Journal* is a much anticipated tradition. Our issues mirror the seasons—spring, summer, fall, winter—and cover art corresponds accordingly. Submit your artwork for cover art consideration. Email high-resolution JPG files to Journal@GCVirginia.org or submit online at GCVirginia.org



Coreopsis lanceolata



GARDEN CLUB
OF VIRGINIA

Historic Garden Week

TOURS STATEWIDE

April 26-May 3, 2025

Proceeds fund the restoration of Virginia's historic public gardens and a research fellowship program.

For a complete listing of tours and to purchase tickets, please visit VaGardenWeek.org

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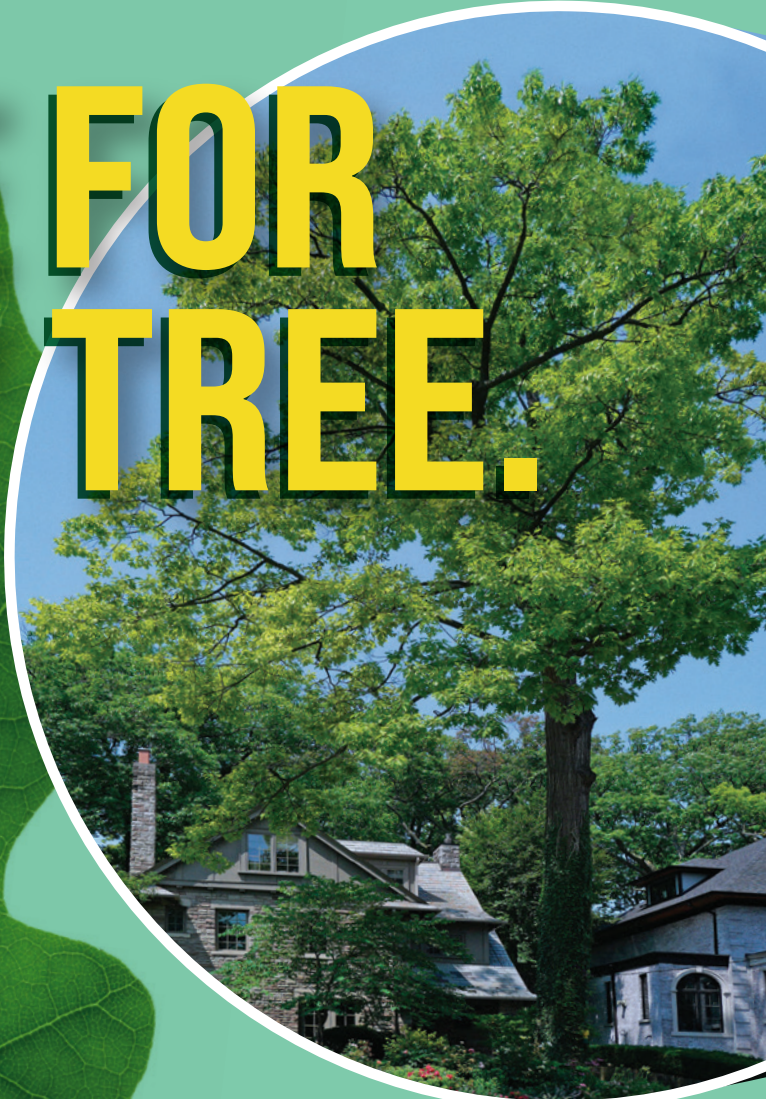
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