

# GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA JOURNAL

Summer 2026 | Volume LXXI | No. 3



## INSIDE

Annual Meeting in Roanoke | Massie Medal  
Lily Show and Horticulture Field Day



The Charlottesville Garden Club

Tay Gwaltney Flower Arranging School  
*Presents:*

## “The Living Line”

Experience a Live Ikebana Performance—Rarely Seen Outside Japan



featuring  
**Louise Worner**

*Internationally Acclaimed Sogetsu Ikebana Artist*

Date: Monday, October 12, 2026 Doors Open 9:30 a.m.

Location: St. Anne's-Belfield School | Grisham Hall Auditorium  
Charlottesville, Virginia

Admission: Performance & Evening Reception at Caspari— \$50  
Full Day Package (Limit 25) — \$175  
Includes Performance, Workshop, Lunch, Specialty  
Vendors & Evening Reception at Caspari

Information

& Tickets: [www.TheCharlottesvilleGardenClub.com](http://www.TheCharlottesvilleGardenClub.com)



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# GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA JOURNAL

Summer 2026 | Volume LXXIII | No. 3

## 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](http://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](mailto:journal@gcvirginia.org).

## PUBLICATION SCHEDULE & DEADLINES

| ISSUES | PUBLISHES IN | SUBMISSION DEADLINE | RESERVE DEADLINE |
|--------|--------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Spring | May          | March 15            | February 15      |
| Summer | August       | June 15             | May 15           |
| Fall   | November     | September 8         | August 8         |
| Winter | February     | December 8          | November 8       |

## ADVERTISING

Advertising inquiries are welcome. Discounts are available to clubs and club members; frequency discounts are also available.

For a rate sheet or more information, visit the GCV website at [gcvirginia.org](http://gcvirginia.org) or contact *Journal* Ad Sales Manager at [journalads@gcvirginia.org](mailto:journalads@gcvirginia.org).

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

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7/31/2026

## 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.

## GCV JOURNAL 2026 COMMITTEE

The Garden Club of Virginia *Journal* is produced by a broad group of individuals, including several contributing writers. Their names are included in the article bylines throughout this publication. The editing and advertising team consists of the following:

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Ann Heller



ABOVE LEFT  
*Historic Garden Week*

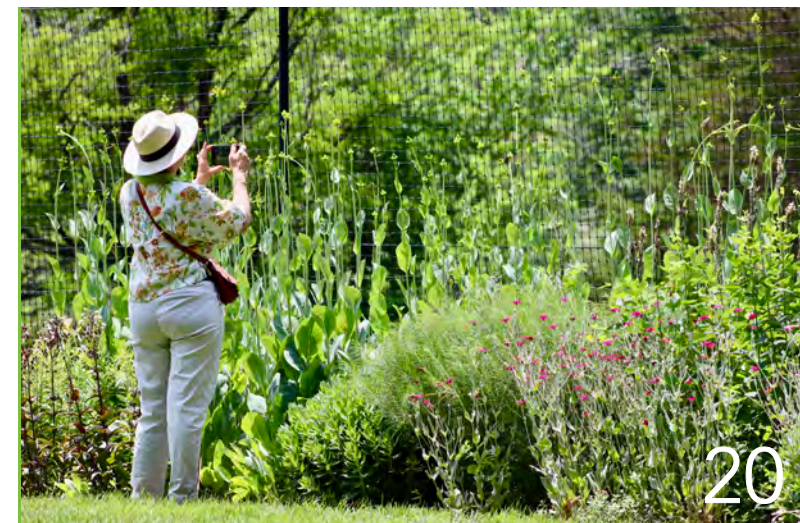
ABOVE RIGHT  
*Horticulture Field Day in Charlottesville*

COVER ART:  
*Hummingbird by Mary Lou Barritt*



TOP  
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ABOVE  
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- Annual Meeting and award winners:** Reflections on a wildflower-themed gathering that mixed business, pleasure, and celebration
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## SNIPS

- GCV clubs spotlight their recent programs and activities!** Submit your club's news on the GCV website by selecting "Submit Stories"

## END NOTES

- Meet the President:** Jennifer Kelley
- Horticulture Tip:** Gardening during drought
- GCV Calendar:** Important dates to remember



## MARY LOU BARRITT

Roanoke Valley Garden Club

Fifty years ago when Mary Lou Barritt and her husband purchased their Roanoke home, there were 25 rose bushes in the backyard. Mary Lou had two young children with another on the way and little desire to spray chemicals to maintain roses. So she dug up the rose bushes and started planting a variety of plants; her goal was achieving year-round bloom. Soon

the pollinators arrived, providing birdsong in the background and inspiration for her photography.

Today Mary Lou's garden is 75 percent native plants, including the scarlet bee balm (*Monarda didyma*) that the ruby-throated hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) is visiting in Mary Lou's striking photograph featured on the *Journal* cover.

"Patience and a very fast shutter

speed are required," according to Mary Lou, who used her Canon EOS R5 Mirrorless camera with a telephoto lens to capture this image. "I love returning from any outing or trip with photographs, whether it be a walk on the Greenway or a recent birding trip to the Dakotas and Wyoming," where she took 800 photos of birds, flowers, and the landscape. Mary Lou's photos have appeared on native plant calendars, and she has donated photos to the local National Public Radio station fundraiser.

After retiring from a nursing career, Mary Lou has followed her interest in nature with like-minded others in organizations that allow her to explore her passions. Mary Lou is a Virginia Native Plant Society member, an active member of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club, and a member of Roanoke Valley Garden Club. Since joining the garden club in 2013, she has chaired and served on the beautification committee, whose members maintain and plant areas at the Virginia Museum of Transportation and Wasena Park, both club projects.

"I want the next two generations to inherit my interest in the natural world," says Mary Lou. She fosters this interest by sharing her stunning photographs and enthusiasm for native plant gardening. 🌿

—Jo Silvers, The Garden Club of Danville



Monarch (immediately above),  
Great Spangled Fritillary on  
Common Milkweed (above left),  
Hummingbird (top & cover)



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## LOOKING AHEAD WITH FOCUS ON MEMBERS

It is with great humility and gratitude that I begin my service as the 54th president of the Garden Club of Virginia. I am in awe of the former presidents who have gone before me. Since 1920, the visionary

leaders of the GCV have focused on the same areas of interest outlined in our current mission and vision statements. While our numbers have increased and technology and demographics have changed tremendously, we still share the same values and interests. Above all else, we all cherish the relationships that are forged as we contribute to the GCV's work.

Our lives are moving at an incredible speed while we find ourselves in a globally connected world, undergoing paradigm shifts of epic proportions. Slowing down and focusing on our natural environment with its beauty, serenity, and simplicity inspires me to approach our work in a similar manner. I encourage us all to follow our strategic plan and "keep it simple and sustainable."

This issue of the *Journal* highlights the wonderful activities of the GCV over the past several months. The leadership, hard work, generosity, and time that all our volunteers give to our organization make the events, activities, and community involvement celebrated in this issue of the *Journal* so successful. The accomplishments of the Garden Club of Virginia are solely because of the collective activity of the 48 member clubs and their membership.

This summer will focus on transitioning for most of our leadership and committees. We look forward to coming together over the next year to support the member club activities and provide valuable programming for the GCV members and the public. The board members and the GCV committee chairmen welcome your comments and ideas. We all look forward to your active participation in the Garden Club of Virginia.

I am excited about the opportunity to travel across the commonwealth over the next two years to visit our clubs and get to know the exceptional members of the GCV! We are a unique organization with the ability to continue making a lasting impression on our natural environment and on the individuals who value our mission. Thank you for allowing me to serve in this capacity.

*Jennifer Kelley*

Jennifer Kelley  
GCV President 2026-2028







 **GCV'S Next "Native MVP" for 2026-2027**  
*It's your turn to vote on GCV's next Native Most Valuable Plant!*

by Anna Aquino, The Boxwood Garden Club

Garden Club of Virginia announced its new Native Most Valuable Plant (MVP) program at the 2025 Board of Governors meeting along with the winner for 2025-26, *Baptisia australis*, commonly known as blue false indigo. Members from the Conservation, Horticulture, and Historic Garden Week committees selected *Baptisia australis* as the first Native MVP, but going

forward, Native MVPs will be selected by GCV member clubs. Ballots will be emailed to clubs in August, and the 2026-27 Native MVP winner will be announced at the Board of Governors meeting in October.

April is now Native Plant Month in Virginia, thanks to the advocacy efforts of Katie van Buren of The Garden Club of Norfolk.

In celebration, GCV will name its annual Native MVP selection and promote it during Historic Garden Week and other events throughout the year. 



1

**WILD BERGAMOT/  
WILD MONARDA**  
Species: *Monarda fistulosa*  
Family: Lamiaceae  
Zone: 3 to 9



This lovely lavender member of the mint family attracts scores of species of pollinators, even hummingbirds. Bergamot is easy to grow. Dry to medium moisture, and rocky, clayey, crummy soils are all the better. Once rooted, this native plant has low water needs. Like other plants in the mint family, leaves and flowers are highly fragrant and repugnant to deer and rabbits. Naturalize the seeds after the first hard frost or plant pots in the garden in full sun to light shade. Although mildew resistant, be sure to give it an airy place to grow. Flowering midsummer into September, it hosts over 13 species of butterflies and moths. Wild bergamot freely and manageably self-sows.

Height: **2' to 4'**  
Spread: **2' to 3'**

*All photos courtesy of Anna Aquino, The Boxwood Garden Club and Wikipedia Commons unless otherwise noted.*

2

**GOLDEN RAGWORT**  
Species: *Packera aurea*  
Family: Asteraceae  
Zone: 3 to 8



Forget invasive periwinkle, this native rhizomatous groundcover is not only a bright spot in a shady place, but its foliage is evergreen (semi-evergreen in tough winters) in zones 6 to 8, which is most of Virginia. Yellow disc and ray flowers unfurl from purple buds in mid-March through early summer, and the heart-shaped basal leaf rosettes remain year-round. Carefree golden ragwort also thrives in full sun and average soil moisture, and accepts wet conditions. This spring-flowering perennial's ability to grow into large colonies makes it a replacement for invasive groundcovers. Moreover, its shallow roots lend itself to planting under shrubs and trees. This perennial is one of the few caterpillar hosts for the blue metalmark butterfly. Look for small bees, unique flies, carpenter bees, cuckoo bees, sweat bees, and caterpillars. Deer and rabbits do not find the foliage appealing. Golden ragwort freely and manageably self-sows.

Height: **.5' to 2.5' with flowers**  
Spread: **rhizomatous**

3

**CULVER'S ROOT**  
Species: *Veronicastrum virginicum*  
Family: Plantaginaceae  
Zone: 3 to 8



This magnificent Virginia native is a true showstopper with its white to pale blue candelabra-like inflorescences opening from the top-down beginning in late spring and flowering far into the summer. Full sun will keep the stems erect. Average garden soil is fine, while it prospers in well-drained wet soil. It is the only host plant for the specialist Culver's root borer moth whose global rank is vulnerable to imperiled. Additionally, the plant's conservation status is imperiled or critically imperiled in 13 states. Culver's root supports bumblebees, mason bees, sweat bees, leafcutter bees, long tongue and short tongue bees, hoverflies, butterflies, moths, flower flies, beneficial wasps, and soldier beetles. Unpalatable foliage deters deer. Culver's root freely and manageably self-sows.

Height: **4' to 7'**  
Spread: **2' to 4'**





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## Celebrate America 250 — Plant a Tree!



Nearly 100 years ago our GCV predecessors planted over 200 dogwoods across Virginia. In partnership with Bartlett Tree Experts and Casey Trees, the GCV is offering each member club a gift for America250 — the opportunity to plant a native tree in a public space in their community.

Rob Allen, Bartlett Tree Experts' Vice President of Virginia and Tennessee Regions, set the stage for this exciting project at the May Annual Meeting by noting the critical role trees played in America's formation.

**The White Pine** of New Hampshire, marked by the king's men to be harvested for Royal Navy ship masts, resulted in the Pine Tree Riot.

**The Liberty Tree**, an elm near Boston Common, sheltered colonists as they protested the British Stamp Act.

**The Charter Oak** hid Connecticut's royal charter guaranteeing self-government.

**The Southern Live Oak** formed the impenetrable hull of the USS Constitution, Old Ironsides, during the War of 1812.

**The Buttonwood (American Sycamore)** sheltered 24 brokers on a sidewalk in New York City as they signed the agreement that became the founding charter of the New York Stock Exchange.

OUR COMMEMORATIVE PROJECT

### Planting 50 Trees for America's 250th

|                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>WHEN</b><br>The Fall of 2026- Ideally, October                                                                                     | <b>WHERE</b><br>Community public space determined by the local GCV Club                                     |
| <b>HOW</b><br>Distribute 2 to 4 species of different mature sizes, planted by local clubs and local Bartlett Arborists, when possible | <b>SUPPORT NEEDED</b><br>Local club liaison to coordinate tree pick-up, planting event, and first-year care |

Planting trees that will shape the next 250 years of history.

*"Trees were a town hall, a constitutional hiding place and shade for a financial founding. In a young country without grand buildings, trees and nature were the natural infrastructure. Our job is to plant the trees that will tell the next chapter."* — ROB ALLEN.

GIVING YOUR TREE THE BEST START

### Planting & First-Year Care

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PLANTING DAY</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>01 Dig wide, not deep — hole 2-3x the root ball width, no deeper than the ball itself.</li><li>02 Find the root flare; set the tree so the flare sits at or just above ground level.</li><li>03 Loosen circling roots; remove all wire, twine, and burlap from the top of the ball.</li><li>04 Backfill with the native soil — and little amendments. Water as you fill to settle air pockets.</li><li>05 Mulch 2-3 inches deep in a wide ring; keep mulch off the trunk (no "volcanoes").</li></ol> | <b>FIRST-YEAR CARE</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>01 Water deeply once a week — 10-15 gallons per inch of trunk caliper. More in droughts.</li><li>02 Manage pests and disease as needed; healthy soil and water matter far more.</li><li>03 Refresh mulch as needed; keep the ring wide and the trunk bare.</li><li>04 Stake only if necessary; remove stakes after one growing season so the trunk strengthens.</li><li>05 Prune only dead or damaged branches; save structural pruning for year two or three.</li></ol> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The first year decides the next hundred.

**THE LIVE OAK**  
Commonly honored off her hull, Old Ironsides was born.

**THE WHITE PINE**  
Royal masts. Colonial rebellion. The spark before the tea.

**THE LIBERTY TREE**  
A Button tree becomes the open-air town hall of a revolution.

**THE CHARTER OAK**  
A hollow trunk hides Connecticut's charter from the Crown.

**THE BUTTONWOOD**  
Twenty-four brokers, one signature, the birth of Wall Street.

Many clubs are already working on their plans for successful planting. Stay tuned for updates and photos of all the new trees GCV clubs are adding to our commonwealth. Who knows what significant role one of those trees might play as the future unfolds?





Ms. Britton is the recipient of one of two GCV Conservation Fellowships awarded in 2025.

GCV's Conservation Fellowships support research in conservation and environmental studies. The work directly impacts both the knowledge and future conservation efforts across the commonwealth.

*Topics may include flora, fauna, or community practices.*



## Urban Habitat Quality & Connectivity for Monarch Butterflies in Hampton Roads

Urban spaces are increasingly being used to create habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinator species. Monarch butterflies are a good model organism for studying pollinator habitat in urban areas due to the high level of interest in their conservation, and because their migratory behavior creates a requirement for suitable habitat patches to cover large geographic areas. In addition, the conservation of monarchs supports the conservation of



other pollinator species, as well as the plant species that are planted during habitat creation.

As the highly urbanized Hampton Roads region of Virginia is located along the east coast flyway for monarchs, it provides an ideal opportunity to study monarch choice in habitat and to understand how the location of gardens may impact monarch abundance. The work described here is part of my dissertation research which seeks to understand what factors impact monarch abundance in gardens located in public parks, schools, and other public-facing areas, attempting to answer the following questions: Which living and nonliving factors are

correlated with higher monarch abundance in urban gardens? How well connected are urban gardens across Hampton Roads? How do nectar resources influence monarch abundance? How do monarchs behave in response to plant species in urban gardens?

To answer these questions, I am building a field data set to create models that can show how variables such as garden size, flowering plant abundance, and choices related to milkweed plants are correlated with monarch abundance. This work includes the usage of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools to create maps, allowing for understanding of potential gaps where gardens could be installed and to determine if area surrounding gardens impacts monarch abundance.

Preliminary results suggest that in contrast to findings from



rural areas, monarch abundance in urban gardens is driven by milkweed stem numbers, garden area, and flowering plant abundance, showing that both milkweed host plants for caterpillars and flowers for feeding adults are important. Planting a diverse community of native flowering plants supports both monarchs and other pollinator species. Future plans include examining the nectar quality and quantity in these

urban gardens, as well as measuring monarch behavior in response to plant species in urban gardens.

I am grateful for the funding from the GCV, which was used to support an intense summer of field data collection, allowing over 30 sites to be included in my large field data set. Completing this step has given me enough data to run preliminary analysis and work through the initial steps of model creation, paving the way for inclusion of more sites and making plans for the next steps of my dissertation research.

My hope is that these findings can be translated to other geographic regions within the state of Virginia and to other pollinator communities that benefit from urban gardens.

—Meghan Britton, PhD  
Candidate, Dept of Biological  
Sciences, Old Dominion University

### Some Things Are Worth Preserving.

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# GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA *Historic Garden Week*

Our cherished springtime tradition  
BY KAREN ELLSWORTH,  
Director of Historic Garden Week and Editor of the Guidebook



Celebrating the 93rd anniversary of the Garden Club of Virginia's Historic Garden Week was a wonderful achievement, and one of the most financially successful years. **We raised \$752,623 and welcomed 22,751 visitors.** Our guests traveled from 49 states (North Dakota was the only one not represented) and 15 countries. And this year, we collaborated with many of our restoration sites belonging to our Founding Fathers in celebration of America250. Congratulations on reaching this exciting milestone!

## THREE SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES

1. HGW 2026 also marked the launch of three significant initiatives. First, the GCV board of directors decided to work with its legal counsel to protect our brand from potential financial and reputational harm. After many months of work, **we added the SM to the Historic Garden Week logo** throughout the 2026 *Guidebook*. SM stands for "service mark," which represents a service offered by a business or organization.

2. Our second exciting addition to this year's Historic Garden Week was a collaboration with the HGW and the Conservation committees, which connected our members' and visitors' values with our most popular public event. Recognizing and highlighting native plants that homeowners cultivate in their gardens help to educate tour visitors. Weather-proof signage about native plants was made available for all tours. This new sign features a concise, impactful message alongside HGW's logo, **"Native plants grow here. The Garden Club of Virginia promotes conservation and pollinator-friendly gardens."** This signage will draw attention to beneficial plants and the biodiversity they support.

Additionally, branded, recyclable bamboo plant tags were also distributed at the Spring Region meeting for the homeowners who have the interest in identifying native plants in their gardens. These plant tags will be distributed again in March 2027.

3. Lastly, this year we offered a **\$15 child's ticket**. Historic Garden Week attendance has decreased by 6 percent over the past decade (excluding 2020–2022). Attracting future generations is

important for building a pipeline of loyal tour-goers. While younger visitors have always been allowed to attend tours, children, except for "babes in arms," have been charged full price for many years, making it a cost-prohibitive activity for many families. Over half of the HGW 2026 tours chose to offer a child's ticket.

Historic Garden Week, the nation's only statewide house and garden tour, is GCV's signature public relations program. It



promotes tourism and showcases communities, both large and small, across the commonwealth. This enduring legacy brings our membership together around a common goal for eight days each spring. Proceeds fund the restoration of Virginia's historic public gardens and support a research fellowship program. But more than a fundraiser, Historic Garden Week is our cherished springtime tradition. The time, energy, and passion you invest in this statewide event make all the difference. Thank you! 🌿



Photos courtesy of Kathy Wirtala, The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club, Joyce Feder, The Williamsburg Garden Club, Don Monteaux, and MK Nunley, The Elizabeth River Garden Club



# BE A WILDFLOWER

*A profusion of wildflowers graced GCV's 106th Annual Meeting*



What an honor to co-chair the 106th Annual Meeting of the Garden Club of Virginia, hosted by Mill Mountain Garden Club at the historic Hotel Roanoke May 19-21, 2026!

When we considered the theme for this meeting, “Be a Wildflower,” we immediately thought of the lovely wildflowers growing in the place MMGC has cherished and nurtured for many years – our beloved Mill Mountain Wildflower Garden. In 1971, the City of Roanoke asked our club to develop a two-and-a-half acre wildflower garden atop Mill Mountain, the beautiful mountain within our city limits, and since then our members have devoted more than 80,000 hours in support of that effort! The theme also reflects the very nature of the

Garden Club of Virginia members because they bloom and thrive with resilience like wildflowers.

The Annual Meeting events began on Tuesday with the board of directors luncheon and meeting in the Shenandoah Room of the Hotel Roanoke. That evening, we gathered for our Dutch Treat Dinner in the atrium of the Taubman Museum. The museum was designed by noted architect Randall Stout, a protégé of Frank Gehry, architect of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in Spain. The cocktail hour featured the music of the Patrick Henry High School chamber orchestra, and guests were invited to browse the museum’s highly regarded collections before dinner.

Wednesday morning kicked off bright and early with choices of an architectural tour of downtown

Roanoke; a tour of our beautiful Mill Mountain Wildflower Garden; and a trip to the famous Black Dog Salvage Showroom, home of the television series “Salvage Dawgs.”

That afternoon the 2026 GCV Annual Meeting began in the hotel’s Crystal Ballroom surrounded by horticulture from each attending garden club. The day’s agenda concluded with a presentation by GCV landscape architect Thomas Woltz, senior principal and owner of Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architecture.

Wednesday evening began with a cocktail party in the Crystal Foyer of the hotel, made possible by the support of Mill Mountain Garden Club’s past presidents. It was followed by the GCV Awards Banquet in the Crystal Ballroom.



Photos courtesy of Megan Ames, The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore





# Rebuilding Abundance:

## CREATING BEAUTIFUL GARDENS SUPERCHARGED WITH LIFE

Photo by Rob Cardillo, courtesy of Claudia West and Phyto Studio

This year's forum speakers will discuss the principles of ecological landscape design for gardeners who are seeking ways to incorporate native plants to enhance natural beauty while attracting and supporting keystone pollinators and wildlife. Drawing inspiration from the recent opening of Anne Lee's Meadow at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, our speakers will explore how to create landscapes that balance bold aesthetic impact with ecological function — creating gardens that are both emotionally resonant and environmentally restorative, as well as how to garden smarter, not harder.

### OUR DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS INCLUDE

**Claudia West**, an internationally known landscape architect and author with an extensive background in horticulture, ecology, and environmental design, was a part of the team that designed the new 7.5 acres of expansion at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. She is a leading voice in ecological planting design.



**Harlan Patch**, a member of the Center for Pollinator Research, is an assistant research professor in the Department of Entomology at Penn State University. He is also director of pollinator programming and scientific advisor for the Bird and Pollinator Garden at the Arboretum at Penn State.

**Raven Larcom** of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation will spotlight the Xerxes Society's mission, the International Bee City Initiative, and 20 Bee City USA initiatives across Virginia, and discuss how your local community can become a Bee City.



68TH ANNUAL  
**CONSERVATION  
FORUM**

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2026, 9 a.m.**

LEWIS GINTER BOTANICAL GARDEN, RICHMOND

MORE INFORMATION AT [GCVIRGINIA.ORG](https://gcvirginia.org)

A heartfelt thank you to our program partners and sponsors:

**Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Pinnacle Associates, Bartlett Tree Experts, and Bee City USA**



### 2026 MASSIE MEDAL FOR DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT

*presented to*  
**ANNE GARDNER BALDWIN**



Wednesday evening's GCV Awards Banquet at the Annual Meeting included the presentation of the Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement, the oldest and most prestigious award given by the Garden Club of Virginia. Susanne Williams Massie created the honor in 1928 during her presidency and personally awarded it until her death in 1952. Since then, it has been given in her memory. Recipients must have served the Garden Club of Virginia with exceptional dedication and distinction; worked effectively to promote the club's mission; and shown excellence in horticulture, restoration, preservation, or conservation of Virginia's natural resources.

This year's Massie Medal inscription captures it perfectly: "An inspiring mentor whose steadfast leadership exemplifies integrity, dedication, and grace." At the 2026 Annual Meeting in Roanoke, it was awarded to Anne Gardner Baldwin.

Anne has held many and varied positions within GCV. She has served on and chaired the Finance, Investments, Restoration, Historic Landscape Research Fellowship, and Massie Medal committees. In addition, she has served as GCV Treasurer, chaired the Nominating Committee, and was a representative for the GCV Centennial.

She has been a member of The Garden Club of Alexandria for over 30 years, where she has held equally numerous and wide-ranging jobs. A gift for finance (one colleague called it her "superpower") runs through Anne's entire garden club career. A particularly notable distinction is that she has served as Historic Garden Week Treasurer from 1995 until the present — surely a record!

Horticulture is Anne's other great love. Her many awards speak for themselves, and she's earned a reputation as "the consummate daffodil resource." One club member praised not just her depth of knowledge, but her genuine eagerness to share it and encourage newer members.

Phrases like thoughtful stewardship, exceptional leadership, and spirit of service appear throughout her letters of recommendation. As one letter put it, Anne truly embodies everything the Garden Club of Virginia stands for.

The Garden Club of Virginia is honored to bestow this prestigious award on someone so richly deserving. Join us in thanking and congratulating Anne on her decades of steadfast service, her generous mentorship, and the countless ways she has strengthened this organization.



Photos courtesy of Megan Ames, The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore





**BESSIE BOCOCK CARTER  
CONSERVATION AWARD**  
*presented to*  
**LEESBURG  
GARDEN CLUB**

Leesburg Garden Club's project was  
titled, "The Dodona Native Pollinator  
Gateway Garden."



**MASSIE MEDAL  
FOR DISTINGUISHED  
ACHIEVEMENT**  
*presented to*  
**ANNE BALDWIN OF  
THE GARDEN CLUB  
OF ALEXANDRIA**

The inscription on the medal reads:  
"An inspiring mentor whose steadfast  
leadership exemplifies integrity,  
dedication, and grace."

**DE LACY GRAY  
MEMORIAL MEDAL  
FOR CONSERVATION**  
*presented to*  
**BETTE BIBEE OF  
THE LYNCHBURG  
GARDEN CLUB**

**GCV HONORARY  
MEMBERSHIP**  
*presented to*  
**BRENT HEATH**

*Editor's Note: To read a detailed  
account of the 2026 Annual Meeting,  
go to the June 2026 issue of  
Membership News at GCVirginia.org.*

*Photos courtesy of Megan Ames, The Garden  
Club of the Eastern Shore*



*Catherine Thompson, president, The Hunting Creek Garden Club; Ruth Brightbill, president, The Garden Club of Alexandria; Mason Bavin, annual meeting delegate, The Garden Club of Alexandria; Anne Baldwin, Massie Medal recipient, The Garden Club of Alexandria; Catherine Bolton, Albemarle Garden Club, The Garden Club of Alexandria; Diane Thomas, GCV Conservation & Beautification Committee chairman, The Garden Club of Alexandria; Laura Francis, GCV 2nd vp, The Hunting Creek Garden Club; Jennifer Kelley, GCV 1st vp, The Garden Club of Alexandria, The Garden Club of Norfolk; Jackie Locke, annual meeting delegate, HGWSC, The Hunting Creek Garden Club*



What an exciting and fulfilling evening it was to see the work and dedication of the award winners and the way in which GCV made this a special moment for all attending.

The 106th Annual Meeting concluded on Thursday with much gratitude to outgoing president Kris Carbone and a warm welcome to incoming president Jennifer Kelley.

We enjoyed planning this 2026 GCV Annual Meeting and would like to thank all our wonderful committee members, especially our flower chairmen, Valeta Pittman and Jane Coulter, and their team for transforming the Hotel Roanoke and the Taubman Museum into a wildflower garden with such creative and beautiful arrangements. We loved hosting you and hope to see all of you again soon in Roanoke, the Star City of the South! 🌿

**—Beth Sayers and Kay Strickland,  
Co-Chairmen, 106th GCV Annual  
Meeting Mill Mountain Garden Club**



**Award Nominations  
Deadlines**

**NOVEMBER 1**  
**Bessie Bocock Carter  
Conservation Award**

**DECEMBER 1**  
**Massie Medal for  
Distinguished Achievement**

**MARCH 1**  
**de Lacy Gray Memorial Medal  
for Conservation**

**Horticulture Award of Merit**

**Applications for Common  
Wealth Award**

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



# horticulture

## FIELD DAY 2026

BEAUTIFUL HISTORIC CHARLOTTESVILLE

GCV Horticulture Chairman Kit Sullivan shares highlights from one of the GCV's most beloved events.

Horticulture Field Day has long been a favorite experience for Garden Club of Virginia members, and this annual event was a true celebration of our shared passion for gardens and gardening. We left our weeding and watering behind for two days to visit Charlottesville!

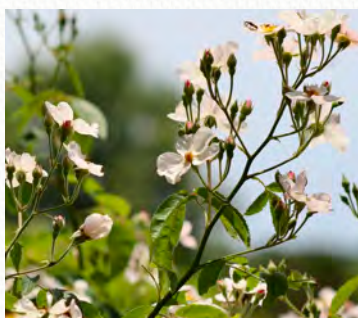
Albemarle Garden Club, in partnership with the GCV Horticulture Committee, hosted approximately 160 club members on tours of four spectacular private gardens on the first day, and visits to Tufton Farm and the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants on the second day. We couldn't have ordered up better weather for our two days.

### THE GARDEN TOURS

*Over the past 35 years, owners Ray and Sue Ann Morgan have grown their "Phoenix Park" garden into a beautiful blend of formal structure and personal history.* Wrought-iron arches frame a boxwood-lined, formal garden to the side of the property. The peaceful, shaded rear garden is just as beautiful with statues of Diana and Apollo. The garden is perfectly curated to provide continuous seasonal color.

*Cathy Kramer's "Southfield" property sits at the end of a shaded lane and features beautiful views of the Blue Ridge Mountains.* This retreat features two large, shaded gardens with paths winding through native plants. A refreshing infinity pool overlooks sun-drenched fields and the mountain landscape.

*"Choill Mhor," owned by Colleen Grant, greets you with a formal geometric parterre of native plantings.* The central bluestone pathway divides the garden into four quadrants, each of



which is anchored by a *Cornus* 'Constellation' dogwood. The parterres include a mix of perennials for year-round interest. Beyond the garden lies a beautiful vista with a lake in the distance.

*Our final visit to "Dick Woods Road" was set on a hillside just north of Ragged Mountain. This 60-acre estate, owned by Dana Harris, is a blend of modern luxury and natural beauty.* Upon arrival, you are treated to sweeping views of the gardens, fields, and distant mountains. The rear of the property features a pool and pergola surrounded by grasses and flowers that take you to Tuscany!

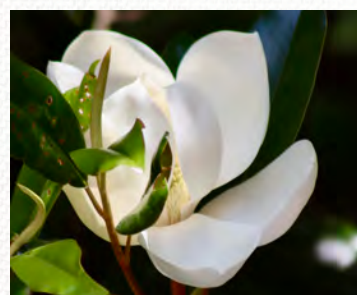
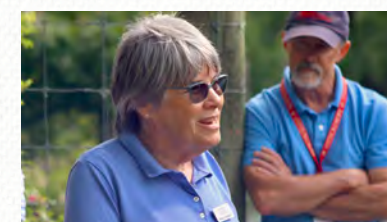
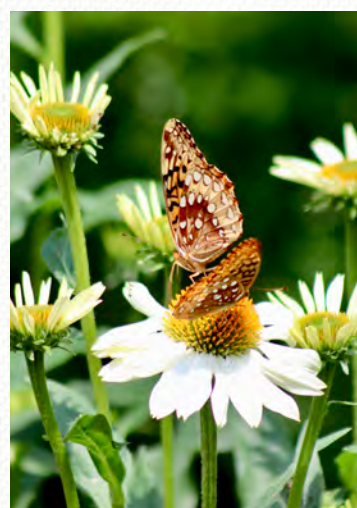
We ended the day with a "Sip and See" through Dana's gardens that included beverages and treats. The GCV Photography Committee held a "golden hour" photography workshop at sunset.

The next morning, we visited "Tufton Farm" and "Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants." The Jefferson Center, established at Tufton Farm in 1986, collects, preserves, and distributes historic and native plant varieties. We spent time with four knowledgeable guides learning the history of the property, how they propagate plants, and the history of the rose garden. Thank you to our rose garden guide, GCV Honorary Member and Rivanna Garden Club member Peggy Cornett.

Our members scored incredible wagons full of plants at the plant sale following the tour.

The 2026 Horticulture Field Day closed out a very successful event with a boxed lunch at the Monticello Visitors Center.

—Kit Sullivan, GCV Horticulture Committee Chairman



Photos by Megan Ames, The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore, and Kit Sullivan, The Boxwood Garden Club



GARDEN CLUB  
OF VIRGINIA

# Renewal

THE 2026 LILY SHOW

HOSTED BY THE  
TUCKAHOE GARDEN CLUB OF WESTHAMPTON



by Frances McDermott and  
Shelly Wiltshire, The Tuckahoe  
Garden Club of Westhampton

The 2026 Lily Show, *Renewal*, hosted by The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton, was held June 17-18, 2026, at Grace Baptist Church in Richmond. The show was a celebration of renewal, growth, and the enduring resilience of nature.

TGCW dedicated this year's GCV Lily Show to the memory and legacy of Mary Meade Trice Davenport, a member of The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton and Garden Club of Virginia, where she held multiple leadership roles over many decades, including club president and GCV treasurer. "Perhaps her most lasting contribution was her nurturing of future generations of fellow garden club members," remarked Lily Show Co-Chairmen Shelly Wiltshire and Fran McDermott.

To celebrate Mary Meade Davenport, Tuckahoe presented a first-ever inaugural award in the new Botanical



Arts category in her memory. The new Mary Meade Trice Davenport Award went to Brittney Van Deusen of The Boxwood Garden Club. This award exemplifies Mary Davenport's love and support of novice gardeners and her beloved Virginia.

"We are grateful to the family of Mary Meade Davenport and to our participants who honor her memory," said Shelly Wiltshire.

On June 17, guest speaker Janice Whitehead of Ikebana of Richmond and The Boxwood Garden Club, spoke about "Using Lilies in Ikebana Design." A beautiful presentation, Janice illustrated each of the seven classes of Ikebana design through arrangements.

The creativity and beauty demonstrated in this year's lily entries in Artistic Design, Horticulture, Photography, and Botanical Arts exemplified the skill, commitment, and love of gardening shared by all participants and visitors. A complete list of award recipients is available at [gcvirginia.org](http://gcvirginia.org).

#### THE TUCKAHOE GARDEN CLUB OF WESTHAMPTON EXTENDS SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- Grace Baptist Church for use of their venue and Michael Chewning of Grace Baptist, who helped us immeasurably.
- Hildrup Moving Company for transporting our properties safely to and from the show. Their generous contribution to the Garden Club of Virginia helps make our flower shows possible and supports the GCV's work in restoration, conservation, and education in the commonwealth.
- Our dedicated exhibitors, judges, volunteers, and GCV for making the *Renewal* Lily Show possible.



Photos by Kit Sullivan, The Boxwood Garden Club, Laura Francis, The Hunting Creek Garden Club, Mary Queitzsch, Dolley Madison Garden Club, Tricia Sauers, The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton





## Three Chopt Garden Club

RICHMOND

GCV DISTRICT 1

Members of Three Chopt Garden Club recently enjoyed a delightful afternoon at Chericoke, the



historic home of fellow member Alice Horsley Siegel, located near Falls in King William County. Under a canopy of spring sunshine, members enjoyed tea and daffodil picking across the sprawling grounds. Continually owned by the Braxton family since 1720, the site



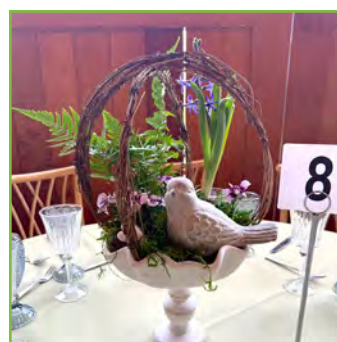
was once home to Carter Braxton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Although his original mansion burned in 1776, his grandson rebuilt the current stately home in 1823, preserving a remarkable piece of Virginia history. — **Sarah Porter**

## The Petersburg Garden Club

PETERSBURG

The Petersburg Garden Club welcomed the season with its annual "Splashes of Spring" event on March 25 at The Barns of Kanak. Beautiful floral arrangements showcased members' artistry, while guests enjoyed a program presented by Boxwood Estate Winery.

Organized by dedicated volunteers, the silent auction and raffle prizes support local beautification and preservation projects. Continuing a cherished tradition since 1995, "Splashes of Spring" reflects the club's mission to promote conservation, horticultural education, and community involvement throughout the Petersburg area. — **Jennifer Clements**



GCV DISTRICT 2

## Dolley Madison Garden Club

ORANGE

While Virginia remains under drought conditions, Dolley Madison Garden Club's Conservation Committee has focused its attention on the water



supply in Orange County. The committee organized a presentation featuring two members of the Orange County Board of Supervisors: J. Jason Capelle, District 1 Supervisor, and J. Bryan Nicol, Chairman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors and representative for the 5th District.

Mr. Capelle began with a history of the county's water supply and its development over time. Mr. Nicol then discussed current and future stressors on the system, available resources, and efforts underway at both the county and state levels to address these challenges.

The club also was honored to welcome Delegate K. Hamilton (67th District) and James Manataz, Chief of Staff to Senator Bryce Reeves (28th District). Members had many questions, and all agreed it was an informative and engaging program. — **Heather McCullough**



GCV DISTRICT 2

## The Lynchburg Garden Club

LYNCHBURG

Wild Ones Greater Lynchburg Area Chapter, formerly Blue Ridge Conservation, planted three demonstration gardens (two at one location) on May 1 using Lynchburg Bee City native garden design plans for Lynchburg. Developed in collaboration with Hummingbird Hill Native Plant Nursery in Free Union, the plans are available free online.

Using pollinator plug trays from Hummingbird Hill, The Lynchburg Garden Club, Hillside Garden Club, and Wild Ones members and volunteers joined students and educators at James River Day School and Camp Kum-Ba-Yah to plant gardens showcasing native plants featured in the designs. Additional gardens are planned for New Vistas School and the Awareness Garden. Designs, locations, and visiting hours are available through the Wild Ones Greater Lynchburg Area Chapter website. — **Jennifer Sittason**



GCV DISTRICT 3

## The Garden Club of the Middle Peninsula

MIDDLE PENINSULA

The Garden Club of the Middle Peninsula continues to cultivate learning through local library partnerships, including a recent project with King William County's West Point Library focused on youth engagement and conservation. With support from a GCMP grant, members



of the Arrow of Light Den from Cub Scout Pack 340 constructed two cedar raised garden beds, working skillfully without power tools. Planted and maintained by the scouts and library staff, one garden features native ornamental plants designed by a Master Naturalist, while the other is a drought-tolerant educational food garden emphasizing native species. — **Lisa Vawter**



## The Garden Club of Gloucester and Mathews

GLOUCESTER & MATHEWS

Members of The Garden Club of Gloucester and Mathews attended History Blooms on February 20, where fellow members Tina McManus and Ceci Brown submitted an arrangement for the show. "It is gratifying to support our fellow members," said Artistic Design Co-Chairman René Wenleder.

In March, the club hosted two annual community events: "Arts & Flowers" at the Fine Arts Museum of Gloucester, where members interpreted art through flowers, and a Kids' Flower Arranging Workshop for 80 children. Both events were free and open to the public. Members also enjoyed GCV Daffodil Day in Virginia Beach, where Nina Watkins and Tina McManus earned a blue ribbon in the Interclub competition.

— **Lynne Manning**





## GCV DISTRICT 3

### The Huntington Garden Club

NEWPORT NEWS

The members of The Huntington Garden Club celebrated the end of the garden club year with a spring picnic on the banks of the James River at the home of longtime member Kathy Allen. Several members showcased their floral arranging skills with posh floral hats.

— **Kim Shoemaker**



## GCV DISTRICT 4

### The Gabriella Garden Club

DANVILLE

Gabriella Garden Club held its annual luncheon on May 13 to wrap up the club year and celebrate members whose contributions made it blossom.

Katie Wright-Thomas received the Lee Arrangement Award. She is pictured giving a flower arranging demonstration of native and seasonal blooms



as part of the HGW 2026 Danville-Chatham Tour Day.

Beverly Cocke received the Roediger Horticulture Award. Her work this year as the club's program chairman thoughtfully incorporated wildflowers, specimen plants and pollinators in activities across a variety of learning styles, including a field trip and a painting class.



Martha E. Ray, received the Heard Award of Merit for her more than 40 years of exceptional service to Gabriella Garden Club. Gardeners across Southside Virginia know they can count on Martha, as well as her husband, Newton Ray, Jr., to whom a chocolate cake was awarded.

— **Kate Stokely Powell**



### The Garden Club of Danville

DANVILLE

The gloves are on and the snips in hand! After a beautiful and successful Historic Garden Week, during which The Garden Club of Danville welcomed 322 guests from seven states and 60 cities, members are back in the garden beds. The Perkinson Rose Garden is in full bloom and is a favorite backdrop during prom season, where cherished memories are captured among the blooms. At Grove Street Cemetery, preservation and beautification efforts continue. Members



recently gathered to paint the historic fencing, and two new sections of fencing were reconstructed by Hudson Welding. Nearly all the cemetery



garden beds have been expanded and equipped with useful watering tools that will be instrumental as summer heat arrives.

— **Amanda Griffith**



## GCV DISTRICT 5

### The Garden Club of Alexandria

ALEXANDRIA

In April, members of The Garden Club of Alexandria gathered for an inspiring workshop on French Rococo floral design. Led by Katherine Murphy and Jordan Richards, the workshop offered valuable,



hands-on experience ahead of the club's May intracub floral exhibits. Through recorded video tutorials and workshops like these, the club's senior floral designers share their expertise and make even the most intricate styles feel inviting and achievable for all.

— **Ruth Gates Brightbill**





## GCV DISTRICT 5

### The Garden Club of Warren County

WARREN COUNTY

Members of The Garden Club of Warren County have been busy supporting the local community through Trash Free Shenandoah, Lone Pine Day, Main Street hanging basket plantings, and the Blue Ridge Singers' Annual Banquet. Members collected

trash, trimmed brush, promoted native and pollinator plants, and helped beautify downtown Front Royal. Diane Kline created a special arrangement and wrote an original poem, "Voices," for the banquet. The club also hosted Janet Davis of Hill House Nursery and held a successful fundraiser at the Virginia Herb Festival.

— **Ashby O'Malley**

### Leesburg Garden Club

LEESBURG

Leesburg Garden Club enjoyed a presentation from The Conche Restaurant on the rich history and origins of chocolate, including its cultivation, harvesting, production, and sourcing. Members created individual chocolate sculptures and then enjoyed a chocolate-themed artisan menu featuring hand-crafted foods and beverages infused with house-made chocolate. The scent of blooming peonies and rich chocolate

created an enchanting sensory experience. — **Ann McCormick**

Several of the town's historic district homes were featured on Leesburg Garden Club's Historic Garden Week tour. An American Revolution-era brick townhouse with plantings of Lewis and Clark Expedition flora; a sprawling brick townhouse reputed to have harbored the nation's founding documents (the Constitution, Bill of Rights, et al.) following the evacuation of Washington, D.C. during the War of 1812; another Federal-style home once owned

by the Russell Baker family; and two farmhouses built around 1800 combined to create an exceptional walking tour.

Each property featured established gardens with mature trees and distinctive floral plantings, some reflecting historic garden designs. Guests were delighted by the unique and innovative floral arrangements in each home, many of which incorporated materials from members' own gardens. — **Judy Gerow**



### The Little Garden Club of Winchester

WINCHESTER

The Little Garden Club of Winchester sold 605 tickets for Historic Garden Week this year, a record for the town and its gardens. Members created many wonderful and creative floral arrangements, and it was inspiring to see all hands on deck helping to make this year's tour a success. The Shenandoah University women's soccer team even lent a hand with transportation. Four homeowners graciously opened their homes for the tour and, despite afternoon rain showers, everything went off without a hitch.

— **Sarah Browning**



## GCV DISTRICT 6



### The Franklin Garden Club

FRANKLIN

Excitement filled Fred's Restaurant in Franklin as new and current members of The Franklin Garden Club gathered for a flower arranging class. Patti Rabil, John Drewry, and Betsy Brantley presented the program for new members.

A variety of greens and foliage, along with actual cuttings available from local gardens, were displayed with ideas for using them as the foundation of an arrangement. Each new member was asked to bring a container or vase for her



creation, and flowers were provided by the club.

With the help of current members, the new members completed their own arrangements. The event also provided a wonderful opportunity for networking and fellowship.

— **June Duck**



# Rooted in Experience: Jennifer Kelley

## A Q&A WITH GCV'S 54TH PRESIDENT

*Thirty years of GCV service, a career in human resources, and a collaborative spirit — Jennifer Kelley steps into the presidency uniquely prepared to lead.*

Leading a 106-year-old organization as revered as the Garden Club of Virginia is no small assignment. It calls for someone who understands people, numbers, and institutions — and who understands the GCV itself, deeply.

Jennifer Kelley arrives with all of it. She spent her professional career in human resources, ultimately managing benefits and financial analysis for Landmark Communications and its thousands of employees nationwide — experience in stewarding people and budgets that maps remarkably well onto leading a complex, statewide organization of volunteers.

Then there's the institutional knowledge. A GCV member for 30 years, Jennifer was tapped for The Garden Club of Alexandria within six months of moving to the city and was its president within three years. She retains her membership in The Garden Club of Norfolk, from the days when she and family called Tidewater home. At the state level, she has chaired Daffodil Day twice, the GCV symposia twice, served on the finance committee, competed in and judged the major flower shows, and served as a Director at Large for District 5. Most recently, she has been GCV's first vice



president, leading the new governance committee charged with strengthening how the GCV governs itself.

Few incoming presidents have seen the organization from so many angles. We talked about that preparation, her leadership philosophy, and a new, shared hobby: fly fishing.

**Madeline Mayhood:** You grew up on the Eastern Shore. How did that shape you?

**Jennifer Kelley:** I had a wonderful upbringing that was very connected to the earth. I lived next door to one set of grandparents, and the other was 20 minutes away. One grandmother had a huge vegetable garden — she was

most proud of her asparagus — and the other had flower beds everywhere. She was a big daffodil person, and a big daylily person, too. I spent all my days outside, and huge amounts of time on the water. I love being on the water to this day.

**MM:** Your college transcript is famously eclectic. Pre-med chemistry, honors calculus, business — and then a drama degree?

**JK:** With a concentration in costume design! My transcript looks a little schizophrenic, but it was a wonderful education. I'm very strong in math, but I wanted an exposure to the arts that was unavailable on the Eastern Shore. I think that

combination — the analytical and the artistic — has served me my whole life. In garden club work, I've done treasurer and finance jobs right alongside flower arranging and event management. It gives me a broader perspective, especially for the presidential role.

**MM:** How does your professional background translate to leading the GCV?

**JK:** I spent my career in human resources — first with the Kellam Companies on the Eastern Shore and culminating with Landmark Communications head-quartered in Norfolk. Almost every job I've ever had did not exist until I came into it, so you dive in, figure things out, and educate yourself. Managing benefits for that many people takes serious financial analysis, so numbers don't scare me. And HR, at its heart, is about people — drawing them in, keeping them working together. That's the presidency in a nutshell.

**MM:** What kind of leader will you be?

**JK:** Collaborative. That's the word I hope my leadership

team would use. If you draw in everyone who has a stake in a decision and make sure they are in agreement, the outcome is much more likely to achieve the desired results. I'm also a big believer in research, and in working smarter rather than harder — using technology like Google Workspace so we stop reinventing the wheel every time someone takes on a new job. No more institutional knowledge ending up in a three-ring binder under somebody's bed.

**MM:** What mark do you hope to leave?

**JK:** I want what we do to be focused on what the clubs and members actually value. We're going to ask them — surveys, small group meetings in the districts, face-to-face conversations — which member benefits they truly want, and what additional support they need. We're here because of the clubs and the membership. If something isn't meaningful to them, we shouldn't be spending our time on it.

**MM:** With everything you've accomplished, what are you proudest of?

**JK:** That's easy — my three

children. I had so many babies so quickly that I stepped away from my career to raise them, and they are, without question, my most treasured accomplishment. Everything else is just gravy.

**MM:** Finally, I hear you've taken up fly fishing.

**JK:** Our daughter lived in Montana for three years, and that was my first encounter with it — a great place to start! I've fished a few places in Virginia since, at the Homestead and near Lexington. I'm just beginning, but I love it. You're standing in the middle of the water, surrounded by nature, usually in the mountains. It's the serenity and communing with nature that speaks to me. It's a great later-in-life hobby, and I'm hopeful I'll have more time for it ... in about two years!

Until then, the GCV has her full attention. 🌿

— Madeline Mayhood, James River Garden Club

LEFT TO RIGHT: Jennifer Kelley, GCV president and member of The Garden Club of Alexandria and The Garden Club of Norfolk; Ellie Gordon, The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore; Virginia Gillock, The Augusta Garden Club, with plant purchases at Horticulture Field Day in Charlottesville. Photo by Megan Ames, The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore





It's Summer in Virginia and the "Heat is On!"

Does it seem like summers in Virginia are getting hotter and drier? Well, they sure are! The changes in our climate are resulting in longer periods between rains and warmer-than-average temperatures. These dry spells have resulted in severe drought conditions in the commonwealth.

So, what's a gardener to do – or not do – to keep plants beautiful and healthy during our long, hot summers?

To do:

- First, recognize the signs of plant stress. Stress indicators include droopy leaves, browning of the leaf edges, and crispy leaves. Plants drink their food and if the soil dries out, they will starve.
- Water slowly and deeply, preferably in the morning between 4-9 a.m. or late in the evening. Water the roots to encourage deep root growth. It's better to water deeply and infrequently than lightly and frequently. If possible, use soaker or drip hoses. For established plants, aim for one inch of water a week. New plants and seedlings need water more frequently.
- Improve your soil health by adding compost to the soil. This will help the soil absorb water. And mulch to prevent evaporation, moderate root temperatures and reduce weeds.
- Weed frequently. Weeds compete with your plants for moisture and nutrients.
- Plant drought-tolerant plants. Native plants are naturally adept to weather extremes. A few great examples for a summer garden include black-eyed susan, beardtongue, golden aster, and yarrow. Plants with fuzzy or silver foliage reflect the sun and are more drought tolerant. Examples include lamb's ear and Russian sage. Succulent plants such as stonecrop and sedums thrive in drought conditions.

What not to do:

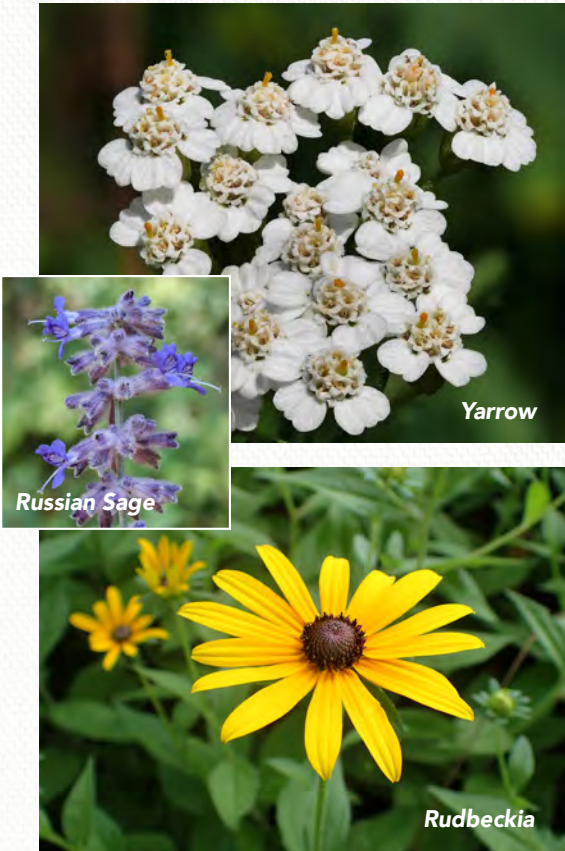
- **Prune in this heat.** Save your pruning for cooler weather. Pruning healthy tissue can cause moisture loss and additional stress.
- **Fertilize.** Skip the chemicals. Fertilizing promotes tender, new growth and without rain to support that growth, it will cause further stress and root damage.

To recap, a healthy drought-resistant garden is built around healthy soil, deep roots, and smart water practices.

Happy gardening! 🌿

— Kit Sullivan, GCV Horticulture Committee Chairman, The Boxwood Garden Club

Photos courtesy of Wikipedia Commons



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SAVE THE DATES

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 8   | Journal Submission Deadline — Fall Edition                                                                                                                                                         |
| September 23  | Conservation Forum, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond                                                                                                                                        |
| October 20-21 | Board of Governors Meeting, Hosted by The Franklin Garden Club, Franklin                                                                                                                           |
| November 1    | Application Deadline for Bessie Bocoock Carter Conservation Award                                                                                                                                  |
| December 1    | Nomination Deadline for Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement                                                                                                                                 |
| December 8    | Journal Submission Deadline — Winter Edition                                                                                                                                                       |
| 2027          |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| January, TBD  | Legislative Day                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| March 1       | Award Deadlines: Nominations for de Lacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation, Nominations for Horticulture Award of Merit, Applications for Common Wealth Award                                   |
| March 15      | Journal Submission Deadline — Spring Edition                                                                                                                                                       |
| March 23-24   | Daffodil Day, Charlottesville                                                                                                                                                                      |
| April 1       | Club vote due for Bessie Bocoock Carter Conservation Award                                                                                                                                         |
| April 17-24   | Historic Garden Week                                                                                                                                                                               |
| May 11-13     | Annual Meeting, Virginia Beach                                                                                                                                                                     |
| June 1        | Award Nomination Deadlines for: Conservation Educator Award, Dugdale Award for Meritorious Achievement in Conservation, The Helen and Tayloe Murphy Conservation in Leadership in Government Award |
| June 15       | Journal Submission Deadline — Summer Edition                                                                                                                                                       |
| June, TBD     | Lilies in Bloom                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| June, TBD     | Horticulture Field Day                                                                                                                                                                             |
| June, TBD     | Presidents Day                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| June 24       | HGW Boot Camp at KVH                                                                                                                                                                               |

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