Get Ready for Fall
At the Garden!

It’s that time of year: FALL! Activities abound, meaning there will be plenty of volunteer opportunities.

**Cocktails in the Garden** continues through September with local artists and music groups. During October **Fest of Ale** will take over evening hours.

The **Fall Member Evening** is scheduled for Monday, October 4. Volunteers are needed so if you can help out, contact Josh. Shifts are 4:30-7 pm or 6:30-9 pm.

**Scarecrows** will be in the Garden from September 28 through October 31.

**Goblins in the Garden** will be center stage on Sunday, October 24 and will need volunteers so watch for email signups.

The annual **Pumpkin Carving** competition may have a new twist and will be held on October 28 at 7 pm.

The **Reindog Parade** will be virtual this year with online photo submissions from November 1-30 and social media voting.

And then there is **Garden Lights, Holiday Nights**, scheduled for November 13 through January 15. Tickets will go on sale October 1. Mark your calendar now for the **Staff and Volunteer Preview Night** on Tuesday, November 9 from 5 until 9 pm. Invitation with RSVP info will be coming via email.

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Congratulations to these Volunteers Of the Month

- May
  - Ann Bonislawski
- June
  - Kathy Bronaugh
- July
  - Theresa McDugald
- August
  - Tatyana Fershtat
- August
  - Tatyana Fershtat
- August
  - Tatyana Fershtat

And to Gainesville’s Volunteers of the Quarter

- Maureen Smith
- Mikiko Lockwood
May: Ann Bonislawski

After nearly 30 years as a school nurse, Ann Bonislawski jumpstarted her retirement by volunteering at the Botanical Garden. “With gardening there is always something new to discover, and I decided there was no better place for discovery and learning that the Botanical Garden!” Appropriately enough, she started as a Discovery volunteer but soon found herself helping with children’s programming and events like Goblins, Reindog Parade, Garden Lights, Garden of Eden ball, and the Flower Show. You name it, she was there to help...and in the process logged Centennial Club hours since her first year. In 2016 she also became a Docent for adult tours, though she admits her favorite volunteer posts still might be Discovery with “The Goddess” where she shares the Under the Plants story and any of the children’s programs. Ann tips her hat to Heather Chiller, Public Programs Manager, for the creative way she adjusted children’s programs during COVID to assure that the activities went on safely and enjoyably. Heather says Ann’s kindness and keen insights helped keep things running smoothly this past year with children’s programs. An active Gwinnett Master Gardener, Ann’s favorite place is always in a garden, though she looks forward to traveling again, especially to visit her children and grandchildren. For her positive energy, her infectious enthusiasm, and her ever-present smile, the Garden says thank you to Ann Bonislawski by naming her Volunteer of the Month for May.

June: Kathy Bronaugh

Even before retiring in 2012, Kathy Bronaugh had been a regular in Carol Sutherland's nature drawing classes at the Botanical Garden. There she struck up a friendship with Pat Bras, a GEM volunteer at the Garden who kept suggesting that Kathy sign up to volunteer too since she loved plants. The rest, as they say, is history! Since retiring, Kathy has become a regular GEM in the Children’s Garden, along with Pat and Marj Leinbaugh, laughing their way to Centennial Club hours and Garden camaraderie. As she puts it, it is the beautiful setting, the friends, the knowledge and experience of the horticulturists and just working around the plants that keep her coming back. Every week, Kathy joins her carpool of fun Master Gardeners to arrive early at the Garden and dig in, and she wouldn’t have it any other way. The staff say that Kathy is willing to do anything they ask, always pitching in on even the most daunting tasks without complaint. Besides gardening and drawing, she enjoys sailing and birding, even taking some exotic birding trips with her Garden buddies, and loving her four cats. Kathy praises the Garden for its strong volunteer program that gives folks like her the chance to enjoy the Garden. The Garden returns that appreciation and salutes Kathy Bronaugh as June Volunteer of the Month for her energy, enthusiasm and sense of fun she brings to the Garden every week.
Meet the Volunteers of the Month

July: Theresa McDugald

“It’s always a good day when I can come to the Garden,” says Theresa McDugald, echoing a sentiment felt by so many. A Garden volunteer since 2016, Theresa was looking for a change of pace after retiring from a sit-at-her-desk office environment and a few years volunteering in an assisted living facility. The Garden was a perfect choice. She started as a Discovery volunteer and OKRA and has pitched in with a whole host of special events but concedes that volunteering in the Children’s Garden is just to her liking. “I sense that families come to the Garden in large part because it feels like a safe environment to bring their children.” The staff calls Theresa a “steadfast volunteer through the years” and praises her for helping keep the children’s programs running so smoothly. She credits neighbor Sally Crowe, Volunteer of the Year for 2020, for getting her started as a Garden volunteer. “She thought I’d love it…and she was right!” Always eager to lend a hand, she has made Centennial Club hours since 2017. An Atlanta native, she never meets a stranger and enjoys daily walks with her husband and dog, exercise classes, reading, travel and spending as much time as she can with her 9 year old granddaughter, who loves coming to the Garden with her. They have made a special tradition of coming to Garden Lights every year together. For her enthusiasm, engaging personality and dedication, the Garden honors Theresa McDugald as July’s Volunteer of the Month.

August: Tatyana Fershtat

After retiring in 2012, Tatyana Fershtat downsized, moving into an apartment and leaving behind the garden she loved. But it’s hard to take a gardener out of the garden, so she soon found her way to the Botanical Garden where she has lovingly tended the plants in the Perennial Garden as a GEM ever since. Her favorites in the Garden are the cannas, “a wonderful flower” that the staff likes to call “her babies.” She enjoys working with the staff and other volunteers who have become close friends. Senior Horticulturist Lindsay Bowen appreciates her quiet attention to detail. “She is meticulous in everything she does and flexible to accept new tasks and do whatever is asked of her, always being eager to learn.” For Tatyana, coming to the Garden every week is always full of surprises...“always something has changed...” and she looks forward to digging in the dirt every week. A Centennial Club member since 2013, she even totaled over 100 hours in 2020. Outside of her Garden involvement, Tatyana stays active, walking, swimming and exercising at the YMCA, cooking and spending as much time as she can with her two grandchildren and three big granddogs, all of whom she loves to spoil! The Garden is grateful to Tatyana for her many years of loving the cannas and digging in the Perennial Garden and proudly salutes her as August Volunteer of the Month.
Saluting the Gainesville Garden’s Volunteer of the Second Quarter:

Maureen Smith

Articles by Sarah Gowder
Gainesville Coordinator

Known for her exuberant nature and dedication to the Garden, Maureen Smith started volunteering at the Gainesville location of Atlanta Botanical Garden in 2015, the early days of the location’s opening to the public. She first discovered the Garden when completing the Hall County Master Gardeners program and visiting the greenhouses with her group. Maureen knew during her first visit that she wanted to be involved. Shortly after, she completed the Garden docent training and began providing guests with tours later that year.

Maureen has helped in numerous different capacities since then. Recently, she has been serving as Nature Ambassador, enthusiastically engaging guests as she facilitates learning center activities, chats with visitors, and helps to ensure all guests, big and small, have a fun and safe experience while learning as much as they’d like during their time at the Garden. One of the aspects she loves most about volunteering at the Gainesville Garden, in addition to helping others learn something new, is experiencing the diverse audience and discovering where guests are from and what brought them to the area. Though she originally hails from England and has lived in New Jersey, North Carolina, and Germany, Maureen loves the North Georgia area she now calls home. “If you ever leave it, you’ll want to come back,” she says. We are so grateful for her dedication and hard work, and we hope she always does! We are happy to honor Maureen as Volunteer of the Quarter.

Saluting the Gainesville Garden’s Volunteer of the Third Quarter:

Mikiko Lockwood

Mikiko Lockwood, known as Mikky around the Gainesville Garden, is an unassuming example of tenacity and hard work. Mikky first learned about Atlanta Botanical Garden in an article highlighting some of the best gardens in the country. After moving to Georgia (leaving behind hundreds of her prized hostas in New Jersey), she decided to find out about volunteer opportunities there but decided the drive to Atlanta from Buford was too daunting. Then she heard about the Garden’s Gainesville location, and she knew she had to find it. That was 2015, and she has been volunteering ever since.

Previously honored as Volunteer of the Quarter in 2016, Mikky has continued to diligently tend the tasks at hand during her volunteer shifts while exuding a profound sense of calm. At the Garden, Mikky also enjoys her time with other volunteers, talking to visitors, and meeting guests from Japan. She especially appreciates the beauty and solace that can be found in her work and in the landscape. After losing her husband to COVID earlier this year, Mikky was approached by Wanda Cannon, former Education and Volunteer Coordinator, with condolences and an offer to volunteer an additional day each week at the Garden. Mikky found special comfort in the offer from Wanda who had lost her husband just four years prior. Since then, Mikky has been volunteering every Thursday and Friday in the Garden while working through her grief. We are so grateful for her hard work and continued commitment and are take special pleasure in honoring Mikiko as Volunteer of the Quarter.
What’s Growing in Gainesville

By Sarah Gowder
Gainesville Coordinator

Much like the plants we see changing before us, quite a few changes have taken place with the people of the Gainesville Garden lately as well. Horticulture team members Alaina and Michael left for new opportunities. In the shuffle, the Gainesville Garden Hort team is excited to welcome two new members. Erin Sparkman is the Garden’s new Assistant Horticulturist who comes to us as a recent Mississippi State University graduate. We are also excited to welcome to the ranks Hannah Umstead who was the Gainesville Garden summer intern in 2018 and 2019. Hannah, also a recent graduate, is from University of North Georgia.

After Wanda Cannon’s retirement earlier this year, Jodi Greenlee briefly served as the Education and Volunteer Coordinator. Though she ultimately decided to return to the classroom when an opportunity presented itself, she contributed much during her short time at the Garden, including a new lineup of Adult classes -- Thankful Journaling, Bird Inspired Gardens, Native Plants and Habitat Gardens -- and planned the Gainesville location’s first Greenhouse tour which will be offered this Fall!

As always, the bountiful blooms astonish, but one in particular has garnered more attention than others this season. Lagerstroemia, or Sunset Magic, is a small crape myrtle on full display in the Ada Mae Pass Ivester Children’s Garden. Ethan Guthrie, Gainesville’s Horticulture Manager, recently noted that it “boasts the darkest purple foliage of any crape myrtle, and the bright red flowers contrast very well.”

The annual Scarecrows in the Garden will continue for the fifth year in a row and will be hosted during the month of October. We look forward to seeing this year’s creative ideas mingling with the beautiful Fall foliage. Greenhouse Assistant Horticulturist, Becca Orazi, is currently growing hundreds of plants in the greenhouses and nursery for the upcoming online Fall Plant Sale. We are looking forward to having many new offerings this year such as Amsonia ‘Storm Cloud’, Buddleia ‘Grand Cascade’, Illicium floridanum ‘Swamp Hobbit’, and Spigelia ‘Little Redhead’ to name a few. The online plant sale will open to members at the end of September and then to the general public at the beginning of October. All of the details can be found on the website!

I just read a book you may enjoy: Bicycling with Butterflies by Sara Dykman. She biked alone from Mexico to Canada and back to Mexico, following the monarch migration. The book has a lot of information about monarchs. The female lays only one egg per plant on the underside of one of the top leaves. This provides a whole plant of nutrition for that caterpillar. I have not had caterpillars on my milkweed plants in a number of years, although I may have had more than one caterpillar per plant. Maybe mom is looking for a big stand of milkweed so she doesn’t have to shop around for a nursery for each egg. My goal: plant more milkweed. Another bit of info: the tropical milkweed, Asclepias curassavica, has problems as a host plant. As an annual that may not die back in warm areas, it carries a parasite which the caterpillars eat and pass on in the scales of the butterfly. Infected adults pass this on resulting in monarchs that are too weak to fly and have a shorter life expectancy. Besides the monarch information, the book is full of interesting experiences along the journey. Can you imagine biking over 10,000 miles and camping in a tent most nights? I wouldn’t want to try it but enjoyed reading about it!
The idea of garden dining first appeared in the pleasure gardens of the 18th and early 19th centuries, sometimes called tea or mead gardens. The owner of a Delaware garden once advertised in 1803 that he was opening his “elegant Mead and Flower Garden” for those who would “observe the strictest order and decorum” and not “injure his garden or molest his flowers.” Our rendition of garden dining in the form of the Docent July Potluck did not have to worry about such behavior since our docents would never “injure or molest flowers”.

The first of the Docent July Potluck Luncheons began in 2014, and they were hosted for several years by Bobbi and Steve Kilgo. Their generosity and hospitality started a tradition which was unfortunately halted by the pandemic. This year my husband and I were particularly delighted to host a return to the July Potluck Garden Luncheons. The weather was agreeable until shortly after dessert, and then we all ran for the covered terrace to finish an afternoon of good eats and camaraderie. After an afternoon of sharing my garden, I found myself once again impressed with the docents’ knowledge and commitment to their volunteer activities. Thanks to all of you for an enjoyable afternoon.

Docents do love to cook and this luncheon was a perfect place to sample some of the recipes found in the docent cookbook “All Things Edible.” Copies are still available from the Volunteer Office.

These luncheon photographs were taken by Sharon Samford. Sharon’s photo, Fly on Purple Coneflower Bud, is a finalist in the 2021 National Wildlife Photo Contest. How lucky we are to have a nationally recognized photographer taking photos of our docent activities!
Meet the Staff:

**Ally Pratt**

Family Programs Coordinator

By Josh Todd

Meet the enthusiastic and entertaining Ally Pratt, the Garden’s new Family Programs Coordinator! Hailing from Port Huron, Michigan, Ally followed her husband to Georgia in 2016 as he pursued a PhD in Chemistry from Emory University. Prior to the move, she received a degree in Musical Theater from Hope College in Holland, Michigan. Ally pursued her interest in theater with Onstage Atlanta, running drama camps at the Alliance Theater, and even found her way into film and television – on your next binge watching of past *Stranger Things* episodes, look for Ally as a featured background extra!

Prior to her job at the Garden, Ally wore a variety of hats at the Children’s Museum of Atlanta from 2017 to 2020. Did you ever see Sid the Science Kid walking around – it may have been Ally! She also worked in the Education Department, did outreach and science programs, and was an Imaginator – the Museum’s professional troupe of actors and educators – where she also wrote, directed and acted in their mini-musicals. This past summer, after enjoying time at the Garden and learning about its programs, Ally found the job posting for the Family Programs Coordinator. “The opportunity for growth to create programming and plan and organize events was an exciting marriage of my interests,” she explains. She started in this new role in July. The position requires creating and facilitating programs aimed at young visitors and their families. Some of these include *Garden Playtime*, an arts and craft offering; *Storybook Time*, weekly readings from the Garden’s library selections; *Garden Grooves*, music and movement; and *Shows for Seedlings*, booking guest performances. Ally is getting to know the volunteers who regularly assist with family programing. “They are amazing at greeting our participants, helping with supplies and cleaning, and getting the children set up with crafts and activities.”

Ally will also plan and execute events for the Programs Department, which includes *Goblins in the Garden* coming up on Sunday, October 24. “I am finishing up the planning stages for *Goblins*,” Ally details, “working on activities, reviewing past decorations and programs, and also figuring how *Goblins* runs differently in the pandemic, with cleaning, safety precautions, and social distancing during activities. We’ll have volunteers helping to greet and wayfind, assisting at lines for the pony and train rides, running pumpkin decorating and a new leaf peeper scavenger hunt that will be really cute!”

You can also add Ally to your favorite podcasts (and tell your kids and grandkids!): in *Ask Deer Abby*, Ally plays a doe named Abby that gives advice to animals. You can find the podcast at the usual places – Spotify, Apple and Google – and also on the website [www.askdeerabby.com](http://www.askdeerabby.com). Ally and her husband, who earned that PhD and now teaches chemistry at Oxford College of Emory University, enjoy spending time around their home in the Clarkston area, getting a cup of coffee at Refuge Coffee, and taking their dog, Gandalf, a miniature schnauzer that obviously professes the Pratt’s love of Lord of the Rings, to local dog parks…perhaps in search of the one ring. Find Ally on the Great Lawn most weekday mornings to introduce yourself and enjoy the family program offerings.
**Check It Out:**

**New Finds in the Garden’s Sheffield Library**

By Michelle Li, Library Volunteer

**A Walk in the Woods**
by Bill Bryson

So much has been said about this novel, now adapted into a movie with multiple A-list actors, that anything written here will likely be a repeat. Sheffield Library now boasts a fresh copy of Bryson’s immersive, brilliant travel writing, and it remains as funny and relatable as it was in 1997, when it was first published. Bryson approaches his Appalachian Trail journey with resigned gallows humor, which, if one isn’t a seasoned hiker and trail fanatic, seems to be the correct approach. Interspersed with tales of colorful characters met on the trail are historical notes about the trail itself and alarming conservation facts about the ancient forests through which it winds.

**Nature’s Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard**
by Douglas W. Tallamy

For those of us at the garden, Professor Tallamy’s book on the precarity of the earth’s ecosystems and disappearing biodiversity is preaching to the choir. However, his blend of ecological history, cited studies, and practical advice is perfect for the neighbor who would like to do more than plant one or two pollinator-friendly flowers in their yard. Of particular interest is his website, [https://homegrownnationalpark.org](https://homegrownnationalpark.org), where one can find resources on how to cultivate native plants in the yard. The vision? To regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting over twenty million acres of native flora and connecting these oases of green spaces to one another.

**Before Yellowstone: Native American Archaeology in the National Park**
by Douglas H. MacDonald

Yellowstone Park holds the honor of being the United States’ oldest national park and within its massive confines lie a wealth of Native American archaeological sites. Although this may be common knowledge, what is less known—and what Dr. MacDonald studies—are the lives of pre-contact Native Americans, a history stretching as far back as 11,000 years. Those interested in the Yellowstone area would find this book appealing, as it details archaeological techniques in addition to describing how the Native Americans lived, including a list of plants used by Native families at Yellowstone Lake.
The 2010 master plan for Storza Woods envisioned a stone channel water garden coursing through the woods under the magnificent hardwoods and joining a woodland pool below a glade garden. The Channel Garden was not a part of the first phase of development of the Gardens in Storza Woods, which was completed in 2015. However, it was one of our top priorities as the Channel Garden really is the connective tissue between the upper boardwalk and the elegant John Imlay Bridge. That beautiful stone bridge needed the flow of water underneath to complete our grand vision.

We are so fortunate that Garden benefactor Mary Ellen Imlay had the same perspective and a willingness to help complete the grand vision with a generous gift from the Imlay Foundation. Its generous support enabled us to complete the design for the Channel Garden and start construction early in 2021.

The water feature was inspired by the old stone drainages that have been in Storza Woods for many decades. These stone-lined channels have deteriorated over the years but still carry water to the creek below the Garden during heavy rains. The constructed Channel Garden actually parallels the existing stone channels, leaving that drainage intact for the future.

During the design process, we realized that this new garden needed an architectural twist to create a dramatic departure from a "man-made mountain stream." The stone-lined elevated flume is an elegant solution that also provides a 4-foot waterfall as the flume ends and the natural stream begins. I enjoyed the sound of water flowing from the lower stream the other day and it brought me so much joy to see the bridge completed with the coursing water below.

The project is slightly behind schedule because of the rainy summer and supply shortages caused by the pandemic. But we remain patient as the Channel Garden is now so close to completion. As of late August, the gardens are planted and mulched, and the stone is being laid in the concrete flume. The last phase of construction will be the installation of lights to highlight the John Imlay Bridge, magnificent trees and waterfalls.
The gardens surrounding the Channel Garden incorporate native plants with other shade-loving varieties selected for color and texture. There are native azaleas, magnolias, redbuds and a tapestry of understory perennials and groundcovers to complement the water feature. Plantings move horizontally across the slopes to accent the same movement of the channel itself.

The Channel Garden is the new magnet to attract visitors to Storza Woods and is beautifully complemented by the Arthur Blank Water Mirror and Glade Garden. The water staircase has been off for most of the last year because of the construction, but when the water flows again it will join the coursing stream below and flow around a small planted island. Joining the two water features truly completes the original master plan and grand vision for this part of Storza Woods.

As many of you have noticed, the Saffron Tower, Dale Chihuly’s neon wonder, has been off for most of the year. Unfortunately, the neon just did not hold up to the weather, so we will bid that piece goodbye and welcome a new Yellow Icicle Tower by Chihuly. This new glass tower will stand where the neon piece has been and will be lit at night as a grand beacon in the woods. If all goes well, expect to see it installed by the end of the year.

Finally, the best news of all. The Channel Garden will be named in honor of Mary Ellen Imlay as a fitting recognition of all that she has done for the Garden and our community. The Mary Ellen Imlay Channel Garden should be complete by the end of the year, and the water will cascade under the John Imlay Bridge and complete our grand vision.

Special thanks go to Art Fix, our Chief Operating Officer and project manager, and to Genoa Construction, led by Chris Dee. Together they and their teams created a remarkable and beautiful new feature for the Garden.

Mary Pat