



Congratulations to these Volunteers Of the Month

January
David Todd

February
Stokes Willingham

March
Marlene Zwier

April
Anne Boyte

May
Agnes Miller-Landers

June
Andrea Rutherford

July
Sally Hilton

August
Paige Carncross

September
Patti Marcus

October
Kathryn King

November
Jack Weeks

December
David Ellwanger

And to Gainesville's Volunteers of the Quarter

First Quarter
Jeryi Amason

Second Quarter
Vince Yamilkoski

Third Quarter
Elvira Franco

Fourth Quarter
Lisa Brooks

Wanda Bokoski Named 2025 Volunteer of the Year

By Josh Todd

Each year at our annual Thanks for Giving Luncheon, we announce the Volunteer of the Year, one special person selected from our pool of nearly 500 volunteers who exemplifies outstanding service to the Garden. At this year's February 28 luncheon, the Garden recognized Wanda Bokoski as Volunteer of the Year.

One of the Garden's most valued and devoted volunteers, Wanda has been a fixture at the Garden since 2003 when she first signed up as a docent. Through the years she has led hundreds of school tours and has been a regular helper with countless events and children's programs, often alongside husband Stan, whom she recruited as a volunteer in 2004.

This Perennial Centennial and three time Volunteer of the Month has endeared herself to staff and other volunteers alike with her willingness to tackle any task, always with a smile and a word of encouragement. She served as docent chair in 2008, leading

"the nicest group of folks that I've ever worked with" and continues as a mainstay of the group. Staff members have come to depend on Wanda and her positive energy and never-ending enthusiasm to save the day. "Whenever I see Wanda's name on the volunteer sign up sheet, I know our program is in good hands! She's a reliable, self-starting volunteer who can give perceptive feedback thanks in part to her invaluable experience here at the Garden," says one. Another echoes that, saying "Wanda is reliable, hard working, passionate about giving a good guest experience to kids and adults alike, and above all, immensely kind. I'm so thankful for who she is and all that she brings to the Garden!"

Indeed, we are all very thankful for Wanda Bokoski and gratefully salute her as the Garden's 2025 Volunteer of the Year.



Centennial Club

Centennial Club volunteers are core volunteers who donate at least 100 hours during the year. This year we welcomed 25 new members into this group, the 35th class of Centennials. Each new member receives a Centennial Club name badge, and all Centennials receive library book checkout privileges, 50% discount on a class, and Garden-sponsored parking at the SAGE facility in 2025.

The Garden thanks these dedicated volunteers for their many hours of service!
The Garden would not be the same without you!

Karen Ahrens
Yvonne Arrington
Katherine Bass
Tom Baydala
Jo Ann Bertrand
Stan Bokoski
Wanda Bokoski
Denise Bomberger
Ann Bonislowski
Gretta Boshara
Anne Boyte
Pat Bras
Kathy Bronaugh
Joan Brown
Shawn Burns
Janet Cantrelle
Paige Carncross*
Nick Chang*
Gerald Clark*
Jerry Jones Clark
Kim Cody
Jeremy Cohen
Barbara Conn*
Linda Copeland*
Karli Craighead*
John Crandall*
Sally Crowe
Johnette Crum
Penny Crump
Cathy Curley
Paul Cushing
Laura Deming
Debbie Demoss
Hayes Doane
Samuel Dyches*
David Ellwanger
Tatyana Fershtat

Chris File
Mary Flynt
Bob Fox
Cyndy Franklin
Rick Fritz
Ron Gagliardo*
Kathy Gallo
Barrie Gibby
Roberta Grant
Edison Gu*
Ashlie Hale
Elise Halpern
Toni Harrington
Mary Ann Hart
Brad Harten*
Pam Hartley*
Reese Hawkins*
Stacy Heath
Lindsay Henningfeld*
Deedi Henson
Elaine Hentschel
Dan Herrick*
Eddy Hicks*
Sally Hilton
Linda Hirsch
Bob Holmes
Louise Horney
Lin Inlow
Sandra Jones
Gene Kalin
Cindy Kelly
Bev Kendall*
Steve Kilgo
Kathryn King
Jo Kroger
Carolyn Lantelme
Kathryn LaTour

Mary Lawton
Marj Leinbaugh
Mark Lewis
Randi Lewis
Jane Lewis*
Andrea Lewis*
Claudia Macdonald
Jim Mallory
Amber Malloy
Lynn Malone
Patti Marcus
Carrie Mayhan
Theresa McDugald
RuthAnn McGehee
Lisa McNaught
Barbara McRoberts
Angie Meadows
Burrelle S. Meeks
Charlotte Miller
Agnes Miller Landers
Greg Mills
Barb Musolf
Pat Musolf
Patty Nathan
Bruce Newton
Olivia Niemczuk
Jack Nolen
Merideth Northcutt
Carolyn Packard
Alejandro Perez
Venetia Perry
Lisbet Phillips
Lynda Pollock
Ray Porter
Bonnie Poulin
Jana Pribisova*
Alice Pugh

Rebecca Rahm
Mireya Ramirez*
Ashley Rivera Lopez*
Kay Roane
Patricia Robinson
Andrea Rutherford
Bhavani Saravanan
Rachel Scott
Denise Siegel
Sherrie Siegel*
Susan Slemenda
David Smith
Marge Smith
Alice Soder
Raenell Soller
Michael Stanley
Judy Steffy
Lisa Stewart
Heather Tangren
Gale Thomas
David Todd
Margaret Turk
Beth Vaughan
Ken Vesey
Matt Vrzal
Jack Weeks
Sue Weinschenker
Paula White
Stokes Willingham
Susan Wood
Sally Wright
Emily Yarosz
Chuck Young
Marlene Zwier

* Denotes First Year

The Bicentennial Club

In 2011, the Garden began recognizing a special "Bicentennial" group of volunteers for donating over 200 hours during the year. This year we salute 26 members, from both Atlanta and Gainesville.

Each of the following receives, in addition to the Centennial Club benefits, a lapel pin in recognition of this achievement.



1st Year

Edison Gu, David Todd, Beth Vaughan, Vince Yamilkoski

2nd Year

Pat Musolf, Lisbet Phillips, Stan Ray

3rd Year

Amy Rothenberg

4th Year

Bev Adkins, Karen Ahrens

5th Year

Anne Boyte, Marj Leinbaugh, Susan Wood

6th Year

Rebecca Rahm, Alice Soder

7th Year

Chris File, Agnes Miller-Landers, Marge Smith

8th Year

Bhavani Saravanan, Marlene Zwier

9th Year

Janet Cantrelle, Kathy Gallo

10th Year

Diane Korzeniewski, Jim Mallory

12th Year

Charlotte Miller

14th Year

Johnette Crum

The Everlastings

The Everlastings Award was first presented in 2001 to give thanks to a group of volunteers who had been around the Garden for many years.

Ten years later, in 2011, we recognized the second class of Everlastings to a group of 23 people who had ten straight years of Centennial Club service.

In this, the Garden's 50th anniversary year, we recognize 41 people who are still actively volunteering and have been around for at least the last third of the Garden's history, since 2009.

Many thanks to the following, saluted at the Thanks for Giving Luncheon, for their 17-plus years of continuous service to the Garden!

Yvonne Arrington
Jo Ann Bertrand
Wanda Bokoski
Stan Bokoski
Denise Bomberger
Lynette Burton
Joan Carson
Johnette Crum
Kay Darrington
Debbie DeMoss
Cyndy Franklin
Kathy Gallo
Deedi Henson
Sandy Kellam
Jeannie Kostiuk
Kathryn LaTour
Marj Leinbaugh
Carrie Mayhan
Angie Meadows
Agnes Miller-Landers

Sunny Mitchell
Jack Nolen
Bonny Poulin
Alice Pugh
Maria Richmond
Barbara Schwendler
Susan Slemenda
Marge Smith
Geni Smith
Raenell Soller
Sa Su
Judie Taylor
Nancy Waterfill
Clark Weisner
Paula White
Patricia Williams
Brad Wilson
Ginny Wolf
Susan Wood
Sally Wright
Chuck Young



The Roots of the Garden

The Top Hours Award



Lisbet Phillips

Lisbet Phillips began volunteering in 2012 and has been a Centennial Volunteer since 2013. Volunteer of the Month for October 2024, she volunteered over 200 hours in both 2024 and 2025. In the Orchid Center, she helps with the biological pest control system, applying beneficial insects to plants and removing pests by hand, along with helping on display installations. In the outdoor gardens, she is part of the Children's Garden horticulture team, helping to weed and plant and general garden maintenance. With 324 hours in 2025, Lisbet is earning her first Roots Award.

Bhavani Saravanan

Bhavani Saravanan began volunteering in 2017 and has been a Centennial Club member every year since, with 200+ hours annually since 2018. The August 2020 Volunteer of the Month, she lends a hand in nearly every department all over the Garden with a wide variety of tasks, from Garden Essential Maintenance and Gardens Under Glass to Children's Programs, classes, Outdoor Kitchen, and special events. With 366 hours, Bhavani is earning her second Roots Award, having received that distinction in 2020 also.

Janet Cantrelle

Janet Cantrelle began volunteering in 2016. She, too, has spent the past 10 years volunteering all across the Garden, from running Discovery Stations to helping outdoor horticulture in the Woodlands and indoor horticulture in the Gardens Under Glass, to leading docent tours. She is a Centennial and 200+ hour volunteer every year since 2017, and a Volunteer of the Month in both 2017 and 2021. The 2021 Volunteer of the Year who had top hours in the program in 2024, Janet spends most of her time in the Orchid Center these days. With 383 hours, she is to be congratulated on her ninth consecutive Roots Award.

Charlotte Miller

Beginning her service in 2013, Charlotte has made Centennial Club and 200+ hours every year since. She is a Volunteer of the Month in both 2015 and 2018, and our Volunteer of the Year for 2018. You may find her leading a morning tour, then stopping by the greenhouse to pot up some plants, then heading to an office to hand address invitations, then staying late to run a Discovery Station for an event. Then she finally gets home late, looks at Josh's email with upcoming assignments, and replies to sign up for everything all over again. With the top hours in the program this year, at 439, this engaging and knowledgeable volunteer is earning her 11th straight Roots Award!

Volunteers of the Month

Volunteers of the Month are nominated by their staff supervisors for showing exceptional devotion and enthusiasm, for being reliable and committed in their volunteer roles and, most of all, for their friendship. These are the folks who make the staff look forward to coming to work each day. They are recognized in **Digging In** and have a book placed in the Garden's Library in their name.

2024

Amber Malloy
Hayes Doane
Wanda Bokoski
Tom Baydala
Sally Wright
Stacy Heath
Sheri Kennedy
Marj Leinbaugh
Christine Cotter
Lisbet Phillips
Laura Deming
Jeremy Cohen

2025

David Todd
Stokes Willingham
Marlene Zwier
Anne Boyte
Agnes Miller-Landers
Andrea Rutherford
Sally Hilton
Paige Carncross
Patti Marcus
Kathryn King
Jack Weeks
David Ellwanger

The Gainesville Garden recognizes
Volunteers of the Quarter

2024

Mike Hogan
Becky Bush
Joy Staeck
Diane Korzeniewski

2025

Jeryi Amason
Vince Yamilkoski
Elvira Franco
Lisa Brooks

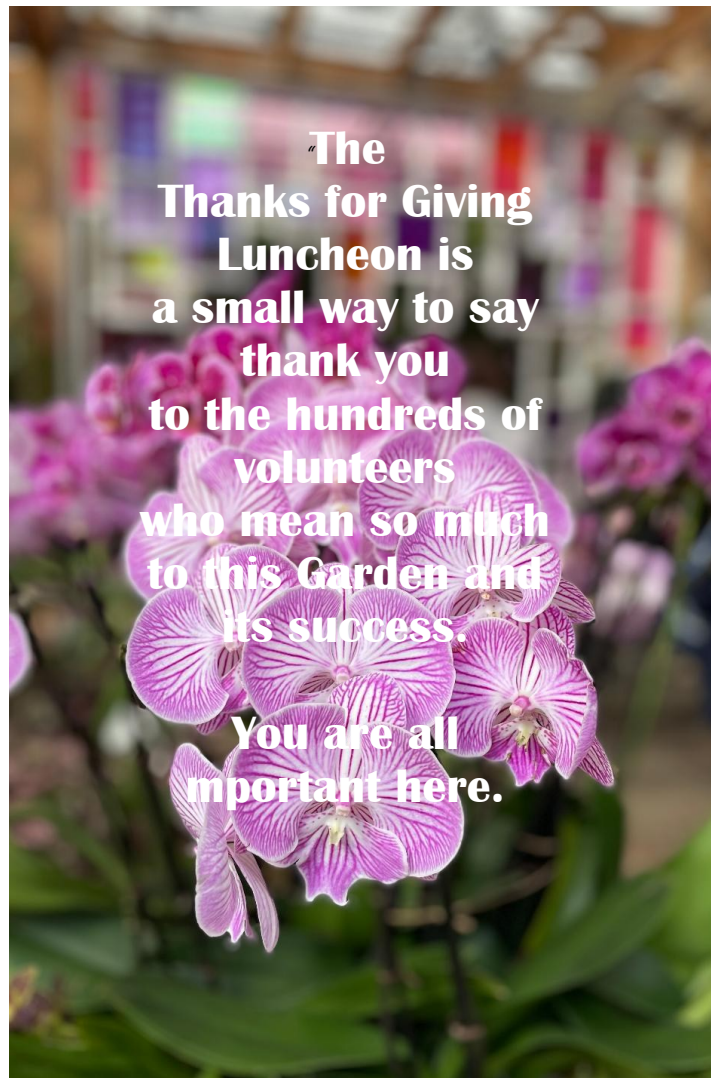
Special Thanks

Thank you to Nancy Waterfill,
Gift Shop volunteer
for 35 years
and the Garden's
Lifetime Achievement Award recipient
in 2019,
for her support of the Volunteer Program and
the Thanks for Giving luncheon
with the
Nancy Allen Waterfill Fund.



The
Thanks for Giving
Luncheon is
a small way to say
thank you
to the hundreds of
volunteers
who mean so much
to this Garden and
its success.

You are all
important here.



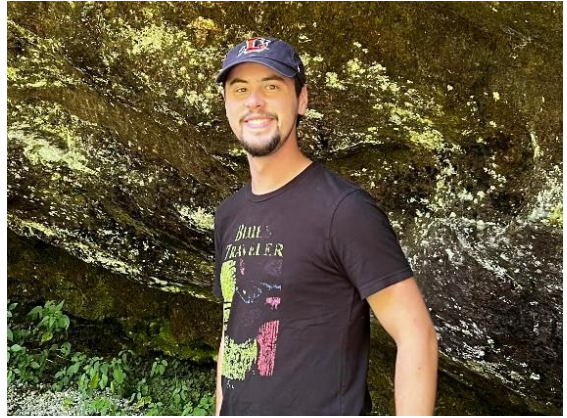
Meet the Volunteers of the Month

January 2025
David Todd



Once a Garden volunteer, always a Garden volunteer, at least in David Todd's case! A volunteer in the Conservatory from 2010 through 2014, David returned in 2024 to lend a much-needed hand in the Membership Office where he is appreciated for his engaging phone voice and patient customer service when contacting renewal members. Long a Garden member, he is happy to be back among the volunteer group, logging Centennial Club hours in 2025. The Garden is sure glad too and salutes him as the January 2025 Volunteer of the Month.

February 2025
Stokes Willingham



An environmental science student at UNC, Stokes began volunteering in 2024 in Discovery Stations, as a GEM and even with events when home during summers and breaks. Often in the Vanilla Orchid Station, he is eager and engaging with guests, "offering more vanilla extract and vanilla recipes than anyone" according to staff who also note that his fluency in Spanish makes him appreciated by Spanish-speaking guests. His positive attitude and willingness to pitch in with weeding, cleaning tools or whatever is needed in the Garden has made him a favorite with the hort staff. "He is a breath of fresh air and we will miss him when he graduates this May!"

March 2025
Marlene Zwier



Marlene Zwier has worn many hats as a Garden volunteer since 2010. She's a greeter, Discovery volunteer, docent and has helped with a countless number of children's activities and events. Like so many Garden volunteers, she is convinced that the Garden is the most beautiful place in Atlanta and that being part of it as a volunteer is its own reward. "It is a thrill to be part of what goes on here!" A perennial Centennial, she has logged 200-plus hours eight times and was Volunteer of the Month back in April 2011. Her enthusiasm and dedication have made her a valued and respected volunteer and earned her recognition again as Volunteer of the Month.

April 2025
Anne Boyte



Anne joined the volunteer ranks in 2016, sharing her wealth of garden knowledge and sense of fun with Garden visitors young and old through Discovery Stations, as a docent and with nearly every children's activity and program. A Centennial volunteer since then, she has totaled 200-plus hours five times and earned the Roots top hours distinction in both 2021 and 2022. "Volunteering here gives me the chance to help people explore the world around them. There's no better place to be!" she says. With always a smile and a kind word for everyone, she is a favorite with visitors and staff alike and is recognized for the second time as Volunteer of the Month.

Meet the Volunteers of the Month

May 2025
Agnes Miller-Landers



Agnes Miller-Landers brings a unique *je ne sais quoi* to her volunteer roles at the Garden. Whether giving tours or greeting visitors or dancing with children during Garden Grooves or any of the other children's activities she helps with, she is filled with joy, energy and encouragement and is just fun to be around. She seems to have a knack for making visitors feel special. A volunteer since 2009, she has tallied 200 or more annual volunteer hours seven times and is still going strong. One of the Garden's most beloved volunteers, Agnes is recognized, for the second time, as Volunteer of the Month.

June 2025
Andrea Rutherford



Andrea Rutherford started her volunteer stint at the Botanical Garden in 2022, shortly after moving to Atlanta, and quickly found out it is a fun place to be! As a Discovery volunteer, she signs up for every kind of shift, always with a smile and an engaging manner. She admits she especially enjoys the vanilla orchid, frog and Edible Garden stations. Also a docent, she earned Centennial Club hours her very first year and has maintained them every year since. Staff find her delightful to work with, always ready to help when needed. Hats off to Andrea for being named June 2025 Volunteer of the Month.

July 2025
Sally Hilton



GEM extraordinaire, Sally Hilton will tell you she knew very little about plants when she started volunteering at the Garden in 2013. But she found out quickly it's a great place to learn! She can't say enough about the Garden's remarkable staff from whom she has learned so much. Gardening is now her life, thanks to her Garden experience, she says, laughingly describing herself as a "true plant nerd." Also a regular docent whose Garden knowledge and patience is legendary, it's no surprise that she has been a Centennial since 2014 and is honored for the second time as Volunteer of the Month.

August 2025
Paige Carncross



Paige Carncross is one of the Garden's more unusual types of volunteers, bringing a unique skill set and knowledge to assist the Garden's conservation team in their field work. In summer 2025, Paige helped with data collection in Florida where her attention to detail and ability to handle long field days were a huge help. Her plant identification skills were later instrumental in cataloguing wetland species in mountain bogs. (Photo above) Her intensive, specialized work with the Garden's conservation efforts earned her Centennial Club honors and recognition as August 2025 Volunteer of the Month.

Meet the Volunteers of the Month

September 2025
Patti Marcus



Volunteering at the Botanical Garden was at the top of her "Things To Do When I Retire" list, says Patti Marcus, so in 2024 when she retired after nearly 35 years in public media, that is just what she did. Starting as a greeter, where she remains a regular on Thursdays, she enjoys welcoming visitors from all over the world. Friendly, engaging, with a positive attitude and warm smile for everyone, Patti is one the staff know they can depend on whether in the Visitor Center or at any of her Discovery Station posts. Volunteering at the Garden is "an honor" she says, and may be the best part of retirement. For her smiles, laughs and all around positive energy, the Garden honors her as September 2025 Volunteer of the Month.

October 2025
Kathryn King



Kathryn King is one of those people who never meets a stranger, which makes her a perfect greeter and Garden representative! Starting as a greeter in 2022, she's a regular with Discovery Stations as well, going above and beyond, always looking for new ways to enhance visitors' Garden experience. A Centennial since 2023, with over 200 volunteer hours in 2024, Kathryn is a delight to be around, full of energy and with great stories to tell, say staff members, and for all that and more is saluted as October's Volunteer of the Month.

November 2025
Jack Weeks



For Jack Weeks, volunteering at the Garden is second nature. A professional landscape architect, he knows his way around gardens and has been a regular in the Orchid Center and with Garden events since 2018, with Centennial hours since 2021. Friendly and engaging, he easily talks with visitors, pointing out things they might otherwise miss and answering their orchid questions. Now retired, he has also joined the Plant Hotline team where his extensive plant knowledge is put to good use. Grateful for that knowledge and all he does, the Garden salutes Jack as November Volunteer of the Month.

December 2025
David Ellwanger



Longtime Garden member, David Ellwanger had never really thought about volunteering here because he thought all volunteers did was pull weeds. Then his wife saw a blurb about docent training and suggested he become a docent because he "liked to garden and liked to talk." A match made in Heaven! That was 2024, and since then he's been busy giving tours galore, helping with children's activities, and handling Discovery Stations, always with a smile and a funny story. "Volunteering keeps me connected with people, and learning new things about the Garden just makes me want to learn more!" For his enthusiasm, friendliness and for being such an all-around nice guy, the Garden tips its hat to David as December's Volunteer of the Month.



What's Happening in Gainesville

By Trish Andrews
Gainesville Volunteer Coordinator

Spring arrived gradually, and then all at once in the Garden—daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips bursting into a vibrant display. The tulips at the front door to the Visitor Center were a brilliant yellow, welcoming guests with a blaze of color, and then a freeze hit hard. It took them about a week before they were all standing back up again! Magnolias transformed bare branches into clouds of blooms in a range of hues and fragrances and have now begun leafing out to cast welcome shade for warmer days. The viburnum looks amazing! Our dedicated GEMs and a volunteer team from Publix will pitch in to spread pine straw, while the horticulture team and volunteers prepare to refresh all the containers in April. Our docents are providing educational tours of our Garden to both adults and students.

The Conservation Nursery will become a treasury of rare and beautiful blossoms in April. Member Evening is scheduled for May 18. Just last year we were celebrating our official tenth anniversary and this May makes eleven years for the Garden! The Alfred Glover Exhibit opens May 16 and runs through August 9. Our summer music series begins May 30. Check the website for more details.

Our volunteers are simply amazing! Their contributions during our inaugural year of *Gainesville Glows: Lanterns and Lights* cannot be celebrated enough! Each and every day, our Garden glows through the smiles of our green-vested volunteers!

Now is a wonderful time to visit—and to volunteer—at the Atlanta Botanical Garden, Gainesville.

News from the Volunteers at

Atlanta Botanical Garden, Gainesville

By Diane Korzeniewski



How does the saying go? “If you don’t like the weather, wait a few hours and it will change.” That has never been more true than this year! Our volunteer visit to see Atlanta’s tulips was postponed a week due to weather. Five of us did make it down the following Monday, with beautiful weather, to see the tulips being dug out. Too funny! But we did have a great tour. Thank you!

We have been making the transition to a spring post *Gainesville Glows: Lanterns and Luminaries*. Volunteers in Atlanta are old pros at this, but we are adjusting to tasks that were cut short due to the holiday lights: bulb planting, acorn removal, and I am sure others that I am not even aware of. This spring seems to have a bumper crop of acorns. Don’t squirrels eat them? Where **are** the squirrels? Asleep on the job, I guess. Every week we dig out tree seedlings, and the following week there are just as many. Guess that is volunteer job security.

We have had two Lunch and Learns already this year. Topics: Magnolias and Conservation (Bog) gardening. Both excellent. Thanks to our staff for taking such good care of us! We learn a lot here. And have a lot of fun. The life of a volunteer!

The 2025 Gainesville Centennial Club

Bev Adkins
Jeryi Amason
Danny Caudell
William “Bill” Doyle
Elvira Franco
Jim Giambrone
Mike Hogan
Diane Korzeniewski

Mikky Lockwood
Stan Ray
Amy Rothenberg
Joy Staeck
Renee Steinke
Larry Strain
Sally Walpole
Vincent Yamilkoski

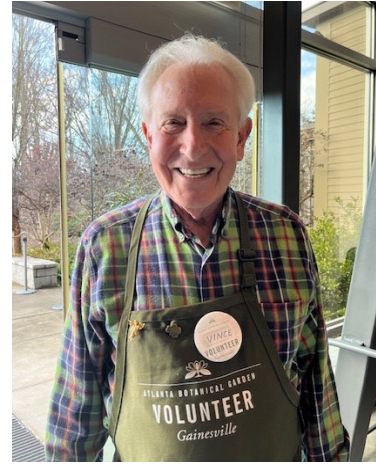
Meet the Gainesville 2025 Volunteers of the Quarter

First Quarter Jeryi Amason



Jeryi Amason began volunteering at ABGG three years ago shortly after retiring from 38 years in healthcare. She is often the first one to sign up for a special event. As a Lobby Greeter and a Garden Ambassador, Jeryi enjoys visiting with guests. Whether she's talking about plants in the Garden or handing out stickers to a child in the lobby, Jeryi uses her years of experience to make a special connection with Garden visitors. Her love of the Garden, her dependability, and her special sense of humor combine to make her our Volunteer of the First Quarter.

Second Quarter Vince Yamikoski



Vince Yamikoski embodies kindness and integrity. A retired education professor who spent over three decades training future teachers, he brings the same patience, warmth and quiet generosity to his work at the Garden. Whether welcoming guests as a Garden Ambassador, dancing with visitors on the terrace at *JuneFest*, lending a hand at *Fairy Tale Friday*, or simply enjoying his morning walk, Vince's presence makes the Garden feel more inviting to everyone. As fellow volunteers often say, "He's just a truly great guy"—and we couldn't agree more and salute him as Volunteer of the Second Quarter.

Third Quarter Elvira Franco



When visitors stroll through the Garden and are greeted with a warm smile and friendly conversation, that smile often belongs to Elvira Franco, one of our outstanding Garden Ambassadors. With a background in counseling, Elvira brings a natural empathy and gift for connection to every encounter. Whether welcoming guests, training new Garden Ambassadors, or sharing insights as a newly trained docent, she helps visitors feel seen, valued and inspired. We are thrilled to honor Elvira as our Volunteer of the Quarter for helping our Garden grow in beauty, community, and heart.

Fourth Quarter Lisa Brooks



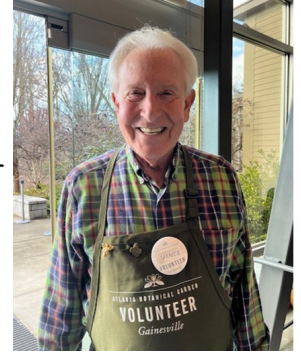
Lisa Brooks is a wonderful example of dedication and enthusiasm. Though she is new, she has quickly made an impact as a Lobby Greeter and a Garden Ambassador, and she is one of our new docents. She actively volunteers with other organizations and brings strong project management and people skills from her professional background. She loves the peacefulness of our Garden. She organized the Gainesville Newcomers Club to support two nights of *Gainesville Glows*, ensuring all volunteer responsibilities were smoothly handled. Her warmth, reliability, and leadership have earned her Volunteer of the Quarter honors as we thank her for all she does.

Saluting Gainesville's 2025 Roots of the Garden

The Top Hours Award

Vince Yamilkoski, 233 hours

A recent Volunteer of the Quarter, Vince is a daily walker in our Garden who also jumps in to volunteer at every opportunity. He has a natural way of making others feel at ease, taking time to connect and ensuring each visitor's experience is a positive one. Whether he's offering directions, sharing a thoughtful observation or simply greeting someone with a smile, Vince helps create the welcoming spirit that defines our Garden community. His steady presence and willingness to lend a hand wherever needed make him an invaluable part of our volunteer family—and a true Root in every sense.



Stan Ray, 309 hours

Since joining ABGG in 2022, following his retirement and years of membership and volunteering at ABG, Stan has quickly become an invaluable part of our volunteer team. In just three years, he has contributed over 850 hours and earned a reputation as the "gold standard" of lobby greeters. Calm, friendly, and deeply knowledgeable, Stan sets a tone of warmth and welcome for every guest who walks through our doors. His positivity is infectious, his presence reassuring, and his willingness to step in and help wherever needed makes him truly indispensable. Trusted by staff and beloved by fellow volunteers and visitors alike, Stan embodies the spirit of our Garden.



Bev Adkins, 312 hours

Since 2016, Bev has been a steadfast weekly volunteer, generously giving over 1850 hours of service to the Garden. A previous Volunteer of the Quarter and a proud Centennial Volunteer every year, she brings warmth, dedication, and a deep love for the Garden to every shift. As a Lobby Greeter, she is known for her gracious welcome, helpful spirit, and ever-present smile. With 44 years as a librarian, she continues to exhibit curiosity and a love for learning. Her passion for people and plants make her a treasured presence and true Root of the Garden.



Diane Korzeniewski, 373 hours

For two decades, Diane has been a cornerstone of our Garden community, generously dedicating well over 4,000 volunteer hours since 2005. As the Garden's first-ever Volunteer of the Quarter in 2018 and again in 2024, Diane exemplifies commitment, heart, and excellence. From GEM work and greenhouse care to writing the Gainesville Volunteer column, Diane's curiosity, knowledge, and energy shine in every role she fills. As Horticulture Manager Ethan Guthrie puts it, "Her dedication and love for the Garden show in everything she does." With four Roots Awards to her name, Diane truly sets the standard for volunteer excellence.



Amy Rothenberg, 405 hours

Since joining the Garden in 2023, Amy has brought exceptional dedication and energy to every task she takes on. In just a short time, she has become an indispensable part of the greenhouse and the IPEP program. Amy's focus, reliability, and determination are second to none—qualities that make her a standout among volunteers. Whether she's carefully tending plants, assisting in propagation efforts, or supporting conservation projects, Amy gives her all with quiet persistence and a deep love for the Garden's mission. As a past Volunteer of the Quarter, Amy's contributions continue to grow in impact and reach. We are truly fortunate to have her as part of the Gainesville volunteer team.



Docent Corner

By Judy Steffy
2026 Docent Chair

The Joy of Always Learning



There's a moment on many tours when a visitor pauses, looks around, and says, "I had no idea." Those are the moments that remind me what an incredible opportunity we have as docents at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Each time we step into the Garden with visitors, we bring not only our love of this special place, but also a growing body of knowledge that continues to evolve with every season.

One of the things I value most about being a docent is that the learning never stops. Our monthly docent meetings give us the

chance to explore different aspects of the Garden more deeply, and I often find myself weaving those insights into my tours. I've especially enjoyed incorporating stories about the Garden's conservation work, including the International Plant Exploration program and the Seed Bank, when talking about the "hidden life" of the Garden.

Our seasonal displays and exhibitions also offer wonderful opportunities to expand what we share. This past year's *Orchid Daze: Living Canvas* reminded many of us of the extraordinary depth and beauty of our orchid collection—and gave us new ways to talk about the intricate relationships between orchids and their pollinators. Likewise, the *Super Blooms* bulb display created moments of pure delight. I recall one tour when a glimpse of the tulips on the Great Lawn drew the group in so quickly that it led to a lively conversation—not only about the display itself, but also about the interesting role tulips have played in human history.

What continues to surprise me is how often one moment leads to another layer of discovery. While leading a tour for Fernbank volunteers, I found myself revisiting the ancient origins of some of the plants we see every day. It's remarkable to realize that while the dinosaurs are long gone, plant families such as cycads, ferns, magnolia, and even orchids still connect us to that distant past.

Serving in different roles, including time spent as a Discovery volunteer, can also enrich our experience. Focusing on a specific topic in greater detail (for example Vanilla Orchids, Forest Bathing, Killer Plants etc.), often brings new confidence and creativity to general tours. Being a docent is not just about guiding others—it's about staying open to discovery ourselves. If we remain curious, there will always be something new to learn—and always another moment when a visitor turns to us and says, "I had no idea."



Spring Break Fun
in the
Children's Garden

Coming soon:

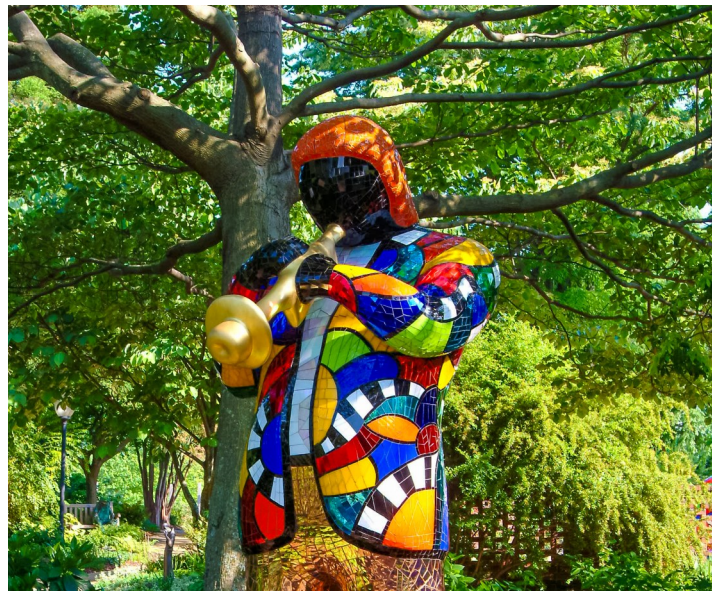
Niki in the Garden

By Josh Todd

The Garden will host Niki's bold, colorful and joyful sculptures this summer, May 9 - September 6.

Niki de Saint Phalle was born outside Paris in 1930 to a French father and American mother. She is known for her work as a fashion model, sculptor, artist, painter, and illustrator. A lifelong advocate for women's rights, social change and environmental awareness, she gained international notoriety for her Nanas series, large, voluptuous female figures that celebrate body positivity and femininity. She worked with a diverse range of materials, including fiberglass, polyester resin, mosaic glass, ceramic tiles, mirrors, bronze and concrete.

The Garden previously showcased an exhibition of her work in 2006.



Volunteer Social and Niki Preview

Monday, May 4

2-4 p.m.

Happy Hour at the Magnolia Bistro

and tour with

Chandler Burns,

Exhibitions Coordinator.

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Digging In is published for the volunteers of the Atlanta Botanical Garden.

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