



“PLANTING INFO...”

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CONTINUING WITH GCG POSITION PAPERS: AN ENIGMA, THE GREEN MAN, THE GCG *PUBLIC LANDS/GREEN SPACE* POSITION PAPER, AND APPLICATION OF ITS PRINCIPLES

REMINDER: DURING THIS GCG ADMINISTRATION, EACH ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE OF PLANTING INFO ... WILL FEATURE ONE OF THE EIGHT GCG POSITION PAPERS LOCATED ON THE GCG WEBSITE. Planting Info ... is designed to supplement materials offered through National Garden Clubs courses in Basic Horticulture, Environmental Studies, and Landscape Design.

ENIGMA: an obscure speech or writing or situation: something hard to understand or that is questionable. It is or can be an inscrutable or mysterious person or set of circumstances or state of affairs. One of the most familiar uses of *enigma* is the adjective form used to describe the smile of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. What *is* she smiling about? *Why* is she smiling? In terms of a da Vinci value, his *Salvator Mundi* (Savior of the World) sold earlier this month for \$450.3 million. The sort of collapse in France that would bring The Mona Lisa in the Louvre to be sold is simply unfathomable. Multiple scholarly papers have been based on Mona Lisa's *enigmatic* smile and the purpose and thought behind such a smile, especially in the Renaissance when few portraits included smiling subjects. Nobody truly knows yet why she smiles or what she is smiling about although theories from the sacred to the vulgar exist. That's a real enigma. Our country is also full of enigmas.

An enigma is sometimes created intentionally to obfuscate, evade or cloud a subject, or an issue or a person. Each of us can likely think of a current enigma, evident and even to blatant in newscasts. Sometimes, enigmas are very simply things that are not easily known, not traceable, and may likely forever remain so. The concept of Mother Earth and Mother Nature is common and understood and understandable. In contrast, there is the Green Man, an enigma if ever there has been one.

GREEN MAN: Assuredly, there is a long tradition of the Green Man, first well known as carvings in European churches during the Middle Ages, often placed high enough to observe anyone standing below within the space. Most often, Green Man appears as a head only with expressions



varying from benign to smiling, to grimacing, to threatening, to solemn, all with no with no known reason. Green Man has been depicted in stone, wood, in paint or ink. or even with light as exemplified by the flashing one indicating walking safely at many street intersections.

Such images are generally accepted as benevolent, and if grimacing are likely frowning at individuals or forces of harm to nature. Green Man most often appears as a head and face only and also often appears on walls or column tops, looking down at owners and visitors alike.

Green Man is generally accepted as a nonspecific force of nature with differing, enigmatic meanings in different times and places. Occasionally he is assumed to be a force of nature male equivalent perhaps of Mother Earth. Most Green Man faces are composed of leaves and fruit or cones. Ivy, grapes, and oak leaves are also often used. Green men have recently been incorporated into some recycling stick figures, tossing trash into appropriate cans, or performing other positive and environmentally friendly acts.

(Image above from Pinterest)

To see multiple depictions of the Green Man, free on almost any search engine, type in **Green Man** and many images will appear; more likely than not, there will be a charge to copy and to use such images, but fortunately, there is no charge for looking. The results and variations are fascinating. Try looking at the images of Green Man of unknown origin.



Think just for a moment about a tremendously familiar adaption of the kindly Green Man seen in grocery stores among canned and frozen vegetables, the Jolly - HO - HO - HO - Green Giant! Had you ever before thought of the origin of that highly successful promotional image? Of course! He's the Green Man, nature itself! Searching **Green Giant** will result in a time line of the image that began in 1928 and many variants of that symbol. In Blue Earth MN, as seen to the left, there's a far larger than life, sixty foot tall friendly Green Giant statue overlooking the local interstate highway with the town's welcome sign for a base.

AND, FOR A VERY GREEN SEARCH ENGINE SUGGESTION: try ECOSIA. It is free, it works well, and much of its revenue goes to planting trees worldwide. To date, it has planted over 17,000,000 needed trees. In August, for example, 49.6% of funds went to planting trees, 33% of its funds went to operating expenses, 10.7 % went to spreading the word, and 6.1% was held in reserve funds. Approximately 45 separate searches on the ECOSIA website will result in the planting of a tree somewhere in the world. Every search counts. Every tree counts. Of course, GCG members can promote its Mission of *Beautification ... Conservation ... Education* by using the ECOSIA search engine.

Additionally, more ways to have trees planted include making a donation/membership to the Arbor Day Foundation that will send you several greeting cards stating that a tree will be planted in the recipient's honor. Furthermore, through National Wildlife - catalogue available online - purchase of seasonal pewter ornaments will include donating to funds for planting trees. The ornaments make good stocking stuffers or table favors. Also consider membership in local tree organizations as a gift to yourself or to someone else. Such action will support the GCG Position Paper below.

POSITION PAPER FOR NOVEMBER FOCUS:

GCG Supports Public Lands/Greenspace

Revised 2016

Since its founding in 1928, The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. has proudly acknowledged its horticultural stewardship, ever mindful of our verdant heritage and considering it a sacred duty to protect those natural resources so generously loaned to each of us.

Georgia's natural resources are rapidly being depleted. GCG strongly believes our public lands and resources should be managed under a mandate of conservation stewardship for future generations.

Legislation must be put into place which protects public lands and their resources, together with responsible management of them.

Therefore, the Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. supports:

- Designation and increased protection of wilderness areas.
- Conservation of land for watersheds, scenic beauty, and recreation.
- Creation of community parks, greenspace, and scenic vistas.
- Preservation and protection of historic landmarks, landscapes, working lands, parks and national preserves from exploitation.
- A dedicated source of funding for the expansion of green space. At the federal level, the Land and Water Conservation Fund should be permanently authorized and fully funded. In Georgia, a permanent source of dedicated funding should be established.
- Conservation and preservation of flora and fauna, especially native species, and the eradication of invasive plants on public lands.
- Enabling legislation authorizing county and municipal governments to establish trust funds for parks and greenspace, river protection and scenic vistas.

SOME OF THE THINGS EACH GCG MEMBER CAN DO AS SUPPORT OF THE TENETS OF THE POSITION PAPER ABOVE FOLLOW. NOTE ALSO THAT ITEMS WITHIN THE POSITION PAPER REPRESENT DESCRIPTIONS OF MANY OF GCG'S COMMITTEE EFFORTS AND ACTIVITIES.

BY ALL MEANS, join conservation and environmental organizations that benefit public lands and green spaces and volunteer your services to them. Club memberships are often available. Staff members often make good speakers for club meetings. Read their newsletters online or, if possible, subscribe to them. Much important is available on websites. Responsible citizens and GCG members inform themselves.

Even if you are not a William Wordsworth aficionado, take *let nature be your teacher* as a guide for your continuing study and exploration through and of life. Many physicians currently prescribe daily time outdoors in nature as part of both mental and physical good health. Precisely that concept was included in the NBC Evening News on November 25th.

Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites - see locations and the number of Georgia possibilities



on the map - as well as the National Parks System and private parks and historic sites that offer a wide variety of opportunities for relaxation, trails to walk or hike, chances to be outdoors and to breathe clean air, smell different smells, see and hear moving water, observe wildlife, both flora and fauna, pitch a tent, paddle a canoe, and enjoy the relative quiet as one ventures past television, films, cell phones, and Facebook.

Private, public, municipal, and county open spaces, parks, and reserves all need upkeep of roadways and buildings, especially if they include lodging. Park Rangers, guides, and naturalists as well as security personnel, necessary vehicles and machines with upkeep all add to costs for maintaining improving such areas.

and

Funding comes from a variety of sources: parking fees, facilities rentals

entry and/or and fees, plus taxes determined by State Legislatures and Congress as well as from donations and memberships. GCG members and individual citizens can make a major difference in funding by 1. knowing who represents them; 2. where as well as how to contact their elected officials; 3. staying in contact with their elected officials and letting them know what matters are important to them about greenspace as well as matters and Bills they may oppose.

GIVING DAY JUST PASSED: ASSUREDLY, ALL ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE DELIGHTED TO CONTINUE TO ACCEPT DONATIONS.

IN REFERENCE TO THE GCG PUBLIC LANDS/ GREENSPACE POSITION PAPER, GEORGIA STATE PARKS AND HISTORIC SITES, OPERATED UNDER THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES - DNR - HAS MADE A PLEA FOR FUNDING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS CURRENTLY NEEDED IN PARKS STATEWIDE FOR FIRST RESPONDERS.

First Responders with DNR Search and Rescue alone saved 5 lives this past year and responded to more than 30 emergency situations. Their needs include the following: supplies, emergency kits, high level trainings and more in preparation for next year.

The following photo and list are as they appeared in the Friends of Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites message of November 28th.



- Certifications and re-certifications for Team members
- NCRC Cave/High Angle equipment and gear such as ropes, helmets, and gloves
- Comprehensive medical kits
- Terrain Navigational Software Systems
- Cartridge guns with canisters for ejecting rope lines for swiftwater rescues
- New rescue wheel and litter [*This highly specialized piece of equipment is akin to a stretcher with safety belts and one wheel. It can be used to help move an injured person along a trail to a point an ambulance or helicopter can reach.*]
- Incident command boards with T-cards
- Specialized Certifications for medical response, swift water rescue, and national cave rescue
- Wilderness First Responders Training”

KEEP IN MIND THAT LEGISLATION AND LAWS ARE WHAT MAKE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION AND WISE USE OF THE ENVIRONMENT HAPPEN. Please check reliable news sources and national government plans for pending drastic measures to reduce funding for all National Parks and to raise entry fees ostensibly to cover operating expenses that may eliminate some visitors. There are also possibilities of using natural resources within such spaces.

Personal Contact for Environmental Topics: One forward looking GCG President believed that all should know their elected officials well enough to be on a first name basis. Inviting elected officials to club events is an excellent opportunity to meet them. Choose a time when they are not in session and can likely attend. Give them an environmental or other topic of interest to the group

and give them a strict and short time limit to speak. Have someone meet them at the entrance and act as their guide and companion. Plan on feeding them even though they will likely have little grasp about what the cost of even one luncheon or dinner will make to a club's budget if they do not show up. After all, they quickly become accustomed to dealing with large sums. Introduce them and include their time limit in the introduction. Be careful about question and answer sessions that can dissolve an agenda's time frame. Thank them in person and in writing. A copy of a club newsletter is a nice gesture. The care and feeding of elected officials can be a specialized set of skills.

Warning: it may become necessary for the person who does the introduction or the presiding officer to stand up, move close to the speaking guest, and hand the person a copy of a Position Paper or a newsletter and say an enthusiastic THANK YOU.

Visiting elected officials in their local offices and at their Capitols is a good idea. Make an appointment. Take them a printed copy of the Position Paper covering the matter you want to discuss with them. It's always good to be accompanied by an interested and informed club member and to write a thank you note with a recap of what was discussed. Email contact on specific issues or topics is also good; again, a copy of the applicable Position Paper is helpful. The good thing about email is that copies of them remain on computer hard drives, as some officials are currently finding out.

Caveat: NEVER, ever forget that GCG's 501(c)(3) IRS designation is the core of GCG's existence and that we cannot take political positions. We can hold meetings for informational purposes on topics interest, but must include representation of all parties for any issue at such events.

Email me if you have questions about this issue of Planting ... content and please forgive the delay in this message. Have a glorious December!