NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

After the recent cold spell, the last of the leaves are falling from the deciduous trees in my yard. They are ready to be collected, shredded, and spread as mulch over flower beds, around trees and shrubs. Some will also be tilled into the vegetable garden with hopes that they will help to transform the soil into the type of dark, rich, loamy soil I saw on recent visits to the Midwest area. Final fall cleanup for me usually occurs in December – a month that it is already filled to overflowing with special preparations and activities associated with the Holiday season.

As I remove the remnants of spent plants and tidy up my landscape, I am already planning for next year's plantings – always with the elusive goal of creating a perfect landscape. We all know that having the “right” plants is a crucial element of a successful landscape. With so many choices of plants available to us, it is extremely helpful to know which are considered “winners” for our area. Help is on the way!! In this newsletter, Connie Cottingham, GCG garden club member, landscape architect, lifetime master gardener, and a garden writer for the State Botanical Garden as well as several other publications, gives us the special opportunity to be among “the-first-to-know” the Georgia Gold Medal Winners for 2015.

Also in this newsletter, Connie reports on two very informative and enjoyable recent events at the Botanical Garden in Athens which focused on the founder of American Landscape Architecture – Frederick Law Olmsted. I had registered for both the Johnstone Lecture and the Southern Garden Heritage Conference but unfortunately I was unable to attend thus missed an incredible opportunity to see Frederick Law Olmstead brought to life and learn more about the Olmsted Legacy.

Many thanks to Connie Cottingham for her contributions to this newsletter – she has certainly made this editor’s task an easy one this month!!!
This November, the State Botanical Garden of Georgia in Athens and the Southern Garden Heritage Conference planning committee combined the timing and themes of two annual events to focus on Frederick Law Olmsted and his two sons’ influences in the Southeast and the field of landscape architecture.

These events started with the Johnstone Lecture on November 13, sponsored by FRIENDS of the State Botanical Garden of Georgia and named in honor of the State Botanical Garden’s first director, Dr. Francis E. Johnstone, Jr. Over 150 attendees gathered for a reception in the Visitor Center & Conservatory, then listened to Frederick Law Olmsted himself (well, actually Kirk Brown of Philadelphia, in full costume and persona). Listening to the character, one understood a bit of the personality of this genius. This free event was open to the public, and was also considered part of the next day’s Southern Garden Heritage Conference, sponsored by The State Botanical Garden of Georgia and UGA College of Environment and Design in cooperation with The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., Friends of The State Botanical Garden of Georgia, Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center, and the Southern Garden History Society. The Southern Garden Heritage Conference is not only an annual event that combines landscape history and design; it offers continuing education credits for professional landscape architects.
The full-day conference was held on November 14 with the following presentations:

- Practicing Olmsted: The Visible Elements and Principals of Design
  *Kirk Brown, Landscape Contractor and Historian*

- Recovering the Vision: The Rehabilitation of the Olmsted Linear Park in Druid Hills
  *Spencer Tunnell, Tunnell and Tunnell Landscape Architecture*

- Who were the Olmsteds and what is the Olmsted Legacy?
  *Connie Cottingham, State Botanical Garden of Georgia*

- Getting Low with FLO: The Olmsted Firms; work in the Low country
  *Andrew Kohr, Director of Planning and Landscape Architecture Studio, Stantec Consulting*

- The Olmsted Firm and the South: A Century of Landscape and Landscape Architecture
  *Lucy Lawliss, Historical Landscaper, National Park Service*

- Reflections of the Challenge of Conserving the Legacy of Designed Landscapes
  *Tom Jones, Cultural Landscape Lab Graduate Student, UGA College of Environment & Design*

The 65 participants gave great reviews for this symposium, one of many annual symposia held at the State Botanical Garden in Athens each year, including:

- Native Plant Symposium – January
- Georgia Gold Medal Symposium – biennial
- Perennial Plant Symposium – September (in 2014 the emphasis was on herbs)
- Southern Garden Heritage Conference

Find out more about symposia, classes and events at the Garden at [www.botgarden.uga.edu](http://www.botgarden.uga.edu)

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**What is the Olmsted Legacy?**

The Olmsted Legacy is the influence of one family that was instrumental in crafting the profession of landscape architecture and championing conservation from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s. Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., born in 1822, had many professions, including farmer, sailor, and writer of anti-slavery dispatches from the South to the New York Times. In 1857 he became the superintendent of New York's Central Park, created to become a great park that would help establish NYC as one of the world’s great cities. This was a time of growing concern for the mental and physical health of a nation quickly becoming industrialized. After visiting public grounds in Europe, it seemed obvious to Olmsted that there were great psychological and societal benefits to nature and parks.
Young architect Calvert Vaux asked Olmsted to join forces with him to enter the Central Park Design competition. Among 33 entries, their entry won. Olmsted and Vaux took on the job of overseeing the construction of the first landscaped public park in the United States and stayed business partners for over a decade. Olmsted and Vaux designed much more than plantings; they created streams, bridges, and winding paths within a natural, picturesque landscape. Although the detail was exquisite, the designs suited the site, feeling comfortable and natural. It took work and creativity to create a feeling of rustic simplicity.

Olmsted was a combination of idealist and problem solver and held strong convictions, leaving and returning to New York City positions many times. During the Civil War he ran the U.S. Sanitary Commission, a precursor to the Red Cross. His contribution to Civil War hospital care is enough to earn him a place in history. Later, he moved to California, which inspired him to be involved in the conservation movement and the creation of the National Park System before returning to the City of New York as their landscape architect. This period of time in California also greatly influenced John Charles Olmsted, his stepson.

Olmsted married Mary, his brother's widow, shortly after winning the Central Park competition and adopted her children, including his seven-year-old nephew John Charles Olmsted. The new family moved into a house in the middle of Central Park. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. was born to the couple in 1870. The two half-brothers had an 18 year difference in age, but both joined Olmsted, bringing the Olmsted Legacy well into the next century.

John Charles Olmsted became a full partner in the Olmsted firm in 1884. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. graduated Harvard ten years later, then spent 13 months on site at Biltmore, an estate Frederick Law Olmsted was designing for George Vanderbilt in North Carolina. In 1895 he joined his father’s firm. Although Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. is considered ‘the Father of Landscape Architecture’, his sons were instrumental in creating the profession as founding members of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. helped establish Harvard’s landscape architecture program. When the father retired in 1898, the two half-brothers created Olmsted Brothers. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. took over the firm after John Charles' death in 1920, and then retired in 1949, leaving his partners to carry on as Olmsted Associates.

From the Central Park Competition in 1858 well into the next century, the Olmsted legacy materialized in projects throughout the country. In 1980 the National Park Service took over Fairsted, Olmsted’s home and the first landscape architecture office in America. With the buildings were 150,000 drawings, photos, and documents for 5,000 design projects in 45 states. Olmsted projects included public parks such as Boston’s Emerald Necklace and Central Park, created to make nature and beauty available to everyone. Estates, public buildings and college campuses such as Biltmore, The U.S. Capitol, and Duke University, were functional landscapes that respected the site and magnificent architecture. Olmsted projects also included community planning, such as Palos Verdes, CA and Druid Hills in Atlanta, which increased in value and beauty over many decades, as well as the utopian World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.
**2015 Georgia Gold Medal Winners**

By Connie Cottingham, State Botanical Garden of Georgia

For over twenty years, Georgia Gold Medal plants have been selected by a committee comprised of horticulture professionals, county Extension agents and UGA faculty. With these new winners, there are now one hundred Georgia Gold Medal Plants, offering an extensive palette of easy to find, easy-care plants with many seasons of interest for home landscapes. The State Botanical Garden of Georgia in Athens is the headquarters for the Georgia Gold Medal Program ([www.georgiagoldmedalplants.org](http://www.georgiagoldmedalplants.org)) and is pleased to announce the 2015 winners:

**2015 Annual:** Cora® Vinca, Cora® Cascade™ Vinca, Periwinkle *Catharanthus roseus*

This tough annual for full sun to semi-shade is suitable for bedding, containers, groundcover, and hanging baskets (Cora® Cascade™ Vinca is the trailing form). Deer resistant and heat and humidity tolerant, this periwinkle offers larger flowers and a more uniform growing habit than common periwinkle.

**2015 Perennial**

Spurge, Euphorbia *Euphorbia*

This deer-resistant plant is great for rock gardens, borders, containers, or wherever you want a tropical look in a dry setting. It will suffer during a wet spring or if overwatered, but laughs at a drought. These plants are attention-getters when the unique flowers appear. ‘Shorty’ will form a 12-24” compact, sculptural, rounded mass of silver-grey in the landscape. Yellow blooms appear in early spring and the foliage is flushed with burgundy in fall. ‘Ascot Rainbow’ has variegated leaves of green and yellow on a 20” tall plant, with burgundy on the newest foliage each fall and yellow blooms in early spring.

**2015 Shrub**

Drift® Roses

Drift® roses are a cross of groundcover roses and miniature roses, offering the best of both: disease resistance, repeat blooming, and compact size. Works well in the landscape, as container plants, or on a slope. Many feel that Peach Drift Rose has proven to be the showiest, most compact, and toughest of this series for Georgia, but blooms are also available in pink, coral, red, and pale yellow that turns to white. There can be different colors for buds, new blooms and aged blooms, creating a kaleidoscope effect.

**2015 Tree**

Empress of China® Dogwood *Cornus angustata 'Elsbry' PP14537*

This small tree is a prolific bloomer in May, when cream blooms stand out against glossy, dark, evergreen foliage. It will brighten any shade garden. Later, red fruits stand out against glossy green leaves and feed songbirds. It is best located where it gets morning sun and afternoon shade.
2015 Native Plant  Dwarf Oakleaf Hydrangeas

*Hydrangea quercifolia*

Same four seasons of interest as the larger oakleaf hydrangeas (large leaves, summer blooms, red fall foliage, and interesting winter bark), but in more compact forms that fit easily into home landscapes. Oakleaf hydrangeas can take dry shade under a tree better than other hydrangeas. If it is planted in an irrigated area, plant high to avoid overwatering. ‘Ruby Slippers’ matures at four feet tall and five feet wide, with upright blooms that go from cream to pink to ruby. ‘Peewee’ is four feet tall and wide with creamy blooms. ‘Sikes Dwarf’ is two to four feet high and wide. ‘Munchkin’ matures at three feet tall by four feet wide. Jetstream is 5’-6’ tall, with an upright form that holds its blooms high and peeling bark that shows in winter.

**Fall Color Hydrangea quercifolia ‘Peewee’ by Connie Cottingham**

**Perennial Euphorbia ‘Ascot Rainbow’, AMA, by Allan Armitage**
Mark your calendar now....................

LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL

Course I of the XXVII Series of Landscape Design School sponsored by National Garden Clubs, Inc., Laurel District, and the Marietta Council of Garden Clubs was held December 1-2, 2014 at the Marietta Garden Center. Course II has been scheduled for January 5-6 and will also be held at the Marietta Garden Center. Check the GCG Website for registration information.
NATIVE PLANT SYMPOSIUM
Wednesday, January 21  8:45 am - 3:30 pm
The Garden Club of Georgia, Terrace Room  $60 (lunch included)
Native plants are uniquely adapted to local conditions, having co-evolved with other plants, animals, pollinators, and soil biota. Therefore they require little maintenance and withstand temperature and moisture extremes. Most importantly, native plants provide diverse sources of food and shelter for a wide variety of insects and birds, butterflies, mammals, reptiles, etc. in the complex web of life. Join us for a day-long program that considers gardening with native flowers and trees along with related conservation issues. Learn how to incorporate your appreciation of these plants into your home landscape plan during this day long series of presentations. This year, noted author, naturalist and activist, Janisse Ray ("The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food") will be our keynote speaker, making the connection between saving seeds and protecting native plants.
Please see complete agenda on-line at www.uga.edu/botgarden/educationalevents.html

Certificate in Native Plants - Orientation for New Participants
Wednesday, January 28  9:00 am – 10:30 am
Visitor Center, Classroom 2  Free
Anne Shenk and Cora Keber, State Botanical Garden Education Staff, will introduce the Certificate program. Learn about the variety of volunteer opportunities available to CNP participants including projects with Botanical Guardians, Citizen Science projects, and opportunities with the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance. Information on field trips will also be provided. This orientation is optional and free.

Scatter Information as We Bloom and Grow is a monthly publication of The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. Each edition focuses on one of three themes: horticulture, the environment, and landscape design.

Horticulture Editor: Gail Berthe, gail.berthe@gmail.com
Environment Editor: Judy Keenan, thekeenanfamily@comcast.com
Landscape Design Editor: Jane Hersey, jhersey@bellsouth.net