Nationally renowned speakers grace our 2017 Annual Conference
Join us for an informative event with presentations from:

Joe Lamp’l, Keynote speaker, Creator and Executive Producer of GPTV’s Growing a Greener World.

A behind the scenes look at some of the most popular stories from his national PBS television series over the past eight seasons. You will meet some of the most fascinating people, see some of the most interesting places and discover organizations doing great things for the planet, all with an emphasis on gardening and a common thread that will empower each of us to advance the cause of these gardening heroes in our own communities.

Mark Weathington, Director of JC Raulston Arboretum, NC State University Dept. of Horticultural Science.

Mark is passionate in his work to connect people with plants. His career has included Director of Horticulture at Norfolk Botanical Garden and the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Mark travels extensively searching for new plants to diversify the American landscape, and lecturing on a variety of topics in horticulture. His explorations and speaking engagements have taken him to China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Ecuador, Europe, Mexico, New Zealand, and throughout the US. He has recently completed “Gardening in the South”, The Complete Homeowner’s Guide for Timber Press.

Mario Cambardella, PLA, ASLA, Urban Agriculture Director, City of Atlanta, Mayor’s Office of Sustainability.

Recognizing that urban agriculture renewal can bring fresh produce to those battling our city’s food deserts. In 2015, the Atlanta Mayor’s Office of Sustainability created a new position responsible for a wide range of activities related to agriculture for inner city residents. Mario Cambardella, was appointed the first Urban Agriculture Director and is responsible for agriculture related policy development, program management and land-use for food production. With the Introduction of Farmers Markets and partnership projects like the Cabbagetown Gardens, the local non-profit, Truly Living Well and the organic farm in Washington Park, Atlanta is building not only the local food economy but community togetherness and education. Tidy rows of vegetables, hives of honeybees and places where children and their parents come to play and learn, signals a city moving forward with cooperation and small garden ingenuity. Many Fulton County Master Gardeners volunteer and support the Atlanta City Community Gardens.
Breakout Session speakers offer very diverse topics to choose from

Kevin “The Plant Man” Tarner, Carnivores in the Garden? Yes!

Kevin’s passion for plants grew during his studies in horticulture at the University of Georgia. He has been a professional horticulturist at UGA for seven years, where he curates one of the largest public carnivorous plant collections in the southeast.

Kevin will showcase amazing and beautiful native carnivores. Want to get a young person interested in horticulture? What can be more alluring than carnivorous plants! We are hoping the bug-eating plants might “capture” your attention too! Kevin will cover how they eat and where they grow. He’ll also guide participants through the basics of growing carnivorous plants. While most plants are content with using sunlight for energy, some use animals to round out their diet! Carnivorous plants are infamous for their ability to obtain nutrients by attracting, capturing and digesting live insects. The nutrient poor swamps of the Southeastern US are a carnivore hotspot.

Susan Varlamoff, Sustainable Gardening for the Southeast

Retired Director, UGA Office of Environmental Sciences; Urban Activist; Master Gardener

Susan Varlamoff will highlight gardening practices that restore and enhance local ecosystems while creating a beautiful landscape. These practices include: increasing soil fertility - the foundation of a flourishing garden, using diverse native plants to attract wildlife and keep pests in check, grouping plants according to water needs to let Mother Nature do most of the watering, maintaining a sustainable but small lawn and planting trees to sop up greenhouse gases and grace the garden with beauty. Susan will also focus on minimizing chemical use in garden maintenance. This information is found in her latest book, Sustainable Gardening for the Southeast, which will be available for purchase at her signing table.

Ann Thompson, Growing Medicinal Herbs and their Historical Journey

It is said for every symptom there is a homegrown cure. Join this Master Gardener and the growing number of people who are growing safe, effective and inexpensive cures for many of the common ailments. Have you ever had dandelion wine or made hand crème from strawberry leaves, tasted basil tea or used rosemary sage hair rinse? Learn which “weeds” and herbs are most effective against nausea, pain, coughs and the common cold. Whether it’s a window box, a patio container or a whole garden plot, it is easy to grow and make many useful herbal remedies. Ann plans to bring samples of herbal remedies for you to experience firsthand.

Carol Hassell, What’s in a “Post-Wild” Garden? Creating a Low(er) Maintenance Garden Using Expected and Unexpected Native Plants and Concepts

Carol is the Executive Director of the Piedmont Land Trust. This presentation will feature landscaping and maintenance in the manner of Thomas Rainer and Claudia West in their 2015 book Planting in a Post-Wild World, and utilizing the concepts of Doug Tallamy,‘s Bringing Nature Home, as well as The Living Landscape by Tallamy and Darke. Included are ideas for creating a resilient landscape using the beautiful native plants you expect -- and some surprises.
Timothy Daly, Invasives in Georgia

Agriculture and Natural Resources County Extension Agent for the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, Gwinnett County; President of Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council.

As passionate gardeners, we can all become involved with either bugs or plants that are not desired in our project. By understanding available support, resources and practices we can share that information and educate our community on strategies to combat invasive species. What is the definition of a non-native species? “An entity whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic harm, environmental harm or harm to human health. The term "invasive", is used for the most aggressive species. These species grow and reproduce rapidly, causing major disturbance to the areas in which they are present.”

Marjorie Stansel, Creating Fairy Gardens

Master Gardener, Master Naturalist

Marjorie is the five-times President of Douglas County Master Gardeners, two-times GMGA President, an author and presenter on numerous gardening topics. She is Horticulture Chair of the Penny McHenry Hydrangea Festival in Douglas County and a participant in the annual Fairy Garden display for that Festival. Marjorie will talk about creating fairy gardens, containers to use, where to find plants for the gardens, and the creation of your own props for the gardens.

Mark A. Maher, Container Gardening with a Southern Living Expert

Certified Plant Professional

This Southern Living Representative will provide a hands-on experience with designing and developing container gardens of all sizes. Plant selection specific to light and watering requirements are imperative for successful container gardening. Our landscapes often cry out for an additional dimension to add just a bit more interest to an area. Adding container gardens for a pop of color or texture often bring the interest we were looking for. Many of the plants from the Southern Living collection for our region will be featured in this demonstration.
Friday, October 6th Workshops Offered

Four - 2 Hour Workshops will be held on Friday, October 6th at Bogan Park Community Center
2723 N. Bogan Road, Buford, GA.
just 4.5 miles from the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center

Pre-registration is required.
$10 fee per workshop

Work Shop Presenters and Topics

Rick Smith, Pruning for the Seasons
Rick is Chairman of the Georgia Certified Landscape Professionals Advisory Board, a UGA certified Landscape Professional in Georgia and Alabama, and owner of The Pruning Guru. Pruning is one of the most intimidating responsibilities in the garden for landscapers and homeowners. This power point will touch on how and when to prune ornamental trees and shrubs along with answering questions that you may have on pruning. You will leave with a basic understanding and enhanced knowledge to apply to your specific pruning needs that perhaps you may not have had at the beginning of this presentation.

Tony Whitaker, Understanding Orchid Culture, Propagation and Diversity
Past President of NE Georgia Orchid Society

There are about 763 genera with 30,000 species of orchids thus far classified and many thousands of hybrids. The public has been interested in orchids since the 1800’s, yet many view orchids as difficult to grow. The current market favorite is the Phalaenopsis hybrid, and the pot the orchid arrives in often determines the plants life span. This session will provide all the basic knowledge needed to successfully grow and bloom Phalaenopsis including repotting, general culture, and successful stimulation of blooming. In addition, orchid propagation from seed to blooming size plants will be described. Orchid seed and seedlings will be on display as well as cart load of blooming plants from the speaker's greenhouse.
Sara Henderson, Restoring Heritage Gardens, Lessons Learned from the Oakland Cemetery Restoration

Sara Henderson, a well-respected horticulturalist and active community leader is currently the Director of Gardens at Oakland Cemetery. Over the span of her career, Sara has held numerous leadership roles including the Southeastern Flower Show and GPPA President.

Heirloom plants are the backbone of restoration gardens such as Oakland but they have also proven themselves worthy of a place in all gardens. Their grace and fragrance are reminiscent of years past but they are also uniquely suited to today’s gardeners’ desire for chemical-free, low input gardens that are both earth friendly and less demanding of a busy gardener’s time. The Victorian period was rich with plants of all varieties. The history and use of many of these plants will be discussed.

Judith Peacock, Container Gardening in the South

Not your average container presentation. We all know that plants or colorful flowers can brighten a shady spot in a garden. Or, if you have limited sunlight, containers allow you to take supreme advantage of those spots of sunbeam scarcity. Composition and scale are important considerations for a pleasing and dynamic container no matter the size or type. This presenter will surprise you with the unique items, such as chairs, that she likes to incorporate into her creations. She will help you see the intrinsic beauty of many items you may already have on hand for your own use. Come learn the basic elements for success and leave with innumerable ideas for unique and stunningly beautiful containers.