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**St. Marys, Georgia**

**Organized 1999**

**Federated 1999**

**Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc.**

**Deep South Region**

**The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.**

**Oleander District**

Revised March 2021

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**St. Marys Garden Club**

Regular meetings the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at Fellowship Hall, First Presbyterian Church, 100 W. Conyers St., St. Marys, GA or by Zoom online.

**Club Flower:** Confederate Rose

**Club Tree:** Live Oak

**Collect**

Heavenly Father, guide us through your garden. Give us eyes to see its beauty, ears to hear laughter in the raindrops, and joy in the sweetness of dew-covered roses. May we always give you praise and work together to preserve that which you have given us here on earth. Amen.

**Club History**

The beginning was in Georgia…

Twelve ladies met in an ante-bellum drawing room in Athens, Georgia, in January 1891 to organize the first garden club in America. “Little did they realize that they were lighting the candle that half a century later would be casting its beams throughout a great nation, shedding rays of light, beauty and happiness in the paths of thousands of followers. Thus, there came into being the first of countless garden clubs that today spread over the land like a benediction.” (Quoted from National Council History – 1965)

In the beginning… On February 9, 1999, St. Marys Garden Club became a reality. Twenty ladies met with Janet Massey to discuss the club’s new beginnings.

Each year the club has been very active in projects and programs to educate members, to encourage them in trying new ideas for their own homes and gardens, and to improve, educate, and beautify our community and conserve our natural areas. Our club is fully federated and is open to both women and men.

**Helpful Websites**

***St. Marys Garden Club website***: gardenclubsmga.weebly.com/

***National Garden Club*** [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)

***Deep South Region*** [www.dsregion.org](http://www.dsregion.org)

***Garden Club of Georgia*** gardenclub.uga.edu

***Oleander District*** [www.uga.edu/gardenclub/oleanderdistrict.html](http://www.uga.edu/gardenclub/oleanderdistrict.html)

The following websites have many pages or links with useful information on gardening, conservation, and floral design.

***Camden County Extension*** – <https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/camden/agriculture-and-natural-resources.html> Awesome ag and education site with lots of good resources.

***Nassau County Extension*** – <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/nassau/> Click on “Lawn and Garden” on the left for events in Yulee and lots of good garden information.

***Marine Extension University of Georgia*** <http://gacoast.uga.edu/outreach/programs/ecoscapes/>

Native and invasive plant and water wise landscape information

***Dave’s Garden*** is a good site for photos and basic information about particular plants (“Plant Files”). Other gardeners also add their experiences with that plant. It also has a “Plant Scout” section that shows which vendors have that plant for sale, and a “Garden Watchdog” area that reviews the vendors. You can do 10 searches a day for free. <https://davesgarden.com/>

***Garden Web*** to ask a question you need to join, free. You can search through the (very large) archive without joining. There are probably close to 100 forums about everything from Southeast Coastal gardening, Garden Junk, brugmansias, citrus trees, palms and cycads, insects, you name it. You can post a question, and will usually get an answer(s) within a day or two from other gardeners. After you are on the site, click on forums, and select a forum. Type “suicidal gardenia” in the search box for a good laugh. [www.gardenweb.com](http://www.gardenweb.com)

***Georgia Native Plant Society*** <https://gnps.org/>

Native plant resources and conservation links.

***Florida Native Plant Society***   
Native plant profiles and gardening information [www.fnps.org/resources/pubs](http://www.fnps.org/resources/pubs)

**Ongoing Projects**

**Crooked River State Park**

At the front entrance of CRSP, we planted daffodils in 2018 and added shrubs in the raised beds as well as native azaleas and hydrangeas along roadside.

In front of the Nature Center, we planted a pollinator bed and will continue to help with pollinator gardens at the park.

The Pollinator Restoration Area at CRSP is about an acre of mowed grass that is being converted to meadow. The garden club is helping purchase longleaf wiregrass understory plant seeds and perennials to help support pollinators and gopher tortoises.

**Earth Angels**

The Earth Angels work to promote a better understanding of our earth and appreciation of ways we can all make it a healthy environment. Our program works directly with second graders at five schools in St. Marys, Kingsland, and Woodbine.

**First Presbyterian Church flower beds**

Several years ago, our club planted a crape myrtle at the historic First Presbyterian Church to celebrate Arbor Day. Since that time we have planted a flower bed around the tree. Our club also donated a birdhouse replica of the historic church which we placed on a pole in the flower bed. Passionflower and cypress vine climb the pole, and nandina, agapanthus, rosemary, liriope, and dianthus grow in the bed. Our club also does some pruning and weeding of other existing landscaping around the church and fellowship hall (where we hold our monthly meetings). Arbor Day 2019, planted live oak to replace historic Pratt Oak.

**Magnolia Manor**

Pre-covid, we assisted the residents of Magnolia Manor with craft projects, such as painting gourds or flowerpots, and in the spring, we helped plant window boxes for their patios.

**St Marys Senior Care Center**

Our club planted the garden behind the Senior Care Center (formerly St. Marys Convalescent Center) in the spring of 2007 and maintained it for several years after that. It provided a colorful area for residents to enjoy the outdoors in pleasant weather and is also visible from the porch. We won a state award for this project. Refurbished in 2020.

**Orange Hall Landscape Restoration**

This project is on hold until the renovations to the building are completed. We will continue to clean up, weed and prune as needed and where it is allowed.

**Pavilion and Median Stone Planters Downtown**

The City of St. Marys pays for plants, although the Garden Club has purchased plants on some occasions. Club members do the planting, and weed, trim and fertilize. Pavilion area has been relandscaped by the city in 2020 repairing hurricane damage.

**Our Lady Star of the Sea Historic Chapel Garden**

In 2007, St. Marys Garden Club began a project to renovate the garden behind the historic chapel. A large tree had fallen across many of the existing plantings and the irrigation system had not been working for a while, so many plants had died. When the church repaired the irrigation system, our club added topsoil, and began to add new plants. The chapel garden is a lovely and quiet place to visit. Our club won a National Garden Club award for this garden renovation. We currently schedule weeding and planting days at the chapel from time to time on an informal basis.

**Past Projects**

**St Marys Middle School Garden**

St. Marys Middle School 6th grade science classes have a STEM project on propagation of native plants and the care of a native pollinator garden which the Garden Club helped establish at the school.

**Orange Hall Christmas Decorations**

Each year our club decorates the foyer and grand staircase at Orange Hall.

**4th of July float**

**St. Marys Welcome Center Naturescape**

From January through March of 2011, our club was heavily involved in creating a “Naturescape” at the new St. Marys Welcome Center (They have since moved to another location). Club members painted a large mural, constructed an oyster shack and overhanging live oak limbs and provided animals (including a 4 foot alligator realistically painted and a life sized armadillo). We provided a scavenger hunt list for children who were visiting to “Find the animals”. One of our members created a large Huck Finn type doll that sat fishing on a piling. Another member decorated the rest room in a cottage style. For two Christmases, we decorated the Welcome Center with ornaments created from natural items and “yard waste” such as lichens, twigs, nuts, moss, bark, and pods. We had fun creating critters and “fairy houses” from things that normally would go on the compost pile, we made some money for the club by selling them, and we won a state Holiday Decorations award for the project.

**St Marys Welcome Center Christmas Decoration**

The Welcome Center has moved to a new location and no longer has room for a large Christmas tree. In 2015 we created a smaller display of a Dr. Seuss-inspired “Christmas in Who-ville” for the new location

**Contributions:**

**Ronald McDonald house pull tabs**

**Operation Fig Leaf/Christmas in July –** The club contributes socks, personal items for nursing homes.

**We also make monetary donations to**: Dollars Educate Scholars, LeConte-Woodmanston Plantation, Roadside Beautification, Historic Preservation, Children’s Garden, State Parks & Public Lands, and Disaster Relief.

*Revised March 2021*

**Bylaws for St. Marys Garden Club**

**Article I – Name**

The name of the club shall be St. Marys Garden Club.

**Article II – Object**

The object of this organization, as provided in its charter, shall be to promote the love of gardening among amateurs, to promote the study of horticulture, to protect our native trees, wildflowers and birds, to encourage civic planning, and to engage in activities which are charitable, educational and scientific.

**Article III – Membership**

**Sec. 1.** The membership shall consist of active and associate members. Honorary members may be voted on by club members.

**Sec. 2.** Application for membership will be completed and dues paid by the third meeting attended. Prospective members shall attend two (2) meetings as guests before officially joining to ascertain their interest in joining.

**Article IV – Dues**

Annual dues shall be payable at the January meeting. Members who are 45 days delinquent in their dues shall be dropped from the active membership roster. Upon payment of dues, they will be re-instated.

**Article V – Officers and Duties**

**Sec. 1.** The officers of the club shall be President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Recording/Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer.

**Sec. 2.** The duties of the officers are as follows:

1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the St. Marys Garden Club and the Executive Board and shall perform all other duties consequent upon her office. The President shall have power to appoint all chairmen of committees, and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee.
2. In the absence of the President, the First Vice President shall perform all the duties of that office. The First Vice President, along with the Second Vice President, will arrange all programs for the club and make arrangements for the location of each meeting. This includes contacting the speakers and introducing them at the meetings. The Second Vice President shall serve as membership chairman. These officers shall attend all Executive Meetings.
3. The Recording/Corresponding Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all meetings and shall conduct the correspondence of the club.
4. The Treasurer shall have charge of all monies belonging to the club. The treasurer shall pay all bills and give all receipts for their payment. The Treasurer shall pay by check bills authorized by the executive board under the direction of the president.
5. There may be a Parliamentarian, the position can be appointed by the President and shall be the outgoing President. The parliamentarian shall attend all meetings including the Executive Board as a consultant without the privilege of a vote.

**Sec. 3.** Each officer shall immediately, upon the expiration of the term of office, deliver to the successor all books, records and properties pertaining to the office.

**Article VI – Nominations and Elections**

**Sec. 1.** There shall be a nominating committee consisting of a chairman and two other members appointed by the President at the August meeting in the even years. The nominating committee shall present its suggested slate at the September meeting in the even numbered years.

**Sec. 2.** Nominations may be made from the floor with the consent of the nominee.

**Sec. 3.** Officers shall be elected at the November meeting and installed at the January meeting. Elections will be held in the even numbered years and officers shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors are elected.

**Sec. 4.** If a vacancy occurs in the office of President, the First Vice President shall succeed to that office. The Executive Committee shall appoint vacancies in other offices for the remaining term.

**Article VII –Committees**

The Executive Committee shall consist of all the officers, past presidents, and the ways and Means committee chair(s). Unbudgeted expenses up to and including $50 may be made with prior approval of the President. Unbudgeted expenses over $50 require the approval of the majority of members in attendance at a regular meeting. All expenditures will be reported at regular meetings.

The president shall appoint chairmen of the committees necessary for the execution of the club’s business. Each committee chairman shall be responsible for the activities of the committee.

**Article VIII – Parliamentary Authority**

The *Robert’s Rules of Order Revised* shall be used as authority if anything is inconsistent with these bylaws.

**Article IX– Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting by a two-thirds vote of the active members present, provided written notice is given to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted on.

**Article X – Dissolution Clause**

Upon the dissolution of the St. Marys Garden Club, the officers shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of said organization, turn all cash assets over to the District Treasurer/Oleander District to be used for Garden Club of Georgia scholarships.

*Adopted Feb. 1999*

*Revised May 2007*

*Revised Feb. 2012*

*Revised March 2018*

**Standing Rules**

After the club has been established, there will be a need to adopt standing rules, which may be adopted or revised by a majority vote at a regular meeting. No advance notice of the vote is required and a standing rule can be suspended for the duration of any meeting. The time of the St. Marys Garden Club meetings should be a standing rule and not a bylaw. Standing rules are related to the details of the administration of a club rather than to parliamentary procedure.

1. The time of the meetings for St. Marys Garden Club shall be at 1:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month unless otherwise published. The club meets monthly, either socially or for a business meeting, from January through December. The quorum for a regular meeting shall be 2/3 of the present active members.
2. Dues shall be $25 per year, payable at the January meeting. **Dues for those joining June through August are $20.  Those joining September of that year will not be charged.**
3. Members should contact the Board before bringing up new project ideas, i.e. asking the club to donate money or work on any project outside of already scheduled programs or projects. These requests should be on the agenda to be presented at a regular meeting.
4. On the death of a member, the club will send a floral arrangement or donation of up to $65. Death of spouses or other family members will be recognized with a card.
5. The annual budget shall include a minimum of $800 to be the Contingency Fund.
6. The annual budget will be voted on at the January meeting for the fiscal year beginning in January.

*Adopted Feb. 1999*

*Revised May 2007*

*Revised Feb. 2012*

*Revised Nov. 2013*

*Revised Aug. 2016*

*Revised Aug. 2017*

*Revised March 2018*

*Revised March 2021*

**Appendix 1**

**Committees**

**Arbor Day**

Arbor Day in Georgia falls on the third Friday in February. The chair should take charge of scheduling the planting, inviting any dignitaries to the ceremony, obtaining the tree, planting the tree at a site approved by the club, and should arrange for someone to make appropriate remarks to those assembled.

**Awards**

The awards chair applies for awards for the club or assists others to apply for awards for their projects. The chair is the keeper of the awards guidebook and awards certificates earned by the club. He or she will attend the district awards workshop so they can be the awards expert for the club.

**Beautification Award**

Each month or quarter, our club presents a “Yard/Business of the Month” award. The chair selects a recipient for each month (members can suggest good candidates), schedules the presentation of the award, frames the individual award, puts up (and removes) the moveable sign, and submits an article with photo to the newspaper.

**Cookbook Committee**

Keep track of cookbook inventory. Sell & collect money for cookbooks and reorder if necessary.

**Christmas Luncheon**

Chair is in charge of finding a venue for our Christmas luncheon, making reservations, payment, and other arrangements, selecting menu choices, and keeping track of those attending (for carpools).

**Earth Angels -- Education**

The “Earth Angels” work to promote a better understanding of our earth and appreciation of ways we can all make it a healthy environment (with an emphasis on soil and growth of plants). Our program works directly with second graders at four schools in St. Marys and Kingsland, and will soon include a school in Woodbine.

**Fig Leaf** -- (Fig Leaf) Collect socks, underwear, and personal items from our members and distribute to local nursing homes at Christmas. Collect donations of personal care items for nursing homes and distribute in July. (“Christmas in July”)

**First Presbyterian Church**

Schedule workdays to weed, clean up, plant annuals, etc.

**Handbook** – Make updates to club handbook as needed. The handbook is in electronic form and does not need changing very often. When it does, the changes need to be incorporated into the entire handbook document, then it should be sent to the Website Chair to reload onto the website, and also to the Membership Chair, who can email it to members.

**Hay Days**

The chair is in charge of the design and creation of the scarecrow(s) with help from a crew of members. Installation takes place in October. Chair should reserve our spot, and schedule installation and takedown of display. Chair also is in charge of scheduling workers for the Scarecrow Stroll (to pass out candy) and getting the candy, which is sometimes donated by another organization.

**Lunch and Learn**

Take charge of the table decorations and other decor for the Lunch and Learn (usually the April meeting). Coordinate members to provide food and beverages and people to help out with setup and cleanup. Take care of Publicity for the event. Sometimes the chair selects and books the speaker, sometimes the Vice President does this.

**Membership Mentors**

Makes sure new members have everything they need to actively participate. Keeps membership forms and follows up with membership-related matters as needed, sends handbook to new members, and calls to make sure new members know what’s going on. Vice-President is chair.

**Name Tags and Sign In**

Bring name tags and sign in sheet to each meeting and collect them afterwards.

**National Garden Week (First full week in June)**

Organize committee to make flower arrangements and deliver them to Mayor’s office and other venues. Coordinate ceremony with Mayor’s office so he can deliver his NGW Proclamation (they have it on their computer). Select other venues such as the newspaper office, Presbyterian Church, Orange Hall, Dalton Signs, and others. If the group is going to lunch afterwards (this is usually the case), make the reservation at the restaurant.

**Newsletter**

Write monthly newsletter with announcements, events, and helpful information. Send to membership chair to email to members, email to Website chair to post on website, and mail hard copies to members with no email.

**Note Cards**

Place the order for the note cards when needed. Tie into sets of 5 with ribbon and keep the box at the Welcome Center supplied with them. Also, bring cards to each meeting for members who wish to purchase them. About once a month, collect money from Welcome Center (they get a % of sales), and keep a tally of when cards are delivered there, how many, how much, etc.

**Orange Hall Historic Landscape Restoration**

Since 2014, Club has worked with landscape at Orange Hall. We are working with City of St. Marys Orange Hall committee to plan landscaping in 2022.

**Our Lady Star of the Sea Historic Chapel**

Schedules workdays from time to time on an informal basis at the historic chapel.

**Pavilion and Median Planters** **Downtown**–

Coordinate work on stone planters on the median strip, trim, weed, work with city to replace plants as needed. City will purchase plants. Coordinate planting at pavilion with the city. Price the plants and supplies and send the list to Public Works. The city purchases the plants and fertilizer, we plan and plant. Most of the plants are perennials, so entire area does not need replanting each year. Organize work parties to trim and weed from time to time.

**Plant Sales (plus Rock Shrimp Festival)**

Chair should start in April encouraging the members to grow items for the sale and making suggestions that will increase profits. They should reserve the space for our booth, supervise the setup and arrangement of the plants at the sale, and take charge of getting change (treasurer will do this), passing out signup sheets for working at the sale, making sure we have enough volunteers, etc. Chair works out logistical details (where to put extra plants and leftover plants), and usually stays at the sale from beginning to end to make decisions as needed.

**President’s Annual Lunch**

The potluck lunch has been scheduled during the summer for the past few years, but it can be and has been held during other months. Chair should supervise setup, purchase supplies such as paper goods and provide a place for the flower arrangements to be displayed for the flower arranging competition. Vice president usually gets the door prizes and prizes for the top arrangements, but the chair might do this also.

**Pull tabs for Ronald McDonald House**

Collect pull tabs from members throughout the year and bring them to the annual Oleander district meeting in October. Tabs should be weighed and labeled with our club’s name and weight before delivering to the district.

**Publicity/Newspaper**

This chair should write articles for the Tribune Georgian from time to time, preferably with a photo attached. They should also send a notice of each upcoming meeting to the “Upcoming Events” section of the paper in time to appear the Thursday before the meeting. (Presently this means emailing the editor on Monday of the week before the meeting or even a week sooner.) Add contact information and the website link to stories and the upcoming events notices. Also send information to Garden Gateways or Oleander Leaflets when the club does something special.

**Scrapbook**

Scrapbooks are being digitized. Photos are encouraged to be taken at all events and posted on club website.

**Sunshine**

Send get well and condolence cards to members on behalf of the club as needed. Secretary is chair of this committee.

**Telephone**

Call those members who have no email (usually less than 4 people) to inform them of changes in schedule, etc. *This chair should have email in order to get the information*.

**Ways and Means**

This group holds workshops to create merchandise such as fairy houses, critters, etc. and seeks out opportunities to sell them.

**Website**

This Chair will maintain and update our website. We can archive photos of our many projects and use it to communicate. Our website chairman posts club information on the site, updates information, makes improvements, and informs members about using the site.

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**Appendix 2**

**St. Marys Garden Club Presidents**

1999-2000 Janet Massey

2001-2002 Janet Massey/Peggy Maurin

2003-2004 Peggy Maurin

2005-2006 Peggy Maurin

2007-2008 Frances Smith

2009-2010 Sandy Morgan

2011-2012 Joyce St. Clair

2013-2014 Barb Abnee

2015-2016 Barb Abnee

2017-2018 Geri Shaw

2019-2020 Joan Seal

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**Appendix 3**

**St. Marys Flora**

**Live Oaks** – the iconic symbol of the city, a live oak takes “100 years to grow, 100 years to live, and 100 years to die”. It is worth a drive around the side streets of St. Marys just to enjoy the live oak canopy. Norris Street, Weed Street, and the streets around Oak Grove Cemetery have some beautiful live oaks. There is an oak tree that forms a giant arch touching the ground on Conyers St. If you go to Cumberland Island, be sure to see the beautiful, gnarled oak at the end of Sea Camp Trail just as you get to the boardwalk to the beach.

**Live Oaks in the Live Oak Society** – The Live Oak Society has about six thousand members, but only one is human (the administrator). The president and all the members are trees. A brochure to local city live oaks is available at the welcome center. Unfortunately, the most well-known member, The Pratt Oak at the First Presbyterian Church, came down in a storm in May 2017. The club held arbor day 2018 replacing the Pratt Oak with a new live oak.

**Washington Pump and Oak** – the stump in the median strip on Osborne St. at Conyers St. is the last surviving stump of six oaks planted when George Washington died. St. Marys held a mock funeral at the time and planted the trees in his memory. When the tree had to be cut down, its lumber went towards construction of the replica of Old Ironsides.

**Tillandsia** - An air plant (epiphyte) that normally grows without soil but attaches itself to a host for support. It absorbs water and nutrients through its leaves. The most familiar tillandsia is **Spanish Moss**, which usually grows on live oaks and is an icon of the south. If you look closely around the ground near live oaks, you may see **ball moss**, which grows like a ball a few inches in diameter. It attaches to small branches of the tree, and when they break off, they fall to the ground. Don’t pick up Spanish Moss off the ground, since it can harbor chiggers.

**Resurrection fern** – Another air plant, these grow on the limbs of older live oaks. They shrivel when the weather is dry, and turn green right after a rain. You can spot them when it is dry by looking for limbs that look “hairy”, after a rain, the limbs look green and mossy.

**Our Lady Star of the Sea Chapel** --Enjoy the peaceful and beautiful garden behind the historic chapel, at the corner of Bryant and Osborne St. After a rain, pink **rain lilies** often bloom in the grass, then disappear in a few days.

**Orange Hall** - The sour orange trees planted behind the mansion recall the reason for its name.

**Camellias at Oak Grove Cemetery** – During winter and early spring, the many camellias at the cemetery are in full bloom.

**Other plants to look for in St. Marys and Camden County:**

**Crossvine –** Orange trumpet shaped flowers blooming high up in the live oak trees.

**Crinum lilies and Spider Lilies** – These are old time Southern plants, which are rumored to be the carp of the plant world (they never die from natural causes). You can see spider lilies blooming in the summer in front of Our Lady Star of the Sea chapel and at Gilman Park and at the pavilion. They have large white flowers with spidery petals. Crinums have tall straplike foliage similar to spider lilies, but have a cup shaped bloom and can be pink or white or striped. Many yards around St. Marys have crinums, including vacant lots.

**Oleander**  -- The median strip on Osborne St. has some large oleanders. They bloom in the summer.

**Jasmine**—In May, drive around town on a sunny morning with the windows down and smell the jasmine that perfumes the town.

**Confederate Rose** – Blooms in fall, large flowers which change color from white to pink to red, so the tree looks like it has three colors of blooms.

**Mistletoe** – Most visible in the winter when some of the trees lose their leaves. It looks like balls of leaves in an otherwise bare tree (probably the origin of the “kissing ball”).

**Yellow Jessamine** – In early spring these vines cover themselves with bright yellow flowers that have a sweet scent. Lots of them along I-95.

**Sea Oxeye Daisy --** yellow blooms along the edge of the marsh in late summer.

**Poison Plants -- The South is full of poisonous plants, so assume that any plant is poisonous unless someone knowledgeable tells you otherwise.**

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