

FEBRUARY 18, 2025, COMMITTEE REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

# STONE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY GARDEN AT VFW PARK



## **Committee Members:**

**COLUMBUS BROWN, CHAIR**  
**CHAKIRA JOHNSON, VICE CHAIR**  
**JULIANA PIERRE, SECRETARY**  
**LAURETTE JACKSON, MEMBER**  
**TOM ZIMMERMAN, MEMBER**

## OVERVIEW

The Stone Mountain Community Garden at VFW Park (SMCG) was established in March 2011 as a partnership between the City of Stone Mountain and the Dekalb County/ University of Georgia Extension Service (Extension Service). Since that time, the SMCG has provided over 15,880 pounds of fresh produce to the Stone Mountain Ecumenical Food Pantry (Food Pantry) for distribution to local families with food insufficiencies. The SMCG is an all volunteer effort that has provided essential food for 3,970 families to date. In 2025, the SMCG has contributed 51 pounds of fresh vegetables and herbs to the Food Pantry — benefiting 13 families experiencing food insufficiencies.

The SMCG provides 54 spaces for individuals in the community to grow their own vegetables, fruits and flowers throughout the year. There is also an apiary, butterfly/ pollinator garden, four composting systems, herb garden, children’s garden, grape arbor, two vertical gardens and a newly added greenhouse. No pesticides are used at the SMCG.

Ten Master Gardeners support this effort through the UGA/Dekalb County Extension Service. Volunteers (excluding Master Gardeners) donated over 680 hours of their time in 2024. Master Gardeners volunteered an additional 900 hours in 2024 bringing the total volunteer hours to over 1,580.

I would like to commend the following individuals for volunteering over 50 hours each this past year: Jackie Marshall, Laurette Jackson, Kathy Porras, and Bruce Lewis.

## RECENT SMCG EVENTS

February 8, 2025    2025 Kickoff Meeting, Orientation and Workday at SMCG - 26  
Participants

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT SMCG

March 8, 2025	Workday and Mini Talk on Food Safety in the Garden by Master Gardener Columbus Brown
April 12, 2025	Workday and Mini Talk (TBD)
March 15, 2025	Food Well Alliance Pop Up Volunteer Workday
TBD	Dedication of New Greenhouse

## RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Nomination of Ms. Jackie Marshall to Replace Ms. Laurette Jackson as Member of Community Garden Committee
2. 2024 SMCG Annual Report
3. Donation of Materials by Master Gardener Tielke Baker for Growing Seedlings — for Use in Food Pantry Garden, Vertical Gardens and Herb Garden

## IMMEDIATE NEEDS FROM CITY

1. Approval of Nominee for Vacancy on the Community Garden Committee
2. Remedy Drainage/Safety Issue Near Entrance of SMCG (a Number of Gardeners Expressed Concern During the Kickoff Event)
3. Remove Dead Peach Tree and Clear Branches and Overgrowth Along Both Fences
4. Replenish Supply of Compost for Community Gardeners
5. Remove Materials from Weed Pile in Stall and Haul Away
6. Replenish Compost and Wood Chips in Stalls
7. Reposition Two Large Bags of Veggie Mix Closer to the Food Pantry Garden and Green House

# MEDIA EVENTS

**Plant Eat and Repeat Talk by Atlanta Botanical Gardens and Food Well Alliance (Summary video by Atlanta Botanical Gardens soon to be released. Delayed due to technical issues)**

Third Annual Faith and Blue Event at SMCG on City Of Stone Mountain Website  
[https://www.stonemountaincity.org/news\\_detail\\_T3\\_R356.php](https://www.stonemountaincity.org/news_detail_T3_R356.php)

Faith and Blue Event at SMCG on FOX News, October 12, 2024  
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/CGsdZKhqoGVzRYtb/?mibextid=K35XfP>

Caston's Blog Dekalb County Extension 2024  
<https://site.extension.uga.edu/dekalb/2024/07/master-gardener-site-spotlight-stone-mountain-community-garden/>

Food Well Alliance April 2024 Instagram  
<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C5USbu7uiS0/?igsh=MWJ4d3M1cnV5MHQ1cw==>

Stone Mountain Community Garden - Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/StnMtnCommunityGarden/>

AIB TV 2024 Documentary on SMCG  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeVQI5Q-l34&t=1s>

11 Alive TV 2024 Documentary on SMCG  
<https://www.11alive.com/video/news/local/gardeners-grow-for-the-hungry-in-stone-mountain/85-2bd50dc4-d5f6-42b0-8af8-14bc12bed901>

FOX 5 ATL 2024 Documentary on SMCG  
<https://www.fox5atlanta.com/video/1435657>

Food Well Alliance Just Picked! Blog  
<https://www.foodwellalliance.org/blog/columbus-brown-stone-mountain-community-garden>

Georgia Grown 2022 Article, Page 32  
<https://editions.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=759283>

Georgia Bulletin Article 2021 Re: SMCG  
<https://georgiabulletin.org/news/2021/04/corpus-christi-parishioners-join-community-effort-to-garden-with-love/>

Dekalb County Extension How to Build a Raised Bed  
<https://www.facebook.com/UGAExtensionDeKalbCounty/videos/build-a-raised-bed/1117166168664185/>

Georgia Bulletin Article 2016 re SMCG  
<https://georgiabulletin.org/news/2016/12/community-garden-grows-tons-good/>

Georgia Bulletin Article 2013 re SMCG [parishes-find-vitality-in-caring-for-creation](https://georgiabulletin.org/news/2013/04/parishes-find-vitality-in-caring-for-creation)