

FEBRUARY 17, 2026, COMMITTEE REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

## STONE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY GARDEN AT VFW PARK



Master Gardeners Columbus and Beth

### **Committee Members:**

**COLUMBUS BROWN, CHAIR**  
**CHAKIRA JOHNSON, VICE CHAIR**  
**JULIANA TAYLOR, SECRETARY**  
**JACKIE MARSHALL, MEMBER**  
**TOM ZIMMERMAN, MEMBER**

## OVERVIEW

Stone Mountain Community Garden at VFW Park (SMCG) is an all volunteer effort and has been operating continuously since March 2011, as a partnership between the City of Stone Mountain and the Dekalb County/University of Georgia Extension Service (Extension Service). **“We Grow Community.”** So far, the SMCG has donated over 17,040 pounds of fresh produce to the Stone Mountain Ecumenical Food Pantry (Food Pantry) for distribution to local families with food insufficiencies — providing healthy and nutritious food for over 4,260 families to date. We delivered 108 pounds of fresh produce to the Food Pantry before the wind and freezing weather in January (see cover photo). Current crops include: arugula, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, collard greens, fennel, garlic, green onions, kale, leeks, mustard greens, parsley, rosemary, sage, thyme, turnip greens and Swiss chard. Despite the frigid weather, most of the plants survived.

The SMCG provides 54 spaces for individuals in the community to grow their choices of vegetables, fruits and flowers throughout the year. We maintain an apiary with three active honey bee hives, a butterfly/pollinator garden, four composting systems, herb garden, children’s garden, grape arbor, two vertical gardens, co-planting demonstration area and a newly operational greenhouse. Pesticides are not used at the SMCG.

Master Gardeners continue to support the Community Garden through the Extension Service. They play an important role in the community by providing gardening and environmental education — through workshops, classes and technical assistance onsite. At least one Master Gardener is on duty every Saturday morning and there is a Community Workday on the second Saturday of each month.

## RECENT SMCG EVENTS

January 19, 2026 Interview of Site Leader by Michelle Geiss of Atlantic Bee Company

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT SMCG

February 19, 2026 Quarterly Community Garden Committee Meeting at 6:30pm (ZOOM)

March 6, 2026 Food Well Alliance Pop Up Group Volunteers at SMCG

- March 14, 2026      Kickoff for New Gardening Year at SMCG
- March 24, 2025      All Dekalb County Master Gardeners Workday at SMCG

## **RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

1. Planted 100 Tulip Bulbs from Atlanta Botanical Gardens in Planters at SMCG, Including One at Entryway to VFW Park
2. Received Grant from Food Well Alliance & Super Sod for 2 - Large Bags of Soil
3. Received Grant from Food Well Alliance for: Connecting Gutters to Rain Barrels and Making Water Available for Irrigation/Watering System in the Greenhouse; and, Supplies for Training New Bee Keepers
4. 2025 Annual Report Completed

## **IMMEDIATE NEEDS FROM CITY**

1. Handicap Accessibility to Garden and Bathrooms—Problems Persist
2. Remedy Drainage Problem Along Gordon Street and Entrance to Community Garden
3. Relocate Storage Shed from Georgia Military College Site to Community Garden
4. Resolve Electrical Problems in Storage Building and Bathrooms
5. Replace Third Picnic Bench Under Kiosk
6. Replenish Compost in Stall and Remove Weed Pile from Stall
7. Remove Two Deteriorated Wooden Benches from Community Garden (Safety Hazard)

# MEDIA EVENTS

Atlantic Bee Company, January 19, 2026 - <https://atlanticbeecompany.substack.com/p/healing-land>

Food Well Alliance - What Growers Have to Say June 18, 2025 - <https://us9.campaign-archive.com/?u=a0e6e9dd6a052a57e2be9f86e&id=9e92df56bd>

Food Well Alliance Summer Campaign, June 18, 2025 <https://mailchi.mp/foodwellalliance/june-2025-newsletter-updates-8346492?e=7cfe561612>

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](#)