

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS
1924-2024



FFGC 97TH CONVENTION DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

www.FFGC.org/convention

Welcome to Jacksonville 2024

Four women in different counties in Florida, working independently, had each organized a garden club in her community almost simultaneously and without knowledge other such groups existed in the state.

FFGC is proud to share the backgrounds of our distinguished panel of guest speakers. We look forward to hearing more about their worlds and how their deeply diverse backgrounds bring great depth to event. You will hear about their collective expertise and contribution to their worlds—of horticulture, floral arranging, using art as a change catalyst to excite people in communities both small and large to *get active* and seek change, and staunch preservationists, as well as our regional and national garden club leaders—at each luncheon or evening banquet. We will all be the richer for it.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER, FRIDAY APR 12 @ 7 PM

Laura Dowling

Laura Dowling is an award-winning floral designer. After being selected by Michele Obama to serve as the White House Florist, where she spent six years raising the bar by using flowers as diplomatic tools, Ms. Dowling wrote two books and has spent recent months on a tour with *Good Morning America*. She is the recipient of the American Horticultural Society's Great American Gardener Award for achievements and contributions in floristry, and is a featured speaker at leading flower shows, museums, and cultural institutions across the country. In 2016, she received the Distinguished Flower Ambassador award from the Royal Horticultural Society of Belgium at a ceremony honoring international floral diplomacy in Ghent, Belgium. A native of Chehalis, Washington, Laura received her B.A. degree in political science and M.PA from the University of Washington in Seattle.

[Flower Magazine](#) [New York Times](#) [Instagram](#) [The Florida Gardener](#)



BANQUET SPEAKER, THURSDAY APR 11 @ 7 PM

Xavier Cortada

Miami's pioneer eco-artist, Xavier Cortada uses the power of art to engage communities in problem-solving. From the White House to the World Bank, at the North and South Poles, and across six continents, his work includes more than 150 public artworks, installations, collaborative murals and socially engaged projects.

In 2007, as a National Science Foundation Antarctic Artists and Writers Program Fellow, Cortada used the moving ice sheet beneath the South Pole as an instrument to mark time; the art piece will be completed in 150,000 years. Through the Xavier Cortada Foundation, the artist involves communities in hands-on campaigns that generate awareness and inspire action around the climate crisis and other social justice issues.

Xavier Cortada is Professor of Practice: Artist at the University of Miami as a faculty member of the Department of Art and Art History (with secondary appointments in the university's Miller School of Medicine Department of Pediatrics and School of Law).

<https://cortada.com/> | [@xcortada](#) (social media) | [YouTube/ @xaviercortada](#) | [Flor500](#)



XAVIER CORTADA

An exhibition of artwork by artist Xavier Cortada featuring works from 90N: North Pole Installations, Florida Is Nature, and the premiere of Arctic ice paintings created by Cortada during his 2008 expedition to the North Pole.



90N: NORTH POLE INSTALLATIONS

GALLERY AT CREATIVE PINELLAS
JUNE 29, 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2, 2018
SEE WWW.CORTADA.COM



Xavier Cortada, Native Flags (North Pole), 2008

90N: North Pole Installations and Florida Is Nature [Source Photo](#)

TRI-COUNCIL LUNCH SPEAKER, WED APR 10 @ 11:30 AM

Teresa Watkins

SHE-Consulting **Sustainable Horticulture Environmental**
Host of syndicated Better Lawns and Gardens, Author

Teresa provides expert consultation and landscape design in Florida-friendly landscape design, gardening, and horticulture to Florida homeowners, customer builders, commercial companies, and government agencies.

Tri-Council Program Luncheon Speaker

Program Topic: *"Ten New and Exciting Plants for the Next Century"*

Book signing **Welcome to Your Florida Landscape**

www.SheConsulting.com | [@TeresaWatkinsFL](https://www.instagram.com/TeresaWatkinsFL)



LUNCH SPEAKER, THURSDAY APR 11 @ 12:30 PM

Debby Cooper

Director, Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.

Debby is co-owner of Cooper Animal Hospital in Greenwood, MS, where she has worked alongside her veterinarian husband for over 45 years.

Debby is an NGC Master Flower Show Judge, Gardening Consultant, Landscape Design Consultant and Environmental Consultant. She is the Past President (2015-2017) of The Garden Clubs of Mississippi and held numerous board positions with Garden Clubs of Mississippi and Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. She loves every aspect of flower shows and enjoys promoting others to be creative and develop their design and horticulture talents. Her Deep South theme is “Decorate the Deep South with Floral Design.” Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. will host a Regional Flower Show in Georgia in 2025 with all six states participating. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening and gambling.

[Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.](#)



LUNCH SPEAKER, FRIDAY APR 12 @ 12:30 PM

Brenda Moore

Brenda Moore, of Oak Hill, West Virginia, is honored to serve as the 48th National Garden Clubs, Inc. President, and to promote her theme of “Go Green – Plant America.” Born in Morgantown, WV, and raised in Fort Washington, MD, she attended West Virginia University and earned a degree in Family Resources. While home raising her children, volunteerism became an important way to connect with others and give back to organizations she cared about. She later taught school in the Fayette County, WV, Public Schools and later worked for the Public Library.

Although the daughter of an agriculture engineer and married to a forester, Brenda’s love for all things outdoors began when she first joined a garden club in 1994. Never did she dream, by accepting an invitation to join a garden club, she would become a club president, a district director, the West Virginia Garden Club President and now the National Garden Clubs’ President. Brenda has a special passion for unusual and native plants. The Moore’s have a certified West Virginia Wild Yard, a National Wildlife Federation Certified Yard, and a Certified Monarch Waystation. Being a good steward of our Earth is very important to her. As a four-star member becoming a five-star member is one of her goals. The four NGC Youth books were authored or co-authored by her.

[National Garden Clubs](#) [Books for Sale](#)



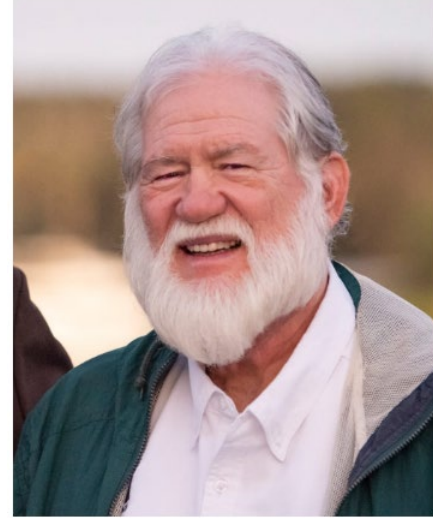
Brenda Moore is also an author of children's books, *The Frightened Frog*, *An Environmental Tale*, *The Saved Seed*, *My Green is Gone* and *Network with Nature*. Will be signing books for sale to benefit FFGC.

CO-LUNCH SPEAKERS, FRIDAY APR 12 @ NOON

Sam Carr & Mike Adams

President of Bartram Trail Conference and the Bartram Trail, Sam lives on the St. Johns River in San Mateo, FL. He is a retired District Manager for Ford Motor Company. He was recently recognized by the St. Johns Riverkeeper, Inc. as the St. Johns River Advocate of the Year. His passion for the river led him to chair a Putnam County committee to establish the Bartram Trail in Putnam County which became a National Recreational Trail. He served two terms as a governor's appointment to the Florida Greenways & Trails Council. He is pursuing the establishment of the Bartram Trail National Heritage Corridor covering all 2,500 miles of Bartram's travels over southeastern U.S.

Mike Adams is a conservation ecologist, researcher, educator, and author. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology, with studies in anthropology, and a master's degree in environmental management. He has lived and worked in Northeast Florida for 41 years, spanning roles in state government, consulting, education, and nonprofits. He serves as Vice President of the Bartram Trail Society of Florida, and volunteers for Marineland Right Whale Project, St. Johns Riverkeeper, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Florida Forest Service. In 2018, he received the prestigious Stetson Kennedy Foundation Fellow Man and Mother Earth Award. He brings natural history to life with his colorful and exciting portrayals of colonial naturalist William Bartram.



[Bartram Trail Society](#)



SEE YOU IN
Jacksonville

REGISTRATION IS OPEN