

**Minutes of Wildflower Bunch Garden Club Meeting
Big Canoe Clubhouse
August 5, 2015**

Welcome and Remarks

At 10:00 president Eunice Nichols welcomed members and guests. She announced that the new sound system had been installed, with this being our first time using it, and expressed hopes that all would go well with it. She remarked on our hot and humid, yet rain free “dog days of summer” with our wilted and thirsty plants as evidence, and our gardening efforts slowing down. She requested that cell phones be silenced and then invited Ed Straw to introduce our speaker

Introduction of Crystal Merrell by Ed Straw

Crystal Merrell is a mother, herbalist, wildcrafter (a person who harvests plants from their wild habitat for food or medicinal purposes) and locavore (a person who endeavors to exclusively consume products grown within a 100 mile radius from where she lives). Working in harmony with the people, plants, animals, and ecosystem of local community is her passion. Born and raised in a small north Georgia town at the foothills of the Appalachians where her family has lived for generations, she began forming a connection with people of different walks that has lasted and expanded in adulthood. For over 9 years, she has been working with herbs. Crystal’s official herbal studies began in 2008 at [BotanoLogos School of Herbal Studies](#) with Patricia Kyritsi Howell, where she returned as class assistant in 2010 and Clinical Training in 2011 with TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) assessment philosophy. In 2014, she began studies with Phyllis D. Light at [Appalachian Center for Natural Health](#) with emphasis on Southern Folk and Native American healing traditions. Crystal has studied with many recognized health teachers at conferences, workshops, and classes each year. As member of the [American Herbalists Guild](#) and the state chapter in Georgia ([GHG](#)), she works to maintain professional connections within a wider community of healers. She completed training in Mental Health First Aid in 2015. Her degrees include an A.S. in Natural Science and a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering.

Program

Highlights of Crystal's presentation included offering 3 samples of tea she'd made so we could analyze it for smell, taste, and feel, and then guess what plant it was made from. She talked about the beginnings of herbalism in India and its spread to Egypt, Greece and China. She introduced us to the work of several notable herbalists from the Appalachians. We learned that today's herbalist can be a grower, medicine maker, healer, medical herbalist, and/or folk herbalist who looks at the whole person, not just a single symptom or condition. Slides included photos of plants and their uses. For more information go to crystaldawnherbs.com

Business Meeting

After Eunice thanked our speaker, Ed Straw announced our **September speaker**, Ellen Honeycutt, from the Georgia Botanical Society. Her presentation will be Using Georgia's Native Plants. Catherine Mann reminded us to sign up for the **next A&O**; a tour of Gibbs Gardens led by Erica Glasener Goldstein.

Cindy Bonner and Lauren Grant, chairmen of the **Garden Tour** informed us of their publicity efforts in and around Big Canoe and encouraged the membership to aid in spreading the word of the event which is **September 12th and 13th**. Sign-up forms will be located at the bulletin board in the post office. Payment can be made by depositing a check in the envelope in the Wildflower Bunch alpha box. Tickets will then be put in the attendees' alpha boxes. Additional advertising will be displayed as the date approaches including an eBlast to the general population of Big Canoe in September. We were encouraged to invite friends to the tour. Tickets will be sold at the post office.

Jeri Remo presented another entertaining report on the state of the club's **finances**, which are on track and healthy, receiving an ovation.

Membership ambassador, Bonnie Plikaytis, reported that we have a roster of 171 people with an additional 3 new members as of this date.

Judy Kaufman reported on our December members' event, **A Time to Share**, encouraging the members to contribute a product or service to sell at this winter member only bazaar.

Judy then "changed hats" to speak as the WFB Parliamentarian, giving credit to Eunice and the executive board for a well run club which exists because of their contributions. She encouraged the membership to pay back by giving careful consideration to **servicing the club in 2016** as a board member, committee chair, committee member, worker bee. She requested calls or emails to volunteer for needed positions that will build next year's club.

Susie Brogdon informed us about the upcoming **Master Gardener course** being offered by UGA February 15 through March 23 in Acworth. Go to pickingsmg@TDS.net for application and information.

New members were introduced. They are, Cindy Abry, Judy Allen and Karen Steinberg

Eunice Nichols closed the meeting with an account of the success July's Flash Feast and the good time that was enjoyed by those who attended. She then thanked the membership and we dispersed.

Erika Jaskiewicz for
Teresa Keesecker
Recording Secretary