

Some of Atlanta's historical homes have decked the halls.

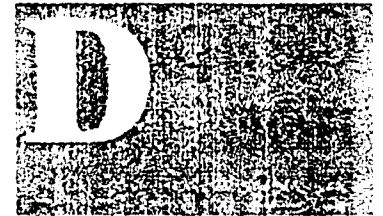
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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution Thursday, Nov. 19, 2009

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Garden People, places, advice, inspiration

Botanical garden's expansion gets award

Arboregard also honored by council.

Praise earned for efforts to protect trees during construction.

By Howard Pousner
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How does the Atlanta Botanical Garden grow?

Very carefully, according to the Georgia Urban Forest Council.

The Decatur-based council recently awarded the garden and Arboregard Tree Specialists an award for their efforts in preserving dozens of trees during ongoing expansion of the Midtown attraction.

The Outstanding Urban Arboriculture Grand Award was for development of the Southern Seasons Garden, which opened in May just outside the new Hardin Visitor Center, set in the rear of the garden and overlooking Piedmont Park.

The garden hired Arboregard to help protect native trees, some more than a century old, during construction of its expansion's first phase. Oaks, tulip poplars and beeches tower over hydrangeas, camellias, trilliums and ferns in the woodland garden.

Garden executive director Mary Pat Matheson said the goal in developing the Southern Seasons Garden was to create "the sense that it had always been there."

That was a challenge. Arboregard helped protect the trees as irrigation, electrical lines and retaining walls, as well as more than a half-mile of Americans With Disabilities Act-compliant walkway, were added close to tree roots.

The trees also had to be guarded from large cranes that installed the enormous sculptures in the "Moore in America" exhibit (which has been extended through Dec. 31), as well as the concrete slabs that had to be poured to display the bronzes.

The second phase of the garden's expansion, including the delayed Canopy Walk through the treetops of Storza Woods, is expected to be completed in May.