

FLOWER POWER

THE AVONDALE ESTATES GARDEN CLUB

March 2021

Volume VII Issue III

THE NATIVE NUDGE *Zenobia pulverulenta* Honeycup



Honeycup, or Zenobia is a showy shrub with handsome, fragrant flowers and bluish-white leaves. The underside of the leaf is whitish and smooth.

Flowers are white, showy, fragrant, nodding downward in clusters at leaf axils of the previous year's growth. It requires moist, acid soil, good drainage and afternoon shade. 3 to 6 feet tall by 4 feet wide



FROM THE PRESIDENT



What a year it has been! Certainly nothing we have experienced before. I was reminded of the confusion and all the questions with seemingly no answers while I was walking around the lake on Saturday. A spectacular day – flowering trees, lots of ducks and geese swimming in the lake, neighbors walking and then I noticed something on one of the trees. I walked closer to get a better look – there were six turtles on two branches of the tree. I had never seen turtles in trees. I had no idea why they were there or how they got there or what they were going to do “out on a limb.” I certainly felt exactly the same way beginning in March 2020.

However, it didn't take long for the members of the Avondale Estates Garden Club to decide we would not allow the challenges of Covid to block our purpose or activities as a garden club. Our members were motivated by the cancellations and uncertainties to search for more creative ways to stay engaged, in touch, and share the beauty of Avondale with each other and our neighbors. We couldn't meet at the Community Club so we Zoomed and went old school by phoning each other to check in and stay informed. No Secret Garden Tour so we planned an Up Front Drive By Tour. In person visits were not allowed but we could visit each other's gardens and share photos in *Beautiful Avondale*. Holiday Elves delivered goody bags to substitute for our annual Holiday Luncheon. These are just a few examples of the ingenuity and determination of our members to continue to move forward and upward even though we were out on limb just like those turtles.

As I look back on my year as your president, I couldn't be prouder of what we have accomplished. Everyone's willingness to help each and every time you were asked ensured our successes. I am certain that as the gavel is passed to Peggy, AEGC will continue to excel. With her exceptional talents and those of our members, officers and board members AEGC will flourish. I want to thank each of you for all your help and support. It has been a privilege and honor to serve as your president.



FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT Peggy Burgess

I would like to thank Alice on behalf of the membership. She has encouraged us, energized us, engaged us, electrified us, educated us, and emboldened us with all things AEGC. She has done all this with grace and style. We are so very grateful for her leadership during this season of Covid.

I am looking forward to some exciting times, I hope you all are too.! For our April meeting we will be celebrating Garden Week in Georgia with a program on "Container Gardening" by our own Nancy Martin. Also, as part of Garden Week we will be hosting our inaugural AEGC Plant Sale April 17, 2021 on the lawn of the Community Club. So be sprucing up your plants to donate and have your pocketbooks ready to open.



May brings us to our Annual Field Trip. This year we will be traveling to Athens to visit the Georgia State Botanical Gardens and lunch. You all know that is my favorite part. Memorial Day we will be honoring our veterans with a wreath and remembrance at the Blue Star Marker.

We have a surprise for June! Some of our member have agreed to entertain us in their gardens on June 8. This will be a portion of our celebration of National Garden Club Week. As a thank you to Avondale Estates City employees we will be providing refreshments during this same week.

After our garden tours, summer fun and relaxation is the next order of business with an eye toward a Fun Fall!

COULD BE A RECORD!

The Avondale Estates Garden Club members pulled together to gather over 13,500 pull tabs for the benefit of the Ronald McDonald House. Thanks to all who participated and especially to Dog Town Franks who saved so many for us.



March Meeting Features Installation of Officers and AEGC Member Donna Tanner Presenting A Cook's Garden

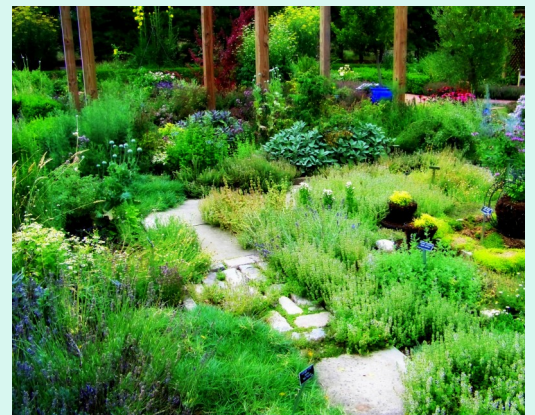
The cultivation and use of herbs appeals to and rewards us on many levels. The health benefits and aesthetic quality of herbs intrigue us as gardeners; herbs allow for a magical transformation in our kitchens. We become artisans imparting beauty and soul to the meal. Simple ingredients become extraordinary with the addition of the fresh garden herb.

The focus will be on the basic cultivation requirements for growing culinary herbs and how to utilize these aromatic plants in our kitchens. The best cooks are often gardeners, as there is an intangible connection between the fresh harvest and the table. Seasonal produce, fresh fruit and vegetables complimented with herbs surprise us with character.

Donna's parents always grew vegetables, flowers and fruit, thus her love of gardening is second nature. She earned a degree in Geography with an English minor, combining a love of earth science and literature. Herbalism has provided that same dynamic, the history and lore of the plants and the earth on her hands.

Donna has studied with herbalists in both Texas and California. With plentiful gardens, she began selling wreaths and flowers to local shops, eventually growing and selling herbs and native plants on an organic farm and at farmers' markets.

Living in Avondale Estates and being a member of the garden club, Donna is enjoying the opportunity to continue learning and sharing the passion for gardening.





MARCH YARD OF THE MONTH HOME OF BETH AND RICK LANGHORST 20 SUSSEX

In winter, when most gardens are at their least interesting, this garden emanates the love and caring of its owners. When the Langhorsts moved to Avondale in 2009, the garden needed some attention, and this couple succeeded in creating a textured landscape whose interest abounds.

Rick designed two beautiful hardscaped paths that wind through the yard. One stone pathway of warm earth tones, repeats the subtle color in the large oakleaf hydrangeas nestled among tall Sweetgum trees. Autumn ferns line the pathways, with their bright green serving as contrast and a beautiful accent to the trees and shrubs which call a welcome to birds and other wildlife.

There will be something new and interesting to watch for each week in this lovely garden as spring unfolds, from the Coryopsis to the right of the drive to the Virginia Sweetspire, Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel, Japanese Maple, and Cryptomeria, just to name a few. This is an unusual and enchanting space, and just one more reason to walk the streets of Avondale Estates!

~ Kathy Delaney

THE GARDEN BOX PROJECT A continuing project since 2006

WE ARE HAPPY TO PICK UP YOUR GIFTS FOR THE CHILDREN, CALL OR EMAIL JEAN KINGSBURY TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

We will be delivering boxes to the children at the Women's Shelter in the spring. The idea for these boxes is to give each child something of their own to keep with them as most of them left home in a hurry escaping violence but leaving behind their toys and possessions.

We are in need of:

- * 10 boxes
- * Fidget spinners or other stress reducers.
- * Jigsaw puzzles
- * Crossword puzzles
- * Markers
- * Number 2 pencils



The committee thanks you for your generosity on behalf of the children.



AEGC Annual Dues

This is a courtesy reminder that Dues are due to be paid by the end of March. After that there will be a penalty. (See standing rules 5, 6, & 7). Please make the Treasurer's job easier. Send Peg Wyse a check if you haven't already. Thank you.



Notes from the Bird's Nest . . .

Hummingbirds are found only in the Americas and is the smallest bird and also the smallest of all animals that have a backbone.

Some nest in Alaska but vacation in the winter in Mexico, a 3000 mile trip one way. Another species flies across the Gulf of Mexico. 500 miles without stopping. Could you do that in a car?

Hummingbirds range in size from the smallest about 2 1/4 inches to the largest at 8 inches. They can flap their wings 70-200 time a second. Yes. A second. This depends on their size.

They can hover, dive, move left or right and up or down because they have the ability to rotate their wings. It all about aero dynamics. Averaging speeds of 20 to 30 miles per hour, they can speed up to 60 mph when in a dive. To conserve energy while they sleep they go into a hibernation-like state (torpor) where their metabolic rate is slowed to 1/15th of its normal rate. Hummers have a strong heart and a big brain. The heart rate can reach up to 1200 beats a minute and its brain is the largest of all birds as it is 4.2% of its body weight.



Here are two websites for you entertainment and edification. The first one is a video guide to birds you might find at your feeder or in your backyard. The second is a sort of Zen “movie” showing a natural spring in the Smokies over a period from late summer to early fall. You hear the water gurgling from the spring and see all kinds of critters, mostly birds who visit the spa. Watch it in theater mode for a better viewing experience. Sit back and relax.

[Identify Your Backyard Birds - YouTube](#)

[Natural Spring Birdbath - The Movie - YouTube](#)

WALTER SAYS. . . Be sure to fertilize your pansies as the weather warms. . . Trim the liriopse with a mower on the highest setting. . . Put lime on your lawn if you haven't done that in the past year. .



.Prune your boxwood and hollies (hollies can be cut to 18” and believe me, they will come back. . . Propagate hosta when you can see the leaves unfurling. . . Remove spent camellia blooms from the bush and from the ground. You'll prevent camellia petal blight . . . Last chance to prune bush roses to approximately one half their present size.

Not All Pruning of Crape Myrtle is Crape Murder

How to Fix Your Crape Myrtle

After inappropriate pruning Crape Myrtles you can get them back on track over time. If they are a knuckled mess from years of trimming branches to the trunk, you are going to have to top the tree for the last time. Cut just below the knuckled mess that has been created.

Wait a few weeks until new growth starts at the top. There should be a lot of small, new growth. Pick a few to keep from the tops of each trunk that are growing up and away from the center of the tree. The rest can be removed with pruners. Every year to six months, you can remove the smaller new growth that grows towards other branches. It is going to take a while to look better probably three to five years. If you are impatient, look into transplanting a new tree to replace it.

Train Your Crape Myrtle to Grow Correctly

Traditional pruning, or training, for Crape Myrtles should keep splits in branch growth in threes. While not definitive, **a good guide to go by is three limbs every three to five feet of height.** Start off with three, then nine, then twenty seven. Always train your tree branches to grow up and away from the center. Remove small limbs that cross other limbs. Your goal for crape myrtles is to have them resemble flowers in a clear vase meaning blooms up top and a center you can generally see through.



Get Rid of Crape Myrtle Suckers



Small pruning for suckers can be done anytime they pop up. Those are the micro branches that pop out of fresh cuts or just about anywhere. Take some pruners and remove them, especially from the base of a mature tree.

If Your Crape Myrtle Is Too Tall

If your crape myrtle is too tall, you need a different variety of crape myrtle. Transplant your existing crape myrtle where it can grow and plant something else in its place.

Remember, pruning a Crape Myrtle is not botanical torture if you do it correctly. Don't over-do it: Cutting lateral branches down

to stubs does restrict the size of the tree but the tree is weakened and can result in insect, disease and winter damage. Prune carefully, don't commit crape murder.



Information found on several sites on the World Wide Web including UGA Extension website.

Flour For Aphid Control – It's Not Just For Baking

Excerpt from Gardening Know How blog

Maybe it was the mild winter, but insects were bad this year. One day I went to start deadheading the roses and saw the carnage. An army of aphids were snacking not only on the buds and new shoots but even mature stems. It was “make the hair stand up on your arms” creepy.

For the next couple weeks, I sprayed daily and dashed them off with sharp blasts of water, but they just kept coming back. In desperation, I turned to the internet. I found several recipes for aphid control, but they were all gardening hacks I had tried before. Seeking something new, a topic caught my eye. Flour. The theory is that aphids will ingest some of it and when they try to excrete their honeydew, the flour will mix with the stuff and clog them up. Yes, I know, it sounds horrible, but those pesky buggers gotta go.



Doubting the veracity of this simple method, I nonetheless set about finding a sifter. I bake a ton, but

I am a lazy cook and have never had a sifter. Fortunately, my husband volunteers at our community thrift store and was able to acquire one. I was ready to do battle. **A quick word of advice: do not sift flour on a plant that is newly wet.** It will clog up leaf stoma and can adversely affect the plant.

I merrily sifted a light dusting of flour over my roses. After a day, I went and checked. The aphid population was definitely getting thinner, so I dusted again. After a few days, almost all the aphids were gone. I rinsed the plants to remove those remaining.



New Gardening Group in Town

A group of Avondale residents has come together to help beautify our town. They are called ***Gardening for the Common Good***.

If you would like to volunteer with them, they meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. They have been working in Willis Park lately and on Fairfield Plaza in the median.

No dues or minimum attendance required, just show up with your garden gloves and maybe some hand tools. Patricia Calcagno can give you more information.

AT LAST! PLACING TREE MARKERS FOR THE AE ARBORETUM



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ADDENDUM

From Carolyn Chandler for the AES Project

Video: Welcome to Avondale Estates Facebook page has a video about the project done by Jack Krost

Blog: This has an overview of the project <https://aestotemproject.blogspot.com/2021/01/two-garden-clubs-and-others-begin-work.html>

Brick Orders until April 15th can be done online <https://4everbricks.com/donors/aes/>

Decaturish has reached out for information. Watch for an article on the project.

Students are back in school, the totems and birdhouses have been completed, the little library has been built and is in the hands of the artist, a sign for the little library has been made, primed and painted and is in the hands of a calligraphist to add wording, and about 35 books have been gathered.

A small committee gathered to discuss the location of the engraved bricks that have been purchased.

Awaiting a date from Plants Landscaping to get everything rolling. They have given us a tentative date of April 9th. I did ask if there was any way an earlier date could be found, but we are looking forward to their assistance whenever it can happen.

Current needs: Power wash blue benches in front of the school to remove peeling paint.

Books, books, books!!! We are still in need of many more books for the little library. Gardening, nature, recycling, environment and ecology books appropriate for Pre-K to 5th grade students.

Books may be new or Used in good condition.

I am grateful for all the people who have had a hand in moving this project forward. It does indeed take a village to accomplish anything like this.

FIELD TRIP MAY 20 TO THE TRIAL GARDENS AT UGA AND THE FOUNDERS GARDEN IN ATHENS

You won't want to miss this opportunity to see the garden where the Garden Club movement began and the Trial Gardens where new plants for the market begin.

