



July 2025

FLOWER POWER

Avondale Estates Garden Club

*Member of the National Garden Club &
The Garden Club of Georgia*

Volume XI Issue VI

THE NATIVE NUDGE

Aruncus aesthusifolius
Goat's Beard



Growing in a bush form, Goat's Beard will reach 4-6' in height. It has feathery white or cream flowers and thrives in moist shaded areas.

'Misty Lace' is the perfect size Goat's Beard – intermediate in height between its parents, *A. aesthusifolius* and *A. dioicus*. This seedling was selected by Dr. Allan Armitage of the University of Georgia for its remarkable tolerance of the hot, humid summers in the south.



A Note from Our President

Hello Everyone!

My name is Julie Martinez and it is my honor to be the new President of the Avondale Estates Garden Club. I have lived in Avondale Estates for 32 years and really love this community. We have so much to be grateful for - an abundance of natural beauty and wonderful neighbors.

You know that the mission of our garden club is to “offer education and service opportunities to inspire appreciation of the various horticultural arts and to promote an awareness of environmental responsibility.” Our programs and projects reflect this mission and I hope you will want to participate in many opportunities through the Garden Club.

We assist in maintaining several of the public greenspaces and we present amazing programs that inform about horticulture and environmental issues. We have fundraising projects that allow us to contribute to wonderful non-profit organizations that support our mission. These activities also promote friendship among our members. You will find people with whom you share a love of gardening and also gain friends that you may have the rest of your life!

Our September meeting will introduce you to the many activities in which the Garden Club is involved. The Board and Committee Chairs will share their plans for the year and will explain how you can participate. Please share your skills and talents with us. Try something new and you may have the time of your life! Take the opportunity to meet new people, learn more about gardening, the environment, and how you can contribute to this beautiful little slice of the planet we call home – Avondale Estates!



AEGC MISSION STATEMENT

The Avondale Estates Garden Club offers education and service opportunities to inspire appreciation of the various horticulture arts and to promote the awareness of environmental responsibility.

And the Winner Is ...the Okefenokee Swamp

After a six-year battle, conservationists secured a major win for one of North America's most iconic wetlands. Twin Pines Minerals has agreed to sell nearly 8,000 acres of land near the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge to *The Conservation Fund* for \$60 million—effectively ending the Twin Pines' mining project that threatened the swamp's delicate ecosystem.

The land sits atop Trail Ridge, a vital geologic formation that helps maintain the swamp's water balance. Over 250,000 public comments helped sway the outcome. While this is a huge step forward, conservationists remain vigilant about 30,000 acres of nearby land still vulnerable to future development.

The Okefenokee—home to bald eagles, black bears, and over 13,000 alligators—has also been nominated for UNESCO World Heritage Site status. The biodiversity is extraordinary. There are 850 plant species and over 200 bird species that live within or use the swamp. According to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, animal species include 64 reptile, 50 mammal, 39 fish, and 37 amphibian species. In total, over 400 vertebrate species live within or use the swamp for part of their life history.

The Garden Club of Georgia took this on as part of the conservation effort that included many organizations across the state. AEGC members wrote letters as part of that effort. This is a big win for Georgia and the conservation movement in the United States but, more importantly, for the Okefenokee.





July Yard of the Month Home of Tommy and Carolyn Adams 31 Fairfield Plaza

The home of Carolyn and Tommy Adams looks established and serene. One could never tell that this garden began on a totally bare site when Tommy and Carolyn Adams moved to their new home in 2020.

Tommy was an environmental engineer and professor at the University of Georgia in Athens and brought his philosophy of a natural approach to soil amending to enrich their garden.

The garden is on a corner and enchants anyone with its artful use of plantings and open fencing that shares the beauty of the greenery in front and on the side is a riot of tall, colorful zinnias and beautiful sunflowers Carolyn started from seed.

A collection of hosta, ferns and iris nestles between fragrant abelia, amsonia and baptisia in the rock garden in front created by Tommy. Closer to the front porch, an extravagant white ginger fills the air with perfume in the summer making sipping a bourbon on the porch an evening that feels touched by an angel.

~Beth Langhorst

**Avondale Estates Garden Club is proud to be a Member
of National Garden Club, Inc., Deep South Garden Club, Inc., The Garden Club of
Georgia, Red Bud District and The DeKalb County Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.**



Who is Deen Day Sanders?

“As a child I planted seeds every year of my life,” she says. “My grandmother and I would put seeds in the ground so I understood there was a correlation between working hard, cultivating something and having the reward of the fruit or the flower or whatever had been planted. There is a stewardship of life that you see in nature, and I was taught that at a very young age.”

A native Georgian, Deen met Cecil Day when they were students at Mercer University in Macon. They married and moved to Atlanta where she finished her degree at GSU while Cecil was finishing his at Georgia Tech. Deen worked with Cecil to establish a new chain of motels and by 1970 Days Inn of America was founded and eventually became the sixth largest hotel chain in the country. When Cecil died at age 44, Deen continued the various businesses they had established



while also mothering their five children. By the time of Cecil’s death he had given away half his fortune to various recipients. Deen who married Jim Sanders in 2002 continued to do the same first establishing the Cecil B Day Foundation. To that and various other charities she brought not only funding, but often her leadership expertise.

Deen was appointed to the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism Board (now Economic Development) and was the first woman to chair the board. She also served on the board of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and was appointed to the University System of Georgia Board of Regents.

Those seeds she planted with her grandmother produced more than flowers. They grew to be a central part of her life. Her leadership skills coupled with her knowledge and love of gardening brought her to garden clubs and floral art. She joined her first club in 1959 and organized a new one in 1961. She is a former president of the **Garden Club of Georgia and the National Garden Club** and is still on the Board of Directors of NGC. She was the vice president of the World Association of Flower Arrangers and has held many other important positions in that organization. A British magazine, *The Flower Arranger* named her America’s First Lady of Flowers. She received the Lady Bird Johnson Award for her contributions to the Keep America Beautiful program and agrees with a quote from Mrs. Johnson that “Where there are flowers, there is hope.” She will tell you to be grateful to others in your life for whatever success you may have because, “Nowhere in your walk of life have you earned what you have by yourself. There’s always a team of people helping you.”

Among a multitude of honors presented over her lifetime, Deen Day Smith holds an honorary degree from Georgia Tech and honorary doctorates from Mercer University and Georgia State University. She is, indeed, a woman in full.

Please see the following article about her influence and gifts to the State Botanical Garden of Georgia at Athens.

PORCELAIN AND DECORATIVE ARTS MUSEUM

NEWEST ATTRACTION AT STATE BOTANICAL GARDEN

The State Botanical Garden of Georgia was established in 1968, largely due to the efforts of garden club members and the Garden Club of Georgia (GCG). Deen Day Sanders was president of GCG from 1987 to 1989 and president of National Garden Clubs, Inc. from 1999 to 2001. She has been a loyal supporter of the Garden for over 50 years through financial contributions and her leadership and influence. She is responsible for making the garden fully accessible and our club, along with other clubs in the state, has contributed to the paved path in the garden allowing for visitors in wheelchairs to enjoy the garden along with those able to stroll through it.

Deen has been collecting important porcelain and botanical art for most of her adult life. She decided to give that collection to the State Botanical Garden where it can be on display for everyone to see. In addition, she was able to acquire complete volumes of *Flora Danica*. Garden Director Jenny Cruse-Sanders calls this “an encyclopedia of the flora, or plants, that grow in Denmark, which represents years and years of study, description, and also gorgeous scientific illustrations.” These volumes were written at the command of King Frederik V of Denmark during the Age of Enlightenment when humans were trying to understand the natural world through rational knowledge. Royal Copenhagen, founded in 1775 used the works and illustrations of the *Flora Danica* and created some of the most beautiful porcelain dinnerware and serving pieces in the world. Now an extensive collection is housed at the Georgia State Botanical Garden in a brand new museum thanks to Deen Day Sanders.



Avondale Estates joins 18 Cities and Three Colleges Campuses in Georgia as a Designated **BEE CITY, USA**



From the City announcement in March of this year: *Avondale Estates, Georgia officially became a **Bee City USA** affiliate on January 26, 2025, following a unanimous resolution adopted by the Board of Mayor and Commissioners on **December 11, 2024**. This designation reflects the city's commitment to creating pollinator-friendly habitats, promoting sustainable landscaping practices, and raising public awareness about the importance of bees and other pollinators.*

*The city's **Greenspace Advisory Committee** was designated as the lead group to guide these efforts, which include:*

*Enhancing native plant landscapes
Reducing pesticide use
Hosting educational events and outreach
Reporting annually on progress and activities*

Already designated as Bee Cities in Georgia are Decatur who was an early adopter in 2016, Pine Lake and Norcross who affiliated in 2018, , Dunwoody in 2019. There are also over 200 Bee Campus affiliates and three in Georgia: UGA, GSU Decatur campus and East Georgia State University. Hmmm. One might think Georgia Tech, with its mascot would be a natural. Any Tech alumni out there who might make a suggestion? Just a thought.



Bee Cities may use their own discretion on how to implement the goals of the Bee City organization which are:

Habitat Creation and Native Plantin
Community Events and Education
Policy and Practice Changes
Community Engagement

AEGC will be partnering with the City to promote the August 22nd and 23rd Pollinator Count. Plans are being made to have an event at the Lake on the morning of the 23rd. Stay tuned for details and read Julie's emails!

Calendar

JulyHave summer fun

August More of the same

August 14th.....Board Meeting, 10:00 at the LakeHouse



National Garden Week and Garden Week in Georgia 2025

We certainly enjoyed both of these occasions and celebrated them in our community (we even won awards). Here is how some of our sister clubs in Redbud District celebrated.

Conyers GC held a garden therapy session at a senior center and provided an interesting triple pot for each participant. Members helped with the potting soil and three plants so each person could go home with a small herb garden. They also hosted the public for a program on beekeeping.

Stonecrest GC held a panel discussion on the "History and Legacy of Horticulture in the Black Community". Later they sponsored a program at the AWARE Wildlife Center. The subject was rehabilitating injured and orphaned native Georgia wild animals.

Wisteria GC in LaGrange installed new plants in large outdoor pots at a local Hospice facility. For the second event, which was at the library, they had a display of flower arrangements made from members' gardens and included information about their club and invitations to join.



Summertime and the livin' is easy, fish are jumpin' and the temperature's high, which makes you reach for a cool refreshing drink of your choice. That drink probably comes in an aluminum can with a pull tab. So, as you open it and hear the whoosh, keep rocking the tab back and forth until it comes off. Have a little dish or cup nearby designated as the special pull tab receptacle and start saving them for the Ronald McDonald House.

Collecting tabs has been a program of the Garden Club of Georgia and its member clubs for 20 years. While the income from the tabs is not significant enough to provide medical help, it does pay for a tooth brush that might have been forgotten in a rush to pack, a snack or perhaps a warm meal in a quiet kitchen. It is a little bit of comfort for a worried family whose child is in the hospital.



Ask your friends to save tabs as well. Every little tab counts!

Bring them to a meeting or drop them off at Susan Barton's front porch. At 19 Wiltshire.

IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY: A GCG CLASS NEARBY

GCG Basic Floral Design I Course

The Conyers Garden Club is pleased to sponsor a GCG Basic Floral Design I Course in Fall 2025.

The classes for this course will be held 10 am – 2 pm on the following dates: August 13 and 27; September 3 and 17; and October 1, 2025 at the Conyers Presbyterian Church; 911 N. Main Street NW, Conyers, GA 30012.

The registration fee for this course is \$125.

To register, please go to this link: <https://forms.gle/mqX86TS3LGnZGfA7A>

For more details, please contact Gale D. Thomas at galedthomas@gmail.com.



Annual GCG Leadership Workshop

The 2025 Edition of the Leadership Workshop was well attended as usual by members of clubs in Redbud and Dogwood Districts. It is always interesting and informative. It covers issues important to individual clubs for member retention to how to write an awards application. Of course, lunch is served, speakers are interesting and it is held in Deen Day Sanders' beautiful garden house in a lovely woodland setting. Five of our members attended this year, see photos below.



Diane Hunter President of the Garden Club of Georgia



Karen Liebert, Nancy Darden, Dawn Dietrich, Julie Martinez and Beth Wielage

... and here We Are at the Board of Mayor and Commissioner's Meeting

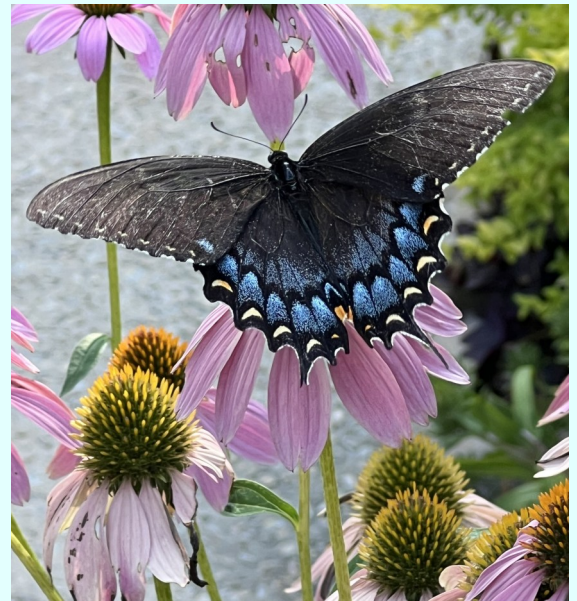
We took our banner and had the Mayor read the proclamation. We then presented this stunning flower arrangement which used flowers from several of our members' gardens. A work of art by nature assisted in the arranging by member Dawn Dietrich.





AEGC member Jean Kingsbury is an artist and photographer. She caught this Eastern Tiger Swallowtail visiting her *Asclepias tuberosa* plant (butterfly weed).

Susan Barton (your reporter) is neither an artist nor photographer but this Eastern Black Tiger Swallowtail was cooperative and met up with a bumble bee on a Dahlia.



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