

# FLOWER POWER

The Avondale Estates Garden Club  
Member of the National Garden Club &  
The Garden Club of Georgia

May – June 2024

Volume X Issue V

## THE NATIVE NUDGE

*Marshallia caespitosa*  
Barbara's Buttons



From mid-May to the end of June this native blooms on 24" stems in full sun to part shade. Compact clumping foliage is nearly evergreen, dominated by basal rosettes underneath dense, dome-shaped white (sometimes pinkish) flower heads borne singly on erect stems.

The showy flower structures measure about 1.25" across and emerge, evoking pincushions.

This beauty was selected as the 2009 [NC Wildflower of the Year](#), a program managed by the North Carolina Botanical Garden



## Surprise, Disappointment, Shock and Delight A Garden Offers It All

If you have tended a garden for even one season, you know this to be true. My garden gave me each of these emotions this year, and we're not even to the 4th of July.

I planted echinops but they didn't seem to thrive and it was a disappointment when I discovered they didn't come back the next spring. Because hope springs eternal, I went out to check the site this spring thinking dormancy maybe? No echinops, but a beautiful, healthy stand of Barbara's Buttons, a native I have never purchased or planted. It put me in mind of the speaker at the April meeting, Tres Crow, who suggested that we not be too quick to pull up things we don't recognize. He reminded us that critters carry seeds, birds drop seeds and that not everything that comes up is a weed. I love the native Barbara's Buttons and hope they will make a return engagement next year.

I was delighted with all the plants that leafed out, doubled in size or bloomed their little hearts out this spring and summer. The shock however, came from an un-tilled, un-watered, mostly hidden and certainly ignored area of my front yard. I don't even know why I walked back there having to fight my way between two overgrown hydrangeas, a Lady in Red and a Limelight. Thanks to the demise of a Sweet Gum and a Redbud, the area is now a sunny delight and there, growing almost out of the Redbud stump, is a tomato plant with yellow flowers on it already! I'm fairly certain a bird deposited it there for me. I am headed to In-town Ace to get some stakes to tie it up and maybe make a cage to protect "my tomatoes" from a rogue ne'er-do-well squirrel who, I'm pretty sure, already has his eyes on my vegetable garden.



~Susan Barton

### AEGC MISSION STATEMENT

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



# Awards Season Ends with The Feddys

You've seen the Oscars, the Emmys, the Grammys and now the Feddys —the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs awards for accomplishments during the past year. AEGC did very well again this year with six firsts, four seconds and one third place. We had a contingent of 10 members attending who enjoyed the comradery of members from other garden clubs in DeKalb County, the joy of winning several awards and a lovely luncheon as well.



*AEGC Members attending the DeKalb Federation Awards Luncheon and showing off our silver from left: Cheryl Sims, Mary Crowell, Karen Liebert, Peggy Burgess, Christi Granger, Patricia Calcagno, Julie Martinez, Beth Wielage, Susan Barton Not pictured: Nancy Martin*

Congratulations to our own Karen Liebert who won the prestigious Butterfly Garden award. This has become a kind of tradition in our club. Last year Beth Langhorst won and the year before that, Alice Guppy took the honors.



- Garden Club Program Award Second Place
- Yearbook Award Second Place
- Environmental Award Second Place (Tied with Avon GC)
- Pull-a-Tab Award Second Place
- Garden Center Participation Award Third Place
- Butterfly Award (Karen Liebert's Garden) **First Place**
- Friend of Birds Award (Beth Langhorst's) **First Place+\$50**
- Highest Scoring Entry – Friend of Birds Award **First Place**
- Federation Special Recognition Certificate (Beth Langhorst for a perfect award application **Score: 100**)
- Special Achievement Award (Tree Walk) **First Place+\$50**
- Federation Website Award **First Place +\$50**
- Newsletter Award **First Place +\$50**



## May Yard of the Month

### Home of Wendi Sams & Mike Babcock

### 3222 Majestic Circle

When Wendi Sams and Mike Babcock bought their home, they saw the opportunity to create a natural landscape amongst the pine trees. They wanted a variety of plants so they could always see something new happening and plants that would support and attract birds, butterflies, and bees. They hired a designer to create a beautiful concept with large sweeping beds. There would be smaller beds for shade perennials, and a large bed near the street for a pollinator meadow. The designer included a combination of classic landscape shrubs alongside native trees and shrubs. Preparation was performed by a landscape crew, and the owners used the plan and plant lists to source the plants and install them themselves. Much time was spent to find the native plants and installed as plants were available.

Working with native plants has been something new for the owners and there was not much information available about landscaping with these plants. To the owners, it initially felt like a leap of faith that it would all “turn out”, but there is really no such thing as a mistake. In the words of the owners, “It’s all an experiment and nature is very forgiving.”

**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.**





## June Yard of the Month Home of Oscar Ramos and David Jones 18 Lakeshore Drive

Oscar and David purchased their home in the fall of 1999 and in the intervening 25 years have established several beautiful gardens around their home.

The front entryway contains a ‘vertical garden’ that frames the entrance to the house. This feature was a solution to protect the annuals from the several rabbits that live in the yard and love to munch on them. There is also a Memorial Garden planted in memory of their fur babies. The Memorial Garden contains Edgeworthia, Giant Heuchera, Empress Wu Hosta and an Itoh peony “Singing in the Rain”.

The Kensington Road side of the yard was created to have a more natural wooded feel and includes dogwoods, viburnum, Carolina Cherry Laurel and varieties of hostas, hydrangeas, and azaleas. This is also the bird sanctuary featuring feeders, bird baths, Blue Bird nesting boxes and a winter roosting box.

The Oak Leaf Hydrangea on the front corner is from a cutting of a hundred-year-old Oak Leaf Hydrangea from David’s grandparents’ yard in Marshallville, Georgia. There are also several beautiful Japanese maples on the property and thirteen varieties of peonies.

The owners have created a yard that is beautiful across the seasons and is worth a look as you pass by. Congratulations, David and Oscar, and thank you for sharing your yard with the neighborhood.

~Scott Legg

# News from Redbud District

The 51st annual flower show presented by the garden clubs of Redbud District will move to August this year. . . and Daisy is going to the movies! The show will be titled Daisy's Movie Mania. This a National Garden Club Standard Flower Show. That means there are specific rules which must be followed and the show will include design as well as horticultural specimens.



The event will be held at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center August 26-29. It's not too early to plan what you might exhibit, design, or volunteer to do. It takes lots of volunteer to put on a flower show of this class. Think of the possibilities with movies as the theme. Bogie and Bacall, Marvel Comics, Barbie, My Fair Lady, The Blue Dahlia, Flowers in the Attic, Steel Magnolias, (isn't this fun?) Cactus Flower, The Days of Wine and Roses, Killers of the Flower Moon—OK, maybe not that one, but you get the idea.

Plans are being finalized, so please put these dates on your calendar so you can be part of the fun! Invite your non-garden club friends. You'd be surprised how many have never been to a flower show.

**WALTER SAYS** . . . Each week a shrub needs one gallon of water per foot of height . . . Limbs in the way when you mow? You can safely remove one fourth of the foliage of any healthy tree during the growing season . . . Look for small new seedlings under your Lenten rose. They can be transplanted now to other spots . . . Tree roots are almost bone dry! Give them 15 gallons per inch of trunk thickness once each week if regulations allow . . . Prune back your hydrangeas when most of the blooms have faded. You'll quickly get lots of new branches, which may give more flowers this fall . . . Try to make each cut just above two buds or two opposite leaves. Leave several shorter limbs untouched. These will harden this fall and, barring extreme winter temperatures, will be the limbs most likely to make blooms next year. There will be lots of new growth between now and October. Many of the resulting branches will also be able to mature and become capable of blooming next year. . . There is still plenty of time to plant seed of marigold, cosmos, cleome and dwarf sunflower. They'll make a spectacular flower show in six weeks. . .





# Member Spotlight on Karen Liebert

Karen Liebert hails from Kentucky but has lived in states from South Dakota to South Georgia due to her husband’s career in the zoo business. Karen is a school media specialist by profession and is proud to call herself a librarian (because in her own words “what gets checked out of a library?”).

Two years ago, after renovating their “new home” in Avondale Estates, they moved in and met the neighbors. Next door was AEGC member Dianne Nelson who suggested that as Karen was an avid gardener, she might enjoy the Avondale Estates Garden Club. The rest is history, well only two years of history so far. In that two years Karen has become an active member and now sits on the Board as Chair of Awards. She is also the Youth Garden Chair working with Avondale Elementary School and has worked on children’s activities for the Tree Walk and for the Plant Sale. She didn’t just join AEGC, but plunged right in.



For the third time AEGC won awards for member’s butterfly gardens. Alice Guppy and Beth Langhorst won at Federation which was followed by Karen’s win this year. Her butterfly garden is only two years old, but you wouldn’t know that when you see it. Zinnias abound with yarrow, feverfew, Indian paintbrush, milkweed and assorted other plants the butterflies love. Tucked in are daylilies and hydrangeas she has brought with her from south Georgia. In a shady area there are hostas Karen rescued from a pile of “yard waste” in the neighborhood. She has a special interest in bees (see Bee hotel in photo) and will write an article on that subject for Flower Power in the near future. Congratulations to Karen and thanks for joining AEGC.



The photo doesn’t do the garden justice. The fence is a wonderful backdrop with taller things in the way back and room in the front for those plants that like to bend gracefully or hug the ground. *Asclepias tuberosa*, our Monarch’s favorite buffet, are in the middle and yarrow at the right.

**Flower Power Staff**  
Editor..... Susan Barton  
Contributors..... Donna Tanner  
Christi Granger  
Patricia Calcagno  
Helen Dorroh  
Adam Barton  
Scott Legg  
Jean Kingsbury  
Beth Langhorst

# 2024 Edition the AEGC Secret Garden Tour

## A Brilliant Success



A dedicated team of AEGC members put on our biennial Secret Garden Tour on June 1st and was rewarded with a tremendous success. It took a village garden club to do it. Congratulations to all involved. The effort was led by Susan Stuart and her planning committee of 18 members. After that portion of the task was accomplished it took even more members. It is project of many parts and every part was successful. There were generous sponsors to find, Patron signs to design and market to members as a “rental” opportunity, tickets to design and fill with just enough copy, strategy for sales of those tickets to members and the public, a Thank You party to plan and execute for the owners of the gardens and volunteers, Garden Docents to find, and publicity and communication to the Club and to the community. It was successfully accomplished and Chairman Susan Stewart made it look easy! A total of 92 jobs were filled by our members. As we are a club of 75 Active members, it is apparent many did double duty. Thanks to everyone for their generous and good nature.

The financial rewards were beyond excellent. After expenses, we made \$9452.68. WOW!

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## BYLAWS AMENDMENTS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY . . .

### What this means to AEGC:

The biggest change we will see is that we will have a new position on the Board, that of Treasurer-Elect. This will prove a boon to the Treasurer who has more and more complicated duties as the Club grows in opportunities and obligations as well as in membership. This will alleviate some of the stress on the Treasurer and serve to train the incoming Treasurer as well. The Treasurer-Elect will be a voting member of the Board and will be a member of the committee to plan the Budget for the coming year.

Another big change is the addition of a meeting in June which will be held in the evening. Our year will be comprised of four daytime meetings and four evening meetings. This will benefit those members who work and cannot make the daytime meetings. It is also easier to engage speakers, many of whom prefer to be at evening meetings.

The other significant change is to the Nominating Committee. The members of that Committee shall have been members of AEGC for a minimum of three years. This will give the Committee some experienced members who, among the five on the committee will have a wider knowledge of the membership.



**To further celebrate National Garden Week,** this spectacular arrangement was made with floral contributions from various member's gardens and presented to City Hall. The idea came from Karen Liebert who arranged the flowers in an antique McCoy vase.

The card displayed read: *Flowers from the Gardens of Members of the Avondale Estates Garden Club in celebration of National Garden Week June 2-9, 2024.*



# Garden Club of Georgia and Monarchs Across Georgia Suggest We Think Like a Pollinator



**Herbs as host plants that you can share with these butterflies:**

**Dill:** Black Swallowtail, Anise Swallowtail

**Parsley:** Black Swallowtail, Anise Swallowtail

**Rue:** Giant Swallowtail, Black Swallowtail

**Fennel:** Black Swallowtail, Anise Swallowtail

They are not all native plants, but widely planted and you can plant them in pots.

