

GCG AWARD # 1

The Garden Club of Georgia Trophy

Avondale Estates Garden Club – Club # 07-115
Avondale Estates, GA 30002

Redbud District



1. MEMBERSHIP: Avondale Estates Garden Club (AEGC) was founded on June 10, 1931. Following a growth spurt after the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, AEGC's membership had grown from 57 members to 71 members on January 1, 2022. And by December 1, 2022 we had grown to 78 members. We attribute this dramatic membership growth to our outreach to the Community with our first ever plant sales in April 2021 and 2022 as well as a most successful Secret Garden Tour in June 2022. We want our new members to "hit the ground running, so we hold a new member orientation at the beginning of our garden club year in September.



New Member at AEGC's New Member Orientation September 2022

2. AEGC's FINANCES: Our Club's **annual dues** are \$40 for a single membership and \$65 for a family. We currently have seven family memberships.) In addition to dues, we hold two fundraisers annually and one every two years.

- **Annual Plant Sale:** AEGC members work throughout the year potting wonderful plants from their gardens which are offered at our April plant sale in conjunction with Garden Week in Georgia. This sale draws buyers from the community and beyond. Our April 2022 sale raised \$9,568.
- **Secret Garden Tour:** The Club holds a tour of selected backyard gardens with docents in each garden during the first week in June of even numbered years to coincide with National Garden Week. This event draws people from the community and throughout the surrounding county. Besides raising funds for our many projects and donations, this event inspires attendees who learn about creative landscaping and plants that do well in our area. Our June 2022 Secret Garden Tour raised \$6,304.
- **Annual Holiday Bazaar:** This Bazaar in mid-November heralds the holiday season with sales of everything from antiques to handmade items, holiday décor, birdhouses, house plants, spa products, children's toys and games, raffle baskets and gourmet baked goods. This Bazaar draws people from within and outside our community. This year's Bazaar raised \$5,168.



AEGC's November 2022 Holiday Bazaar



Our April 2022 Garden Week in Georgia Plant Sale



A Georgia Certified Native Plant Garden was on AEGC's June 2022 Secret Garden Tour

Donations made by Avondale Estates Garden Club: With our treasury overflowing, AEGC's Executive Board established a Disbursement Committee to propose organizations which worked towards the goals of our club as well as the National Garden Club, Deep South, the Garden Club of Georgia, Redbud District, and the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs. Following the Committee's extensive research, the AEGC membership set aside \$10,000 and approved the following eight initial donations to these worthy recipients. These one-time donations were given in November 2022. AEGC will be donating an additional \$3,000 to other worthy organizations in 2023.

1. **\$1,500** to the Garden Club of Georgia Scholarship Fund – AEGC donates \$400 annually to this scholarship fund but we decided to increase our giving in 2022 with a named scholarship.
2. **\$1,500** to the Avondale Elementary School Foundation (AESF) – Continuing our Mission and Vision that education is core, we believe there is no better time to start than in the beginning stages of a child's scholastic career. AESF works directly with AES administration, teachers, and staff to ensure their needs are supported so that every student receives the necessary resources to thrive. AES is a STEM school with an International Baccalaureate program.
3. **\$1,000** to Atlanta's Center for **H**ard to **R**ecycle **M**aterials (CHaRM) – This is a permanent drop-off facility that aims to improve our environmental health by encouraging reuse and diverting thousands of pounds of household hazardous waste and other hard to recycle items from Metro-Atlanta landfills and water systems.
4. **\$1,000** to the Cherokee Garden Library –In addition to our annual donation of \$100 to the library the membership added this additional donation in 2022. The library located at the Atlanta History Center holds over 33,000 books, photographs, manuscripts, seed catalogs, and landscape drawings. These valuable resources tell the story of horticulture and botanical history in the Southeastern U.S. Their collection also includes our Club's scrapbooks that are being carefully preserved. In addition to being a valuable research resource, the library holds author talks and generates a publication called "Gardens Citings" that shares stories from their collection.
5. **\$500** to the Georgia State Botanical Gardens –Education is one of the cornerstones of AEGC's strategic plan. So what would be more fitting than a donation to the State Botanical Gardens. This garden creates an environment that stimulates and encourages learning at all ages and stages of life.

6. **\$500** to Decatur City Cemetery -- This historic cemetery next door to Avondale Estates is an important local garden which is significant in many ways to our community and the local ecosystem. The county extension office regularly hosts horticultural tours that focus on plants and trees found in our area.
7. **\$500** to Historic Oakland Cemetery – This historic cemetery is Atlanta’s oldest public park and the City’s largest greenspace which boasts arboretum status. The Historic Oakland Foundations regularly supports environmental projects and restoration and maintenance of one of the best examples of a Victorian garden cemetery in the country.
8. **\$500** to the Dunwoody Nature Center – This Nature Center located right here in our own DeKalb County supports our mission for education and environmental responsibility. The center inspires the love of nature and cultivates environmental understanding and stewardship by conserving and enhancing Dunwoody Park; educating children, families, and adults of all ages about the natural world and our place in it; and motivating environmental awareness and responsible action.



Presentation of \$1,500 check to Susan Turner, GCG Scholarship Chairman



Presentation of \$1,000 check to CHaRM Director Peggy Whitlow Ratcliffe



Presentation of \$1,500 check to Alex Robinson, AESF Chairman

In addition to the one-time donations above AEGC continues to make the following donations annually:

\$25 to Arboreta and State Botanical Gardens	\$50 to the Avondale Christmas Tour of Homes
\$150 to the Avondale Estates Memorial Tree Fund	\$25 to the C. Burke Day Jr. Memorial Fund
\$100 to the Cherokee Garden Library	\$25 to the Founders Memorial Garden
\$25 to GCG Headquarters Beautification	\$400 to the GCG Scholarship Fund
\$25 to the Blue Star Marker Restoration Fund	\$25 to support GCG's Garden Therapy Programs
\$25 to GG's Historic Landscape and Garden Preservation Program	\$25 to the James R. Cothran Endowment Fund
\$25 to the Marshall Forest Land Trust	\$50 to Historic Oakland Cemetery
\$25 to NGC's Natural Disaster Support	\$25 to GCG sponsored Roadside Beautification Fund
\$25 to the Alice H. Richards Children's Garden at the State Botanical Garden	\$25 to GCG supported State Parks and Public Lands Fund
Minimum of \$68 to the Penny Pines Foundation	

3. SERVICES PROVIDED BY AVONDALE ESTATES GARDEN CLUB: Our Club provides many services to our members and our community.

1. **Yearbook** -- Our Club prints a Yearbook each September which is given to all of our members. Our Yearbook includes everything a member needs to know about our upcoming garden club year and an events calendar which includes our programs descriptions and information about our affiliate's events. (NGC, Deep South, GCG, Redbud and DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs). Our member directory includes pictures of most of our members. This is very helpful to be able to put a name to a face in such a large club.
2. **Newsletter** -- "Flower Power" is the newsletter of Avondale Estates Garden Club. It provides the members with news of the Club, the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs, Redbud District, the Garden Club of Georgia, and the National Garden Club. In addition to newsworthy articles, the newsletter includes horticultural tips, a multitude of gardening information, and photos of our many activities and projects. There are 10 issues annually of "Flower Power". It is published digitally every month from September through May. Occasionally a summer issue is published. The newsletter is emailed to all 78 Club members. "Flower Power" is also available to anyone accessing our website.
3. **Website** – AEGC's website (avondaleestatesgardenclub.org) is a resource for our members and prospective members. Our upcoming events are listed in the calendar. Each calendar event is linked to a

brief description of the event. Issues of our Club's Newsletter, "Flower Power", can be accessed from the Newsletter menu. Anyone accessing the site can learn about our recent activities by clicking on the photo gallery link in the pull-down menu. Our website also has links to all our affiliated organizations' websites (NGC, Deep South, GCG, Redbud District, and the DeKalb Federation), and our Facebook page. Anyone considering joining Avondale Estates Garden Club can view and download the New Member Application from the site. Since the site's debut in October 2019, our members have had "one-stop shopping" for all things AEGC. The website is updated regularly. The last update was on November 16, 2022.

4. **Facebook Page** -- Avondale Estates Garden Club's Facebook page went online in March of 2019 to promote our garden club and its affiliated organizations. We publicize events and remind current and prospective members of meetings, related events, horticulture tips, etc. The page is designed for internal and external use. The page's posts routinely reach upwards of 800 people in the local area, and we have added more than 20 new club members since the page went live.
[\(https://www.facebook.com/aegardenclub/\)](https://www.facebook.com/aegardenclub/)
5. **Annual Plant Sale** – Our plant sale is not only a fundraiser for the club, but it also serves the community by providing an opportunity to purchase below market priced plants which we have propagated and thus are known to flourish in the metro Atlanta area.
6. **Bonnie Phelps Memorial Tree Walk** – To encourage appreciation of our tree canopy and to educate the public, AEGC hosts a Tree Walk in the fall of odd numbered years. Certified arborists lead groups of walkers on five different routes while lecturing and discussing the trees. We produce an extensive tree guide for each walker as reference material.
7. **Secret Gardens of Avondale Tour** – This tour of backyard gardens held in June of even-numbered years encourages people to visit the community, become inspired and learn about creative landscaping and plants that to well in our area.
8. **Totem Tenders** – Club members visit the Avondale Elementary School's beautiful Totem Garden at least twice monthly to provide maintenance, thus ensuring that this garden, the work of our club, our sister club, and the community, will continue to flourish.
9. **City Plantings** – AEGC members maintain the plantings at our city's east and west entrances as well as the planters at the city clock tower in the center of our downtown area.
10. **Blue Star Marker Planting** -- The Avondale Estates Garden Club first installed a small red, white, and blue themed garden around our Blue Star Marker in front of City Hall in 2017 and have maintained it by planting annuals in the spring and fall each year bringing attention to the marker and to those it honors.
11. **Avondale Neighborhood Arboretum** -- Following the successful acquisition and installation of the initial 30 granite tree markers (which AEGC purchased in 2021) for the city's Arboretum, the Avondale Estates Tree Board asked AEGC to help with their efforts to raise funds for another 36 markers. AEGC's publicity chairman wrote an appeal for donations which was published in the City's weekly E-news and the City's hardcopy newsletter. AEGC also agreed to a Tree Board request to hold donated funds until the funding goal had been reached. Once the goal was reached, an AEGC member placed the order with D&S Monuments in Dalton, GA. These markers were delivered in late summer 2022 and stored in the garage of an AEGC member until the weather was cool enough to "plant" them. On October 24 and November 5 AEGC members assisted Tree Board members in installing these new markers.
12. **Environmental Speaker Series** – In October 2022 AEGC members approved a \$1,500 expenditure to establish an Environmental Speaker Series which will be free and open to the public as well as our members. The first lecture, "Sustainable Gardening for the Southeast" is scheduled for January 31, 2023, and will be given by Susan M. Varlamoff, the retired director of the UGA Office of Environmental Sciences and the author of three environmentally focused book. This lecture will be followed by two additional lectures in February and March. The speakers are experts in their fields and will educate and encourage the public and our members to be better stewards of our surroundings.

13. **Charitable Giving** -- In addition to the above, our eight large one-time donations enumerated in Section Three above provides a service that will enable those organizations to continue their important missions.



Arborist educating Walkers during the AEGC Tree Walk



City's West Entrance Planted for Winter



Fall 2022, Planting Pansies at our Blue Star Marker



Set for al fresco dining at one of the Secret Gardens on the June 2022 Tour



Totem Tenders preparing the garden for Winter



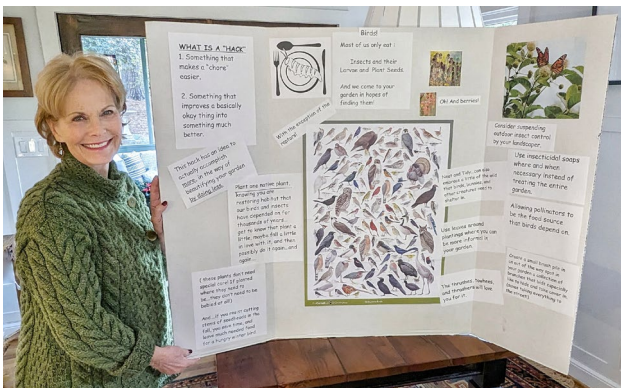
AEGC members helped "plant" 36 markers

4. Club Programs:

1. **January 21, 2022 – Planning, Preparing and Maintaining a Cutting Garden:** Presenter Sara Henderson, a lifelong Atlanta gardener, designer, frequent lecturer, and past president of the Georgia Perennial Plant Association and the American Hydrangea Society showed us how a cutting garden

begins with a dream and becomes reality with choosing the appropriate site, carefully preparing the planting bed, and choosing the right flowers to grow.

2. **February 18, 2022 – Permaculture Gardening:** Presenter Brandy Hall owner, of Shades of Green Permaculture, used PowerPoint slides with her talk to explain to the membership how Permaculture, a holistic design system that emulates systems existing in nature can create sustainable systems which integrate harmoniously with the natural environment.
3. **March 18, 2022 – Favorite Garden Hacks:** In this program, following the installation of our officers, five new members presented their favorite garden hacks which help in their garden endeavors. Their hacks ranged from the informative to the unusual – where you can get free nursery grown plants in need of nurturing, how to make worm casings compost tea for fertilizer, propagating a rose in a two liter soda bottle, a sustainable gardening “less is more” plan, and a variety of uses for cinnamon in your garden.
4. **April 8, 2022 – Field Trip to Woodlands Garden in Decatur:** Woodlands is a 7.1 acres natural Piedmont forest in the City of Decatur, an urban sanctuary which is used to educate and engage the community in the natural world.
5. **April 15, 2022 -- Gardening in the Shadow of a Legend:** Presenter Teresa Parrish, a Decatur gardener who inherited Ryan Gainey’s property upon his untimely death, shared with us what it is like learning to garden in the shadow of such a legend.
6. **May 19, 2022 – In-House Flower Show:** Member Tyler Weaver grew up on the hems of his great grandmother who was a florist in their small hometown. He showed us tricks and “recipes” he picked up along the way for lovely flower arrangements with items cut from the yard and using objects around the house. In addition, seven club members provided floral designs of all kinds and styles! Entrants were scored on overall design, technique, freshness, and concept
7. **September 15, 2022 – From Wild to Wow:** Presenter Jane Cross from CCW Interiors showed our members how to create a gorgeous tablescape using the natural beauty in our own landscape to make each and every guest to our homes feel special.
8. **October 20, 2022 – Black Gold 101, All About Composting:** Brandon Crumsey, and Urban Agriculture Project Manager with “Food Well Alliance” showed us how easy and fun composting is and what an invaluable resource it is for our gardens.
9. **November 12, 2022 – Holiday Bazaar:** Not a program per se, but an event in which all our members were involved from donating to setting up, to working as salespeople, etc. on the day of the event.
10. **December 3, 2022 – Holiday Luncheon:** AEGC’s Executive Board will host our annual luncheon at the Avondale Community Club. This is an event for members to just relax and enjoy the company of old friends and new and to celebrate the holidays together.



March 18, 2022 Program on Gardening Hacks



May 19, 2022 In-house Flower Show Entries

5. Club Projects: AEGC is involved in a myriad of projects some of which were initiated by the Club and some of which were initiated by our affiliated organizations.

1. **Avondale City Plantings** – AEGC participates in funding and installing plantings to promote civic pride and to beautify and enhance our city. We have adopted the City’s West and East entrances as our ongoing project where we have installed new landscaping. Each spring and fall we add seasonal annuals

to these areas to add color and throughout the season we maintain these areas. The planting was last done in October 2022. In addition, this fall we redid the brick planters at the City's clocktower, the major intersection in the Avondale Estates business district. We planted low-growing easy maintenance perennials to enhance this space which had been overgrow and neglected. We will continue this project for the foreseeable future.

2. **Blue Star Marker Planting** – Our Club maintains and replants the small red, white and blue themed garden around our Blue Star Marker in front of our City Hall as a continuing project. Each spring and fall we plant the garden with seasonal annuals. In October 2022 we removed the summer annuals and planted pansies and violas to provide color throughout the winter and early spring. This is a continuing project.
3. **Children's Little Free Library** – AEGC built and maintains the well-used Little Library for elementary school aged children which is located near the neighborhood park. One of our members purchases books at local thrift stores and normally adds books to the library every week. Books were last added to the library on November 14, 2022. This is a continuing project.
4. **Fig Leaf Project** -- Each year using club funds, AEGC purchases and contributes toiletries and personal clothing items for residents of the Georgia Regional Hospital. We will be delivering these items after Thanksgiving this year.
5. **Garden Week in Georgia** – The Club holds its annual plant sale to commemorate Garden Week in Georgia. This year we held our plant sale on April 16, 2022. Also, during a regular Wednesday meeting of the City Board of Mayor and Commissioners, the mayor read a proclamation declaring Garden Week in Georgia and the club places a Garden Week in Georgia banner near the busy intersection of our business district. This is a continuing project.
6. **Holidays for Heroes** – Club members prepare holiday greeting cards for active Military personnel serving overseas. In 2022 AEGC members contributed over 450 cards to this project. This is a continuing project.
7. **Memorial Day Remembrance** – Using Club funds, AEGC in conjunction with our sister Avon Garden Club places a wreath at the Blue Star Marker in front of City Hall and conducts a ceremony honoring veterans the Friday before Memorial Day. Our mayor and local veterans participate. We dedicated the wreath this year on May 28, 2022 and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.
8. **National Garden Week** – During National Garden Week the Club places a banner which was purchased by the Club, on the main thoroughfare in our business district announcing the event. Our Secret Garden Tour in June 2022 was an added feature in honoring National Garden Week. We also take this opportunity to publicly thank our city employees for their help. During a City Board of Mayor and Commissioners meeting on May 25, 2022 the mayor read a proclamation declaring National Garden Week. This is a continuing project.
9. **Recycle and Reuse Projects** – This is a continuing project in which the Club collects and donates aluminum tabs to the Ronald McDonald Houses which they in turn sell to help defray expenses at the houses. We also schedule several “recycling rodeos” to CHaRM (Atlanta's Center for Hard to Recycle Materials). Members bring theirs and their neighbors recycling items to this permanent drop-off facility several times a year. Our last rodeo was on November 3, 2022.
10. **Secret Gardens of Avondale Tour** – This continuing project was last held on June 5, 2022 when five unique gardens were on the tour. The tour encourages people to visit our beautiful community, become inspired and learn about creative landscaping and plants that to well in our area.
11. **Totem Tenders** – Club members visit the Avondale Elementary School's beautiful Totem Garden at least twice monthly to provide maintenance, thus ensuring that this garden, the work of our Club, our sister Club and the community will continue to flourish. The Totem Garden was last tended on November 20, 2022 when the tenders put the garden to bed for the winter. Members will continue to provide maintenance of the garden throughout the year.

12. **Youth Gardening** – In this continuing project, AEGC members support Avondale Elementary School’s Student Garden Club by providing materials and helping to increase their understanding of the importance of native plants and pollinators.

6. Club Representation: AEGC members are always represented at a number of our affiliate organizations’ events throughout the year.

1. **Garden Club of Georgia** -- AEGC President Peggy Burgess attended the Garden Club of Georgia Convention this April in Macon where she proudly accepted four First Place and three Second Place awards. Three of our members attended the May 2022 Lockerly Arboretum – Rose Hill Tour and lecture which benefits GCG’s Historic Landscape Preservation Grant. In addition, our club’s Executive Board regularly attends GCG’s Leadership Seminar and will be attending the next one in 2023. Our club participates in GCG’s “Dollars Educate Scholars” every year. In 2022 we donated over \$150 to this worthy effort.
2. **Redbud District of the Garden Club of Georgia** – Our Club participates in several Redbud District events including the Redbud District annual meeting and the District’s Yellow Daisy Flower show. In September AEGC members provided 40 horticulture specimens and three design entries to the district’s flower show. In addition, AEGC provided the brunch and lunch for the show’s judges and clerks. Eight members attended the district meeting in LaGrange on October 11, 2022 where we were thrilled to receive four First Place Awards. AEGC also donated a raffle basket and bought lots of raffle tickets to assist with the district’s fundraising efforts.
3. **DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs** – AEGC is represented in many aspects of our county’s Federation of Garden Clubs. Two of our members serve on the Federation’s Board as the Hospitality and Birds/Butterflies chairmen. Four to sixteen of our members regularly attend their meetings, and at their March 24, 2022 meeting provided the horticulture specimens and a design entry for the mini-flower show. At the Federation’s April Awards meeting and luncheon, we proudly accepted nine First Place awards, two Second Place awards, and one Third Place Award. And in May 2022 we provided the brunch food for the hospitality portion of the Federation meeting. The Federation was able to finally hold their annual fundraiser, “Leading Lights”, after a two-year hiatus on November 17, 2022. Sixteen of our members attended this raffle, fashion show and luncheon. We also donated a raffle basket and bought lots of raffle tickets to help replenish the Federation’s treasury. One of our members was a model for the fashion show from Chicots.

Photos of our members attending GCG, Redbud District and DeKalb Federation events are on the following page



April 27, 2022 at Federation Awards Meeting



Some of our members attending the October 11, 2022 Redbud District Annual Meeting



Our President Peggy Burgess receiving an award from GCG President Peggy Tucker and GCG's immediate past President Barbara Bourque at the April 2022 Convention in Macon