

# NEWS FROM CITY HALL

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF AVONDALE ESTATES · AVONDALE ESTATES, GEORGIA  
NEWSLETTER 395

November - December 2024

07

NORTH WOODS AWARD



19

TREE LIGHTING



19

WINTER WANDERLAND



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# Inside This Issue

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Cover Photo: Sam Juarez



Trekkers on the Dale Ale Trail show off their 2024 Avondale Ale Day glasses and their festive costumes on November 2.  
Photo Credit: Ellen Powell

## Stay in Touch with the City of Avondale Estates

Stay connected with what's happening through the many communications channels used by the city.

### Newsletter

To receive this bimonthly newsletter in the mail or electronically, please email [communications@avondaleestates.org](mailto:communications@avondaleestates.org).

### E-News

The city emails an electronic newsletter once a week and as needed for special announcements and alerts. To sign up, visit [www.avondaleestates.org/e-news.html](http://www.avondaleestates.org/e-news.html).



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News from City Hall - Newsletter Disclaimer  
**Purpose**

The City Newsletter was created for the purpose of providing a written medium for regularly sharing information from City Hall. It is a vehicle for the Board of Mayor and Commissioners and the City Manager to share information relevant to issues discussed, actions taken, and plans made by the Board of Mayor and Commissioners, to share newsworthy information about our residents and businesses, and to provide a calendar of scheduled City events.

# From the City Manager



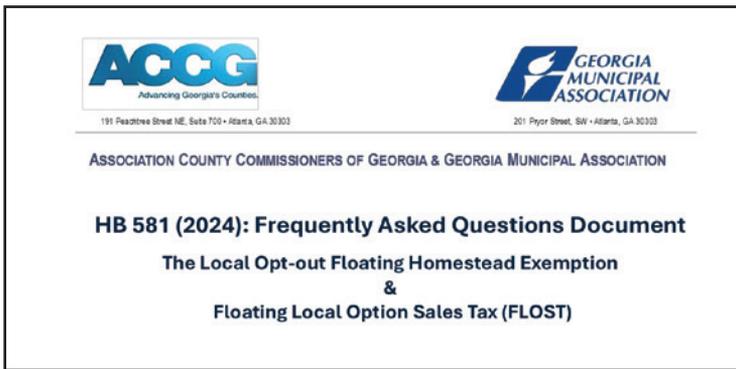
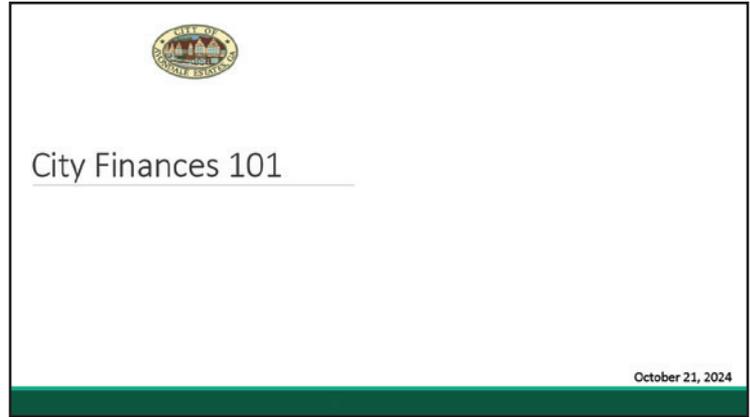
by Patrick Bryant  
City Manager

Dear Avondale Residents:

‘Tis the season. No, I’m not talking about the upcoming holidays. I’m talking about everyone’s favorite, “budget season.” I know, I know, “budget season” does not get the attention of “football season” or the excitement of “spooky season,” but it’s an important season the city must go through to set priorities and direct resources for the coming year. If you are a regular attendee of the Board of Mayor and Commissioners (BOMC) meetings, then you probably have a general grasp of the discussions held to make these important budgetary decisions. If you are not, never fear. We have put together some helpful materials to get you up to speed.

This budget season, new legislation, HB 581, will be on the ballot. HB 581 is a complex piece of legislation that, if passed by the voters of Georgia, allows municipalities to either opt in or out of a floating homestead exemption, capping the annual increase of the taxable value of homestead properties at the rate of inflation. The bill also provides for the institution of a Floating Local Option Sales Tax to further offset revenue generated from property taxes. The text of the legislation may be difficult to understand, so the legal team of the Georgia Municipal Association has compiled an informative FAQ document explaining the bill and its potential consequences. For your convenience, we have posted that document on the Finance page of the city’s website. The results of the HB 581 ballot initiative and the subsequent decision by the

rate on your property tax bill, demonstrates the sources of revenue from which the city must draw, and compares our revenue diversity with other cities within Dekalb County. It also dives into expenditure trends so you can wrap your head around the costs to operate and provide you with the service standard you expect from the City of Avondale Estates. We have also posted another document that highlights the proposed 2025 Work Plan, which is used



BOMC to either opt in or opt out will dictate the shape of the budget for 2025.

City staff has proposed a draft budget using a conservative estimate of the revenue anticipated to be received if the BOMC were to opt into this legislative action. That decision cannot be made until the first quarter of next year, so if adopted, the proposed budget may have to be amended early in 2025 to reflect the changing revenue climate. Staff is already working hard to analyze those potential impacts and will keep you updated through our website and other communication channels.

But before we touch on this year’s proposed budget in more detail, I would like to direct you to two other documents the city has posted to the Finance page to help you better understand how budget decisions are made. The first of those documents, City Finance 101, clarifies the impact of the city’s millage

by the BOMC to help guide them through the process of directing resources to achieve the goals they have for the following year.

After familiarizing yourself with those documents, you are ready to explore the city’s draft of the 2025 Annual Operating Budget and Capital Program. Each document is available on our website so you can see exactly where the city’s revenue is generated and how it is planned to be spent. If you have any questions or comments about the 2025 draft budget, be sure to let your BOMC know. The decisions they make for the upcoming year will have a direct impact on your quality of life, so it’s important that your voice is heard!

Cheers to another successful budget season,

Patrick



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## Construction Updates

Construction comes with the good, the bad, and the ugly, and at least, in this case, it will end up with something beautiful and valuable to the entire community. The process to get there is not easy. The construction of the Avondale Estates complete street project is no different from any major transportation project. As the construction team started digging, they uncovered unidentified gas pipes, water pipes and sewer pipes that were installed years ago and forgotten. They have experienced water leaks and gas leaks that must be repaired. They have had to “batten down the hatches” to prepare for major storms. In each scenario, the design team works with the appropriate partners to determine the best course of action, but these issues can cause delays. Thanks to community members for their patience as construction continues.

The big concrete pipes seen along the corridor for the last several months are stormwater pipes. This infrastructure is not sexy, but it is critical. It will address flooding that has been occurring not only on North Avondale Road but along either side of the corridor. IP Construction is nearing the end of the stormwater pipe installations. They expect to be largely completed with this phase, which is anticipated to be one of the most difficult and invasive, by the end of the year.

The construction team is starting to install curbing and sidewalks on the south side of East College. If there are no unforeseen challenges, the team will continue on the north side of the street at Ashton Place. Lights, trees and landscaping will be installed in the final phase.

Check the city’s website to keep up with the current areas of work and the schedule for completion. The project is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 2026 and remains on schedule. Additional updates are posted every other week on the city website.



## Open for Business

While work is in progress, the city’s businesses remain open. Please make an extra effort to support them. As construction continues, please avoid blocking intersections and entrances to local businesses. Keeping these areas clear ensures smooth traffic flow and helps local shops remain accessible to customers.

## Complete Street Features and Benefits

- ▶ Three 11’ traffic lanes, including a turning lane, preserve existing roadway capacity while adding safety improvements.
- ▶ A continuous, connected sidewalk system to access residential and commercial areas, including:
  - ▶ a 10’ path for pedestrians and bikes on the north side and
  - ▶ 5’ sidewalks on the south side
- ▶ New pedestrian and vehicle lighting.
- ▶ Landscape buffer (typical 5’ strip).
- ▶ Center median (typical 11’).
- ▶ Road repaving and restriping.
- ▶ Replaced and upgraded traffic signals.
- ▶ Upgraded underground utilities and repaired leaking water mains.
- ▶ Improved mobility and safety for pedestrians and cyclists, including pedestrian/bike crossings.
- ▶ Redesign intersections to increase functionality and safety.



Mayor Elmore and City Manager Bryant accept the award at the Atlanta Regional Commission's State of the Region at the World Congress Center.

## North Woods Project Receives Accolades

Avondale Estates captured regional accolades for its innovative approach to the North Woods Project. The green infrastructure project, touted as an example for other communities to replicate, garnered recognition for its unique approach to amplifying resilience and equity. Mayor Jonathan Elmore and City Manager Patrick Bryant accepted the award in front of 1,500 metro Atlanta leaders attending the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) 2024 State of the Region event on November 1.

The project received an Honorable Mention award, one of only five ARC Regional Excellence Awards. These prestigious awards recognize metro Atlanta projects that exemplify cutting-edge, livable design that enhances the surrounding community and supports the goals and policies of the Atlanta Region's Plan.

The North Woods Project, a stormwater mitigation project, was designed to prevent erosion in the North Woods and to reduce sediment and pollutants in Lake Avondale. The project created three rain gardens to improve the water quality in Cobbs Creek and Lake Avondale, as well as an ADA-accessible slate nature trail.



Capital Projects Director Kristin Moretz holds the Honorary Mention Award for the North Woods Project. A

video created by the ARC for the awards ceremony identified the North Woods Project as "a shining example of how to improve water quality using green infrastructure while

concurrently providing access to nature for local residents." Scan the QR code to watch the video about the award-winning projects and learn more about the North Woods project's impact.

This is the second time in three years the city has been recognized in the regional awards ceremony. In 2022, the city received the ARC's Great Place Award for the Avondale Estates Town Green. Other winners of this year's awards include Gwinnett County, the City of Atlanta, the Midtown Alliance, and the City of Clarkston.

The Atlanta Regional Commission is the official planning agency for the 11-county Atlanta Region, including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties, as well as the City of Atlanta and 74 other cities. The Atlanta Regional Commission's mission is to foster thriving communities for all within the Atlanta region through collaborative, data-informed planning and investments.



# Composting in Avondale – the Path Forward in DeKalb



by **Ted Terry**  
District 6 DeKalb County Commissioner

Dear Avondale Estates friends,

Composting is an essential tool in the fight against climate change. It helps reduce methane emissions from landfills, enriches our soils, and recycles valuable nutrients back into the earth. I've been composting for over 10 years, and it's a simple yet impactful way we can all contribute to a healthier

planet. That's why I was proud to support the recently launched composting pilot in Avondale Estates.

My office contributed an in-kind donation of over \$50,000, which helped Avondale Estates apply for the grant that makes the pilot possible. Since late September, we've also been knocking on doors to help the program meet its goal of signing up 750 participants (400+ have already signed up). But this is just the beginning—this pilot is part of my broader plan to raise awareness about composting and make it accessible to everyone across DeKalb County.

I am thankful to the Avondale Estates city staff and my fellow elected city officials for helping to implement this pilot, but most importantly, I am grateful for the residents of Avondale Estates who are participating in and helping us learn how to deliver curbside composting efficiently and doing their part to teach their neighbors.

DeKalb County's landfill is limited. We need to find other cost-effective alternatives, and composting is one of the healthiest ways to do that, not just with this pilot but throughout the county. And we are moving in that direction. DeKalb has already committed to building a composting facility within the next three years, solidified as part of the sanitation rate increase. This facility will be a game-changer for the entire county, ensuring that all residents—not just those in Avondale Estates—can benefit from composting services.

By advocating for these policy changes, rolling up our sleeves, and lacing up our shoes, we can spread the good news about this transformational program to address climate change right here in our backyard. Join us!

**RESIDENTS,  
SIGN UP NOW!**

Review the FAQs and program details and learn what can be composted.



## Great Reasons to Join the Program

For those already home composting or who feel they don't produce enough waste to participate, here are some reasons to give it a try:

- ▶ CompostNow can take more items than a backyard compost pile because the compostables are processed at an industrial-scale facility using aerobic windrow piles, which are closely monitored.
- ▶ It's surprising, but about 60% of waste is compostable. CompostNow accepts harder-to-compost materials like meat, dairy, bones and compostable plastics.
- ▶ Any amount of material collected, no matter how small, adds up and reduces the amount of material going to the landfill.

## The Pilot is Expanding – Residents of Multi-family Housing Can Now Participate

CompostNow has worked out the logistics and is excited to open the program to multi-family buildings and communities that don't have curbside sanitation pickup beginning the week of November 4. Participants who live in a multi-family building will get a seven-gallon bin with identifying name tags. Bins will be dropped in a location that is accessible for pickup, and the team will notify the participant of the chosen location. CompostNow reserves the right to cancel service if a successful collection location outside the building can't be identified.

## Avondale Estates Curbside Impact Report

Impact to date:

Date: 11-1-2024

**21,678** lbs.

diverted from the landfill!

#starvelandfills

#buildsoils

**439**

participants

Methane avoided

**2,255** lbs.

CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent\*

**56,363** lbs.

Equiv. miles not driven

**63,282** miles

Equiv. cars parked for 2 wks

**143** cars

Tomato potential

**40,646** tomatoes

of compost created

**2,710** plants

\*In a landfill food waste decomposes in the absence of oxygen and produces methane, which is 25x more powerful as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, yet in the US 95% of food scraps are going to the landfill.



Check out the results of the pilot program through October – almost 11 tons of waste have been diverted from the landfill.



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# Update from the Greenspace Program

Public Works has been busy since the transition from solid waste collection. Staff members collect yard waste daily and transition to maintaining public areas once the yard waste pickup is complete. Soon, they will also run the leaf vacuum truck every day. Mowing, right-of-way clearance, cleaning, and repainting signs are all on the itinerary.

Increasing competencies in multiple areas has been a priority of the team, and Public Works staffers have been excited to learn new tasks. The staff received training in chainsaw use from the Georgia Department of Transportation and structural tree pruning from Trees Atlanta.



Remember to submit requests for Public Works service via the Form Center on the 'Requests' section of the Avondale Estates webpage or scan the QR Code.



## Leaving the Leaves

Public Works is adding a new landscaping practice to its repertoire this year. Leaf litter will be allowed to collect in beds and under trees in some city parks and plazas. Permitting some leaf litter to remain and decompose will improve soil quality while reducing the use of leaf blowers. Blowers will still be used to clean hardscapes and grass areas, and for leaf collection during leaf season.

Improving soil quality benefits tree health, as urban soils are overly compacted and devoid of nutrients. Practices that increase tree health extend tree lifespans, expanding their benefits while reducing maintenance and removal costs.

## Request from Public Works

Leaf season will soon begin. To expedite leaf pick-up service, residents are encouraged to consider putting leaves in paper yard bags or designated containers for curbside collection. Unbagged leaves strain stormwater infrastructure and contribute to the enrichment of stormwater with phosphorous and nitrogen, increasing the occurrence of algal blooms and reducing the usability of receiving water bodies. Bagged leaves are more efficient to collect and give the leaf vacuum truck a better opportunity to stay on schedule and service the entire city.



Hate bagging, raking or blowing leaves to the curb? This fall, try leaving them. Fallen leaves are nature's mulch and adding them to garden beds provides many benefits.

### Tips for Leaf Collection and Yard Debris Reminders

- ▶ Don't put leaves in trash or recycling containers.
- ▶ Don't place leaves in the street or in/over storm drains to prevent flooding.
- ▶ For safety and to assist motorists, parents should remind children not to play in leaf piles near the street.
- ▶ To allow the Public Works' trucks access to the leaves, do not park beside a pile of leaves or yard debris ready for pickup.
- ▶ Other yard waste should not be mixed with leaves.
- ▶ Placing rocks, bricks, large limbs, lumber, food waste and other debris in the leaf piles will break the vacuum truck mechanisms and significantly delay leaf collections throughout the city.



## Bring One for The Chipper!

SAT., JAN. 4, 2025

[www.keepgeorgiabeautiful.org](http://www.keepgeorgiabeautiful.org)

Bring One for the Chipper, Georgia's annual Christmas tree recycling program organized by the Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation, is a widespread environmental tradition involving hundreds of communities and thousands of volunteers. Since 1991, more than six million trees have been diverted from landfills and recycled into mulch for playgrounds, public landscaping projects and wildlife habitats.

Stay tuned for details on curbside tree pick-up and drop-off on Saturday, Jan. 4.

THE DECATUR AVONDALE CHILDREN'S CHOIR

will present their  
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# "A SONG OF PEACE"

Sunday, December 8th, 2024 - 5:30 PM  
First Baptist Church of Decatur  
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Admission is FREE

But help support our community choir with donations received the night of the performance



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Emmanuel Pahud  
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Mixing Bowl with Poseidon and Theseus, Greek, 480-470 BCE. Attributed to the Harrow Painter. Terracotta. Harvard Art Museums / Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Cambridge, MA. Bequest of David M. Robinson. Image: © Presidents and Fellows of Harvard College. Drinking Vessel with the Maize God and Other Supernaturals, Maya, 600-700 CE. Ceramic with polychrome slip. Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey. Gift of Stephanie H. Berneheim and Leonard H. Berneheim Jr. in honor of Gillett G. Griffin, 2005-127. Photo by Justin Kerr. Justin Kerr Maya Archive. Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, D.C. Stirrup-Spout Vessel with a Presentation of Shells, Moche, 500-800 CE. Terracotta. Adapted from a photo by Museo Larco, Lima, Peru. MLD13653. Design © 2024 J. Paul Getty Trust

## La Vaughn Belle Come Ruin or Rapture

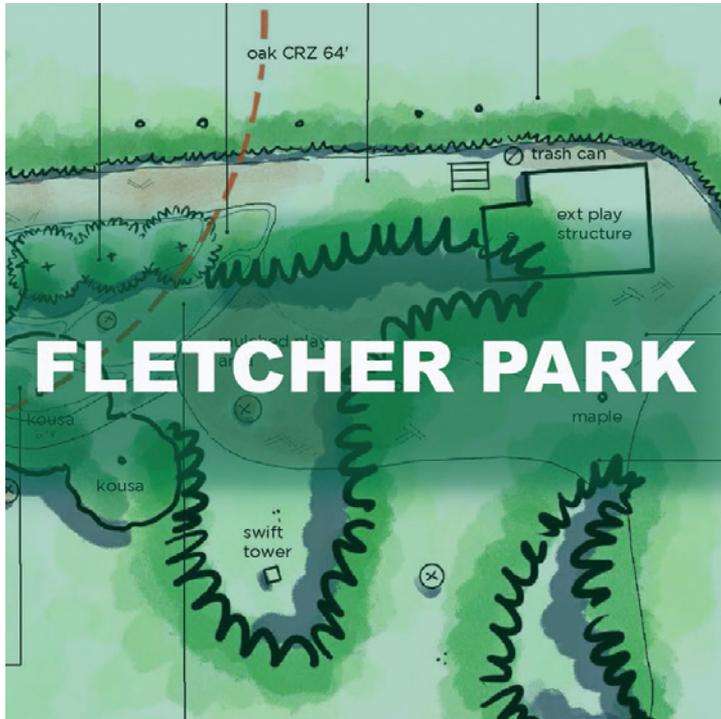
09.19.24-12.08.24

Detail of La Vaughn Belle, Storm (how to imagine the tropicals as monumental-as in when people turn into trees), 2023. Charcoal, ink, acrylic, glitter with cuts and burns on paper mounted on 100% cotton. Image courtesy of the artist.



# News and Updates

## Fletcher Park Design Improvements



The city received a State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities grant totaling \$393,057 from the state of Georgia’s Office of Planning and Budget to improve Fletcher Park. The proposed Fletcher Park Improvement Plan includes recommendations for ADA accessibility, playground expansion, invasive removal, and drainage improvements. Thanks to everyone who joined Avondale Estates city staff at Fletcher Park on Thursday, Oct. 17 to learn about proposed park updates and to those who provided feedback through the online form. The plans are online and are being adjusted from the input.

<https://avondaleestates.org/2511/Fletcher-Park-Improvements>

## Veterans Day – City Hall Closed



City Hall will be closed on Monday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day. Regular hours will resume Tuesday, Nov. 12. Yard waste pickup will be delayed by one day due to the holiday. Sanitation, recycling, and compost collection schedules will not be affected.

Thanks to all who served.

## National Drug Take Back Day



The police collected 42.8 pounds of prescription drugs as part of the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Sat., October. 26. They turned over 161 pounds to the DEA for destruction, including prescription drugs collected at the drop-off box available in the City Hall lobby. Thanks to all who participated in keeping unused prescription drugs out of the wrong hands. Residents may drop off unwanted prescription drugs throughout the year anytime City Hall is open as part of the CVS Pharmacy Take Back program.



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## City Participating in DeKalb County World Planning Day

On Saturday, Nov. 9, the city is participating in World Planning Day with the DeKalb County Planning and Sustainability department, Super District 6 Commissioner Ted Terry, and 20+ other organizations for a day of education, celebration, and action at the family-friendly World Planning Day featuring the DeKalb Green New Deal Festival. Assistant City Manager Shannon Powell

will present a workshop on "Complete Streets with the City of Avondale Estates," and the city's curbside composting pilot program will be featured in a workshop with project partner Jamie Rosenthal of RootsDown.

All are welcome for a day of food trucks, DJs, games, eco-friendly workshops, and inspiring connections centered on community building and environmental justice.



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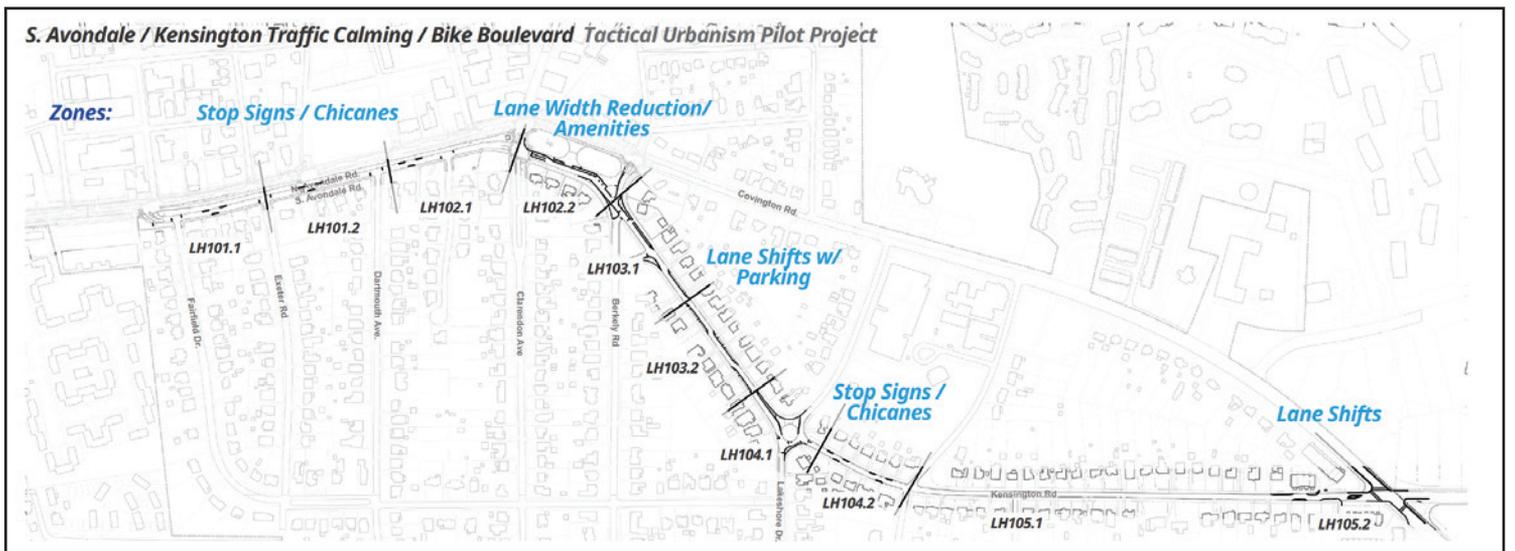
**REGISTRATION IS OPEN**

**World Planning Day**  
-featuring the-  
**DEKALB GREEN NEW DEAL**  
NOVEMBER 9, 2024 **FESTIVAL**

REGISTER NOW AT [bit.ly/wpd-ft-gnd-2024](https://bit.ly/wpd-ft-gnd-2024)

## Traffic Calming Pilot Construction Starting in November

Construction on the neighborhood traffic calming project is scheduled to start in early December and be done before the Christmas holiday, pending weather interruptions. To increase safety, reduce speeds, and deter cut-through traffic in the neighborhoods, the city developed a traffic-calming plan for the neighborhood. Traffic calming measures aim to reduce driving speeds by narrowing a driver's field of vision, prompting them to be more attentive and mindful of their surroundings. The pilot project will target South Avondale Road and Kensington Road using inexpensive materials that can be easily removed. This pilot project will allow the city to test traffic-calming measures in the short term before making a permanent investment or expanding them to other areas of the city if they prove effective. **Scan the QR code to learn more about the project.**



# November 2024

## calendar of events



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
						Avondale Ale Day
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.  Weekend Wind Down Concert featuring Blue Velvet Atlanta 4-7 p.m.		Election Day 7 a.m.-7 p.m.	Board of Mayor and Commissioners Regular Meeting & Work Session 5:30 p.m.			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Veterans Day- City Hall Closed	Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting 5 p.m.				
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.			Board of Mayor and Commissioners Regular Meeting & Work Session 5:30 p.m.			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.				Happy Thanksgiving! City Hall Closed	City Hall Closed in Observance of Thanksgiving	

# December 2024

## calendar of events



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Town Green Tree Lighting					Lake Avondale Tree Lighting 6 p.m.
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.		Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting 5:30 p.m.	Board of Mayor and Commissioners Regular Meeting & Work Session 5:30 p.m.			Winter Wonderland
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Christmas Tour of Homes & Holiday Market Noon-6 p.m.						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.		City Hall Closed in Observance of Christmas	Merry Christmas! City Hall Closed First Night of Chanukah	Kwanzaa Begins		
29	30	31				
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.		New Year's Eve (City Hall Closed Jan. 1, 2025)				



## Thinking back, looking ahead at the Avondale Arts Center

by **Isadora Pennington**  
*President, Avondale Arts Alliance*

Just about nine months ago, we opened the Avondale Arts Center to the public and debuted our first exhibition, *Neighbors & Friends*. In the months since, we have hosted special events, art-making opportunities, workshops, concerts, performances and markets and showcased the works of hundreds of artists on our walls and pedestals.

As this Holiday Season approaches, registered 501(c)(3) nonprofits such as the Avondale Arts Alliance rely heavily on tax-deductible end-of-year donations. If you're someone who appreciates the arts and enjoys what we do at the Avondale Arts Center, please consider supporting us with a financial gift before the end of 2024. You can find a link to our GiveButter account on our website at [www.avondaleartsalliance.com](http://www.avondaleartsalliance.com).

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a huge thank you to the Avondale Arts Alliance board members who give tirelessly of their time and efforts to the cause. I am also so grateful for our team of dedicated



volunteers and all the donors and sponsors who have worked with us over the months. A special shoutout to Cheryl and the Avondale Garden Club who oversee our landscaping at the gallery. We truly couldn't do this without the support and generosity of our community.

The Avondale Arts Alliance is in a period of growth, with many opportunities to continue the Center's evolution into a robust arts facility.

To support our growth, we are seeking professionals in the field to join an advisory board for our organization as well as the expertise of someone with grant-writing experience. Want to teach with us? We are currently seeking teaching artists interested in leading workshops. For more information, email [info@avondaleartsalliance.com](mailto:info@avondaleartsalliance.com).

It is incredible to be able to support our local arts community through this space. We are incredibly thankful for the opportunity to be here in Avondale Estates and excited to see what the future will bring.

# Eat, Shop, Drink, Win!



## Shop Local Throw Down – and the Winner Is....

That's a wrap on the first quarter of the Shop Local Throw Down competition. In the first three months, the team captains received over 1,300 receipts from their team members. Thanks to all who have participated and supported the city's businesses. Construction is challenging and they need your support. Can we double the number of receipts in this quarter?

And now for the big news – congrats to Team 4 and captains Nancy Darden and Lynn Thompson for their first-quarter win. A team party is in the works to celebrate. Count on food and beverages from the city's businesses and a chance to connect with neighbors/teammates.

## FIRST QUARTER STANDINGS

- Team 1 - Malcome Phillips/The Willis = 2
- Team 2 - Shelly Groves = 70
- Team 3 - Josh Norris = 18
- Team 4 - Nancy Darden & Lynn Thompson = 366 - WINNERS
- Team 5 - Erica Sheidler = 79
- Team 6 - Julie Fleming = 123
- Team 7 - Connie Bryans & Dee Merriam = 90
- Team 8 - Cricket Beach = 64
- Team 9 - Ernie Ahlquist = 215
- Team 10 - Liz deGoursac = 215
- Team 11 - Billy Elek = 61
- Team 12 - Elizabeth Standard = 0

**TOTAL OF 1,301 RECEIPTS**

## Small Business Saturday

Make a big impact. Shop Small. Stop by, order online, leave a review, or tell a friend. It all counts. It all matters. Don't forget to stop at the city's business on November 30 for Small Business Saturday. Their doors are open! Shop Small all year long — and support the city's businesses.

# SHOP SMALL<sup>®</sup> WITH US ON NOV 30



# HALLOWEEN SPIRIT AWARDS



**BUSINESS AWARD**

Eclectic Hair Studio at 126 N  
Avondale Road



**MOST CREATIVE AWARD**

Sarah Walker and Ben Bell at 46 Clarendon Avenue



**SPOOKIEST AWARD**

Stewart Hills Cemetery at 101 Clarendon Avenue



**CHILDREN'S APPEAL**

Moving Skeleton Home at 1066 Clarendon Avenue



## Avondale Estates Holiday Spirit Awards

Enter your home in the 2024 Holiday Spirit Awards. Decorate your home or business and enter a photo by Monday, Dec. 9, at 8 p.m. Check the city's website for the link to enter after Thanksgiving.

Voting will occur from Tuesday, Dec. 10, through Monday, Dec. 16. Winners will be announced on Tuesday, Dec. 17.

- ▶ Categories include:
- ▶ Business Award
- ▶ Sparkle & Pizzaz
- ▶ Avondale Elegance
- ▶ Children's Appeal

## 'Tis the Season for Treats, Crafts, Music and Santa

**Winter Wonderland, Saturday, Dec. 14**

The city's businesses are busy planning another festive Winter Wonderland. Mark the calendar for Saturday, Dec. 14 and enjoy live music, crafts, pictures with holiday characters and treats when visiting businesses throughout the city. Check the event's Facebook page in the coming weeks for updates on the participating businesses and planned activities.

Learn more: <https://www.facebook.com/share/18EGJgu1zK/>.



## City's Holiday Tree Lighting at the Town Green

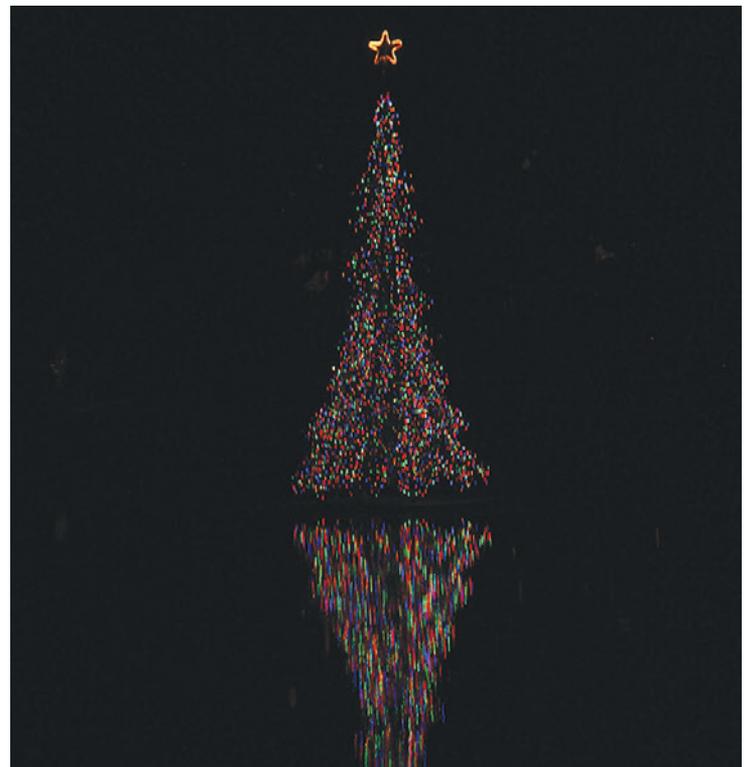
**Monday, Dec. 2, at 6 p.m.**

Don't miss the lighting of the city's holiday tree at the Town Green. The DeKalb School of the Arts' ballerinas will perform dances from the Nutcracker and the Decatur Avondale Children's Choir will lead the audience in a sing-along after their performance. Who knows what other special guests might appear?



## Lake Avondale Tree Lighting

The Avondale Community Club invites you to join neighbors and friends for the Lake Tree Lighting on the banks of beautiful Lake Avondale on Dec. 7 at 6 p.m.



# Avondale Estates Christmas Tour of Homes and Holiday Market

by Margaret Lunsford

Tour of Homes Committee | [avondaletourofhomes.com](http://avondaletourofhomes.com)

The 32nd Annual Christmas Tour of Homes & Holiday Market returns Sunday, Dec. 15. The tour runs from 3 - 8 p.m. Five to six homes representing various styles of architecture are featured on the tour.

While living in Chastain in 2010, Kit and Brad Shipe discovered Avondale Estates when their son attended The Friends School. They bought a 1927 English Cottage on Dartmouth that was originally a two-bedroom/one-bath home before it was “bumped up and out” by the previous owners. The Shipes gave the kitchen a facelift, renovated all the bathrooms, and added a laundry room. Christmas at the Shipes feels the presence of Kit’s mother, Betty, the “Christmas Diva” in her hometown. Their tree holds over 50 years of ornaments, including many of her mother’s needlepoint ornaments.



In 2022, Tyler Weaver and Andrew Kennedy moved into their 1955 brick ranch on Dartmouth Avenue that had been a part of the Lee family for over 70 years. Antique furniture, depression glass, fine china, crystal and silver are just a few of their passions, but nothing compares to their Christmas collection. The duo decorates with family items, some over 130 years old, and things picked up at estate sales, thrift stores and even items found on the side of the road. Perhaps the most unique feature is the backyard “secret garden” where lights and figurines create a Winter Wonderland covering the lot.

Sharon and Bob Wess lived at 56 Clarendon for 25 years. After Sharon was diagnosed with cancer, they moved to a single-story ranch home on Hess Drive that reminded Sharon of her childhood home. They updated the



home with new appliances, a kitchen backsplash, hardwood floors, new doors and windows and over 70 lights. Sharon lost her battle with cancer seven months later in 2022. This year, Bob is honoring Sharon’s memory with the help of several of her friends as he showcases their home for Christmas.

Amie and Dan Waltzer purchased their 1965 Colonial and moved from Kirkwood six years ago. They have remodeled the entire house, turning the garage into a living room and mud room, changing the kitchen into a separate dining area with a new island and appliances, and converting the fourth bedroom into an office.

Their final addition was the new front porch completed this year. Art by French Canadian artist Raphaelle Seguin is featured throughout. As a Jewish family, they celebrate the Christmas and holiday spirit, as well as Hanukkah with lights, candles, and holiday décor.

Sarah and Steven Hecht found their new home on Ohm Avenue the day they decided they were “outgrowing” their home in Forrest Hills. Moving to a two-year-old farmhouse in 2021, they added personal touches, including works by Atlanta artists and a landscaped backyard. They treasure the mural along the upstairs hall painted by Atlanta artist Christina Kwan, created as a montage of pictures from a book Sarah’s grandmother read to her as a child. The Hechts’ home is decorated with a winter theme, including a Menorah and stockings, as they celebrate Hanukkah and Christmas.

In addition to the featured homes, the city will be “lit up” along every street. Block captains will be encouraging all our residents to “Light Up Avondale” including the trees on the verge.

## The Avondale Holiday Market Returns

The Avondale Holiday Market is Sunday, Dec. 15 from noon to 6 p.m. at the Avondale Lake House.

This year’s market includes old favorites including hand-knitted scarves, chocolates, honey, jewelry, photography, bird feeders, smoked salmon, jams, Grits Bits and ornaments. Support the market vendors and finish Christmas shopping with one-of-a-kind gifts. Enjoy soup and sandwiches at the Holiday Market Café.

The Book Bird will host Avondale authors Kathy Trocheck (aka Mary Kay

Andrews) from noon to 3 p.m. and Samantha Jayne Allen from 3-6 p.m. The authors will sell and sign their books.

Purchase pre-sale tour tickets at Finders Keepers Consignment, Garage Door Studio and Intown Ace Hardware for \$20, online at [bigtickets.com](http://bigtickets.com) or at the Avondale Lake House for \$25.

Let’s celebrate the end 2024 in Avondale Estates with light and hope for a New Year!

# AVONDALE ESTATES 2024 CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES & Holiday Market

## PLATINUM SPONSORS

- AS Turner & Sons
- Dearborn Animal Hospital
- ECO Gardens
- Homegrown Team-Leigh Lynch
- Santo Cantina & Cochina, Calle Latina & BaddaBing

## GOLD SPONSORS

- Avondale Pharmacy
- Avondale Swim & Tennis
- Carol Reimer - Alma Fuller Realty
- Coyote's Mexican Grill
- BigTickets.com
- Finders Keepers Consignment
- Galette Atlanta
- IN Bloom
- Jen Newman Homes
- Kudzu Antiques
- Libby and Rob Morris

## SILVER SPONSORS

- Ace & A Heating & Air
- Arborguard
- City of Avondale Estates
- Avondale Pizza Café
- Brittany Meyer, DMD – Greater Decatur Dental
- Dee and Tom Merriam
- Emily Sanders Real Estate
- Ernie Ahlquist and Faye Noble
- Jax Package
- Jollay Masonry
- Kathy and Tom Delaney
- Lindsay Forlines
- Summit Auto
- Susan Robertson Hawkins, Realtor-Keller Williams
- The Stratford
- Wanda and Louis Belline
- Wild Heaven Beer

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024

Tour 3:00 – 8:00  
Holiday Market Noon -6:00

## \* FEATURED HOMES \*

- 84 Dartmouth Avenue
- 97 Dartmouth Avenue
- 1018 Hess Drive
- 1057 Hess Drive
- 255 Ohm Avenue



## ★ TICKET INFORMATION ★

Pre-Sale Tickets \$20.00  
BigTickets.com \$25.00 on day of the Tour

Purchase Advance Tickets At:

- Ace Intown Hardware
- Finders Keepers Furnishings
- Garage Door Studio

Visit our web site: [avondaletourofhomes.com](http://avondaletourofhomes.com)

## ANGELS

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Avon Garden Club                   | Jill Joyner                        |
| Avondale Estates Garden Club       | Theresa & David Kazanowski         |
| Jake, Penny & Linda Abraham        | Christine Kempton & Don Harvey     |
| Carolyn Adams                      | Chris Kiefer                       |
| Leslie Adcock                      | Jean Kingsbury                     |
| Donna & Bobby Alion                | Kathy & Chris Kingsbury            |
| Tara & John Ashbaugh               | Claire & Richard Langway           |
| Kathy & Bruce Barlag               | Margaret & Andrew LaRocco          |
| Michael Barlow and Lynette Barclay | Joan Lass & Sarah Zimny            |
| Susan Barton                       | Karen Liebert & Doug Porter        |
| Adam Barton & Scott Legg           | Kathleen & Edwin Link              |
| Martha Barton & Wally Emerson      | Margaret & Clark Lunsford          |
| Heather & Brian Beaubien           | Dave Maddox                        |
| Faye & Bob Boyd                    | Diane Mahaffey                     |
| Lynn Boyd & Harry Vann             | Angela & Ramon Maldonado           |
| Cathy Brackett                     | Sally & Mick Mann                  |
| Melitta & George Brandt            | Julie Martinez                     |
| Ianna and John Briggs              | Martha & Norm McDermott            |
| Connie Bryans                      | Bev & Ed McElroy                   |
| Lydia & Blake Buckler              | Donna & Eddie McHenry              |
| Peggy & Bob Burgess                | Christine McMahan & Larry Zagorski |
| Patricia & Anthony Calcagno        | Carol Meeks                        |
| Annie & Jeff Campbell              | Shannon Meeks & Rob Huffstedtler   |
| Susan Carney & Bob Wenger          | Megan Mahoney                      |
| Bonnie Chafin                      | Charlotte & John Merritt           |
| Carolyn Chandler & Mary Bell       | Susan Merritt                      |
| Amy Ciba                           | Sarah & Matt Miller                |
| Barbara & Bill Clark               | Larry & Kathleen Minnix            |
| Eden & Johnathan Clark             | Elaine & John Mizell               |
| Laura & Tom Clegg                  | Molly Mobley                       |
| Linda & Don Coatsworth             | Cathy Moody & Camille Rasheed      |
| Jessica & Baylor Coffman           | Anne & Kevin Moran                 |
| Joy Cole                           | Frank Mullins & Dennis Washack     |
| Mike & Jane Cole Chase             | Nora Munagian & Mark Norton        |
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| Jane & Jim Darnell                 | Alice Murray                       |
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| Bill Elek                          | Judy Pitts                         |
| Vickie Figiel                      | Diane & John Pomberg               |
| Emily Fish & Dustin Ducoite        | Emily Pritchett                    |
| Donna & Doug Fortenberry           | Kerry & John Quinn                 |
| Lucy & David Fowler                | Susan Williams-Rogers              |
| Mary & Julie Galpin                | John Robinson                      |
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| Rachel & William Highsmith         | Deborah Timberlake                 |
| Jennifer Hill                      | Pat & Bob Timm                     |
| Robin Hollis & Art Rosser          | The Titak Family                   |
| Karen Holmes                       | Jennifer Topinka & Stacie Bearden  |
| Peggy Howard                       | Ellen & Joel Tressler              |
| Katherine & Brent Hudspeth         | Kathy & Tom Trocheck               |
| Robin & Chris Hughes               | Paul Varian                        |
| Beth Jackson-Jordan & David Jordan | Camilla & Hugh Warren              |
| Cheri & Jim Hutchens               | Darleen & Tom Watson               |
| Bruce Johnston                     | Susan Woodall                      |
| David Jones and Oscar Ramos        | Peg Wyse                           |



## Second Annual Blessing Baskets this Thanksgiving

Last year's Blessing Baskets event was a huge success. Thanks to the support of the community, 49 local families had a holiday meal on their table.

Thanksgiving can be a stressful holiday for families experiencing food insecurity. Help make this holiday a lot brighter for local families in need. This year, Avondale Elementary, The Museum School and Our House, a local nonprofit supporting families transitioning from homelessness to self-sufficiency, will deliver donated Thanksgiving baskets to their families in need.

Bring completed baskets to the Happy Hour Drop-off on Tuesday, Nov. 19 at The Lost Druid, 2866 Washington St., from 4:30-7:00p.m.

The Lost Druid will provide two complimentary drink tickets (up to a \$14 value) for each basket donated. Drop off your baskets and stay to enjoy drinks, dinner and conversation with friends and neighbors in support of the local community.

Registration is required. Register online at [bit.ly/AEBB2024](http://bit.ly/AEBB2024).

Blessing Baskets for Avondale is generously hosted by two local, women-owned businesses - Susan Robertson Hawkins, Realtor® | MBA, Keller Williams Realty Metro Atlanta, and The Lost Druid Brewery & Distillery.



## BLESSING BASKETS

**BENEFITTING FAMILIES FROM  
AVONDALE ELEMENTARY  
THE MUSEUM SCHOOL  
AND  
OUR HOUSE**

## Pancake Breakfast & Boutique Kick Off the Holidays

**Saturday, Nov. 16, 8-11 a.m.**

Kick off the holiday season with friends and neighbors at an old-fashioned pancake and sausage breakfast. Enjoy great food, shopping and comradery at the Avon Garden Club's Annual Pancake Breakfast & Boutique at the Avondale Community Club's Lake House, 59 Lakeshore Dr. The garden club has sponsored this much-loved community event for 40 years. One of the most attended events in the city, folks join their neighbors to celebrate the neighborhood, fellow residents, and the beginning of the holiday season.

Breakfast includes pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee. Tickets can be purchased from any Avon Garden Club member or at the door.

A Boutique Sale of gently used items, including everything from gardening goods to decorative items, will take place during the breakfast. Plan to purchase delicious, homemade goodies, both savory and sweet, for gifts and upcoming holiday parties.

Tickets can be purchased from Avon Garden Club members or at the door.

Ticket prices:

Adults: \$8

Children (ages 4-10): \$6

Children under 3: Free



This much-loved tradition raises funds to support the club's community projects, including planting the downtown planters and traffic circle, making and placing wreaths throughout the city and sponsoring the day after Halloween clean-up.

## Get Avondale Items from the Avondale Woman's Club

The Avondale Woman's Club (AWC) is offering custom-designed items to support local charities.

- ▶ Four Seasons Garden Flags: Add a splash of seasonal color to your yard with limited-edition garden flags, complete with a sturdy stand. Available on the AWC website for \$81 per pack of four.



- ▶ Vintage Historic Avondale Notecards: Capture the charm of Avondale with custom-designed vintage notecards in two sizes and designs. Available online at \$8 for a pack of 5 notecards and envelopes, or 2 packs for \$15.



- ▶ Handmade Pet Bandanas: Show off your pet's style with reversible bandanas, available in three sizes. Purchase in person at AWC meetings. Prices: Small \$15, Medium \$18, Large \$20.



### HOW TO PURCHASE

Flags and notecards are available at <https://www.avondalewomensclub.net/>. Pet bandanas can be purchased at the AWC meeting on Thursday, Nov. 21, at 11 a.m. at the American Legion, Covington Highway. The November AWC meeting theme, "Strengthen Your Funny Bone," will feature improvised storytelling led by Cynthia Millhorn, Artistic Director at Appalachian Moon Studio. For more information, email Diane Pomberg at [dphandworks@gmail.com](mailto:dphandworks@gmail.com).

Interested in joining the AWC? RSVP to Roxane Conticello at [roxane.conticello@gmail.com](mailto:roxane.conticello@gmail.com).

## AE Parents' Co-op Events and Holiday Party

**Save the Date – Dec. 14 Holiday Party** at the Lake House at Avondale Estates with FREE Santa pictures

Stay tuned on the group's Facebook page for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AvondaleEstatesParentsCoop/>

The Avondale Estates Parents' Co-op invites families to learn more about their upcoming activities.

- ▶ Willis Park Play-dates: Last Saturdays of the month, 3-5 p.m., Nov.30 and Dec. 28
- ▶ Stroller Walks around Avondale Lake: First Saturdays of the month, 10:30-11:30 a.m. on Nov 2 and Dec. 7



## It's Fall Y'all - Decorate and Win!

In Avondale, fall is in the air when the charming, tree-lined streets show their rich shades of yellows, oranges and reds. Add a few pumpkins and other fall decor to your entrance or front yard to have a chance of winning the Avondale Fall Decor Contest! \*

Anyone living in the 30002-zip code is eligible to participate. Fall decor must be displayed by Nov. 18. Winners will be announced on Nov. 22. Gift card prizes from local Avondale businesses will be awarded to first, second and third place winners.

Registration is required: [bit.ly/AEFallDecor2024](http://bit.ly/AEFallDecor2024).

Let's continue to build community and display what a wonderful place Avondale is to call home!

Fall Decor Contest brought to you by Susan Robertson Hawkins, Realtor® | MBA, with Keller Williams Realty Metro Atlanta.

\*Not affiliated with the city's Halloween decoration contest.

## Avon Garden Club Garden of the Month



**September:** 71 Dartmouth Avenue, home of Kathy and Tom Trocheck



**October:** 18 Lakeshore Drive, home of David Jones and Oscar Ramos

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## Avondale Estates Garden Club Yard of the Month

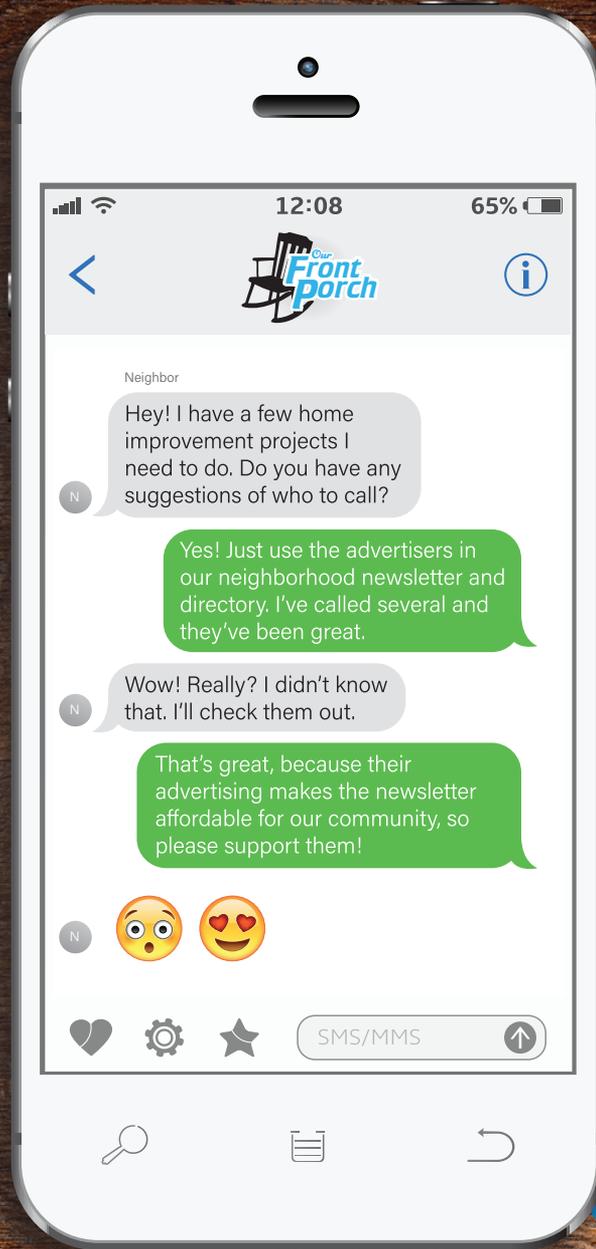


**September:** 3 Lakeview Place, home of Linda and Don Coatsworth



**October:** 1051 Lakeshore Drive, home of Alan and Camille Harvey





MORE COLOR,  
MORE CONTENT,  
DIGITAL EDITIONS  
TOO!

# SUPPORT YOUR SPONSORS!

## DID YOU KNOW...

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5875 Peachtree Industrial Blvd #160, Norcross, GA 30092 | 770.623.6220 | [www.ourfontporch.net](http://www.ourfontporch.net)

# Sponsors eager for your business!

The following are sponsors\* in other community newsletters, published by Our Front Porch. **BOLD LISTINGS** have an advertisement in this publication. (\*Included sponsors have met purchase criteria.)

AE78N | TA

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Home Clean Heroes of Atlanta North .....	770-554-2224
House Cleaning Specialist, Inc .....	770-975-4995
<b>Concrete Repair</b>	
Advance Concrete Lifting & Leveling .....	678-208-3426
<b>Consignment</b>	
Finders Keepers .....	404-377-1944
Uptown Cheapskate-Cumming .....	770-844-7600
Uptown Cheapskate-East Cobb .....	770-999-1967
<b>Decks</b>	
Painting Plus - Decks .....	404-973-2541
<b>Dentist</b>	
Acworth Dental .....	770-974-4146
BridgeMill Dentistry (Scott Merritt, DMD) .....	770-704-1812
Esthetic Dental Solutions .....	678-352-1333
Family Dentistry at Seven Hills .....	678-574-4837
Roswell Dental Care .....	770-998-6736
Swords & Phelps Dentistry .....	770-479-3713
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Park Avenue Entries .....	770-622-0554
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Advance Concrete - Driveway Repair .....	678-208-3426
<b>Electrical Service</b>	
Arc Angel Electric Corp .....	470-239-5568
M.J. Power .....	470-617-3700
Shumate Electrical Services .....	678-584-0880
<b>Entertainment</b>	
History Cherokee .....	770-345-3288
<b>Financial Planning</b>	
Thrivent Financial-Houck .....	470-817-5050
<b>Fitness Centers</b>	
Body Bar Pilates .....	678-336-2377
<b>Flooring</b>	
All Floors Center .....	404-610-9344
<b>Furniture &amp; Accessories</b>	
Palm Casual .....	770-779-8902
<b>Garbage &amp; Recycling Service</b>	
The Bin Brigade .....	404-913-5033
<b>Golf Equipment &amp; Supplies</b>	
Golf Cars of Canton .....	678-880-1156
<b>Gutters</b>	
Painting Plus - Gutters .....	404-973-2541
<b>Handyman</b>	
Happy Handyman LLC .....	770-685-8421
Shumate Handyman Services .....	678-584-0880
<b>Home Builder</b>	
Stonecrest Works .....	770-823-7892
<b>Home Furnishings</b>	
ARIANA Home Furnishings & Design .....	678-807-7422
<b>Hospital</b>	
Northeast Georgia Medical Center .....	770-214-4492
<b>Insurance</b>	
Allstate Insurance Nancy Wells .....	404-452-5066
The Upton Agency .....	770-361-6570
<b>Medical Clinic</b>	
Prestige Medical Group .....	706-692-9768
<b>Nursery</b>	
Autumn Hill Nursery .....	770-442-3901
Beech Hollow Wildflower Farm .....	404-277-4726
<b>Painting</b>	
Chris Brown Painting & Home Repair .....	770-323-3148
Earthly Matters Painting and Contracting .....	770-346-0203
Painting Plus .....	404-973-2541
Verge Painting and Siding .....	678-331-1102
<b>Performing Arts</b>	
<b>Schwartz Center For Performing Arts</b> .....	404-727-8769
<b>Pest Control</b>	
Legacy Pest Control .....	770-423-0160
<b>Plumbing</b>	
Bryan Plumbing Services .....	770-826-5277
Greenlee Plumbing .....	678-386-7513
Rooter Pro Plumbing GA .....	470-600-5146
Shumate Plumbing Services .....	678-584-0880
<b>Pre-Schools &amp; Kindergarten</b>	
Omega Learning Center-Acworth .....	770-792-7431
<b>Propane Service</b>	
Gas Incorporated .....	770-720-1378
<b>Real Estate</b>	
Atlanta Communities-Carl Hawthorne .....	404-403-1789
Atlanta Communities-Elizabeth Martin .....	678-373-9342
Atlanta Communities-Jennifer and Associates .....	770-403-5639
Compass Realty-Natalie Gregory Team .....	404-373-0076
Cory & Co. Realty .....	404-564-5561
Georgia Real Estate Depot-Nix .....	770-401-4932
Harry Norman Realtors-Pam Hughes .....	404-626-3604
JW Collection Brokers LLC-Oslund .....	678-672-2878
Keller Williams-Gloria Williams .....	678-780-7556
Keller Williams-Linda Jacobs .....	770-337-2006
Orchard Realty-Schmidt and Pala .....	678-677-2738
ReMax-Bailey .....	678-535-8979
Robin Martin and Associates .....	678-665-0202
<b>Remodeling</b>	
Diversified Contracting Group .....	770-329-9112
GCI Basements .....	404-569-8794
Victoria Renovations .....	678-429-3108
<b>Restaurants</b>	
Cactus Cantina .....	470-207-8341
Kaldi's Coffee .....	404-727-0405
Luna Maya .....	770-720-4999
<b>Roofing</b>	
Atlanta Roofing Specialists .....	770-419-2222
Certified Quality Roofing .....	470-326-7663
Earthly Matters Painting and Contracting .....	770-346-0203
<b>Schools-Private</b>	
Atlanta Academy .....	678-461-6102
McGinnis Woods Country Day School .....	770-664-7764
The Friends School of Atlanta .....	404-373-8746
<b>Security Systems</b>	
Classic Entry Systems .....	678-330-1111
<b>Siding</b>	
Painting Plus - Siding .....	404-973-2541
<b>Skin Care</b>	
dermani MEDSPA - East Cobb (Marietta) .....	678-909-1735
<b>Tutoring</b>	
The Brain Station .....	678-401-3596
<b>Veterinarians</b>	
Flowery Branch Pet Wellness Center .....	678-960-3060
<b>Window Replacement</b>	
America's Best Choice .....	678-896-8688
Davis Window & Door .....	678-379-1629
EntryPoint Doors & Windows .....	770-904-0094
North Georgia Replacement Windows, Inc. ....	770-888-1604
Visionaire Windows .....	404-543-9306



Wishing you all a  
Happy Thanksgiving!



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# grateful

## 2024 Events

**NOVEMBER 2**  
Avondale "Ale" Day

**NOVEMBER 11**  
Veterans Day  
Thank a Veteran Today

**NOVEMBER 14**  
Pickle Day  
(Jen loves pickles!)

**NOVEMBER 28**  
Thanksgiving

**NOVEMBER 30**  
Small Business Saturday  
(Support AE small Biz!)

**DECEMBER 3**  
"Giving" Tuesday

**DECEMBER 15**  
Avondale Tour of Homes

**DECEMBER 20**  
Ugly Sweater Day

**DECEMBER 25**  
Christmas

**DECEMBER 26**  
First Night of Hanukkah

I am grateful for my family & friends and all of my blessings. I am especially grateful that I get to wake up each day in Avondale Estates! **Thank you for being wonderful neighbors, friends, and clients!** We have so much to be thankful for!

*what are YOU grateful for?*



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