

# NEWS FROM CITY HALL

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF AVONDALE ESTATES · AVONDALE ESTATES, GEORGIA  
NEWSLETTER 400

September - October 2025

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SHAKESPEARE ON THE TOWN GREEN



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AVONDALE ALE DAY



24

HALLOWEEN



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Cover Photo: Ellen Powell



Let's dance! Hispanic Heritage Month returns on September 14 at the Weekend Wind Down Concert with salsa lessons and the C.O.T. Band.

See pg. 20 Photo credit: Hector Almador

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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

## City's Financial Accolades Tell a Bigger Story

The city recently got great news from our independent auditor, Mauldin & Jenkins. After a comprehensive review of our books, the auditor issued a “clean” opinion with no modifications to our financial recordkeeping.

In layman’s terms, that means the city’s books are managed cleanly and effectively, and that there’s no need for an outside agency to make any changes to them. The opinion demonstrates that we have established strong financial controls to ensure against improper financial management.

You can add the audit opinion to a growing list of financial accolades for the city. Not long ago, Avondale Estates received exceptional credit ratings from Moody’s and Standard & Poor’s, who cited the city’s strong economic outlook, sound budget management and financial policies among the reasons for these prestigious ratings.

Taken together, these independent reviews show that the Board of Mayor and Commissioners (BOMC) and city staff are acting financially responsibly and wisely spending taxpayer money. They also show that the city is in good financial shape and comfortably able to take on debt to finance capital projects like the transformation of our historic Main Street. The ratings from Moody’s and Standard & Poor’s help even more because they put the city in a top tier that provides the opportunity to finance projects at lower interest rates.

## Prioritizing Our Infrastructure

Let me tell you, these capital projects were sorely needed. Due to years of neglect, the city’s infrastructure—including our roads, curbs, sidewalks and stormwater removal system—required a lot of work. This could have been disastrous, but the current board and staff have been fiscally responsible enough to prioritize this work and ensure the city has a healthy amount of

resources to dedicate to capital projects so that we don’t fall further behind with crumbling infrastructure.

Even with all of this ongoing work, our millage rate has stayed the same and remains low compared to other cities of similar size and service levels. And, throughout the process of bringing these projects to life and making other important decisions, you have had the opportunity to participate in those discussions.

Want the latest on the North Avondale Complete Street project? Have questions for the auditor? Concerned about access to Willis Park or confused about a line item in the city budget? Then please attend our biweekly board meetings, where you get an in-person glimpse into transparent government and access to your elected officials.

## Your Chance to Participate

Residents can attend the regular BOMC meetings and work sessions—which were expanded from once a month to twice monthly to provide even greater transparency—in person or via a Zoom internet livestream. We also hold regular open houses on projects of significant public interest and importance so that residents can engage in free-flowing conversations with their elected officials.

Can’t make it to a meeting? That’s okay because our availability and transparency don’t end there. Board members and staff are available by email and phone, with our information posted on the Avondale Estates website. Or swing by City Hall, where helpful staff will direct you to the appropriate department so that your questions can be answered quickly and correctly.

With the development of the 2026 budget set to begin in October, there’s no better time for you to come to city meetings, learn more about the city’s financial position, and have a say in the budget process.

I encourage you to participate as the BOMC, in concert with city staff, thoughtfully and carefully develops a spending plan for Avondale Estates and determines how your tax dollars will be spent. I hope to see you at a meeting soon!

# Stay Involved

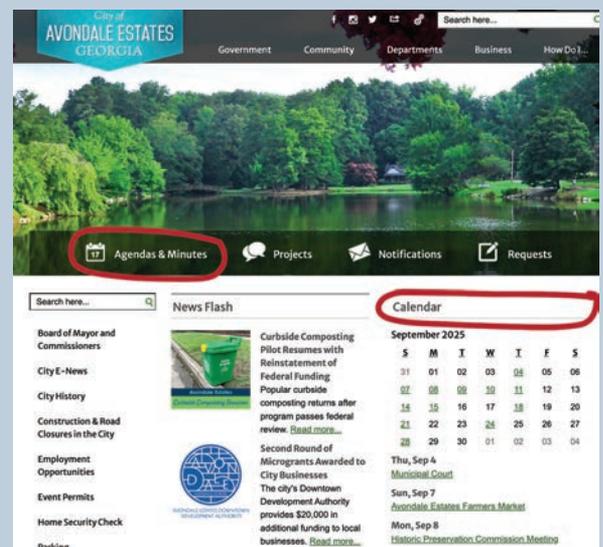
Can't attend a Board of Mayor and Commissioners or other public meeting? Stay up-to-date on the topics discussed through the Agenda Center on the City's website, where you'll find the minutes, an audio recording, and downloads of the agendas and packet material. Click on "Agendas & Minutes" on the City's homepage. Please note that minutes will be posted after approval in subsequent meetings.

Know when meetings and events occur by looking at the city's calendar on the website's homepage.

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# Exciting Mix of Businesses Set to Open in The Dale

by Helena Oliviero

Residents and visitors will soon be able to dine at new restaurants, enjoy a scoop of award-winning gelato, peruse a bookstore, sip a cocktail from a rooftop bar, and so much more at The Dale in Avondale Estates overlooking the picturesque Town Green.

The mix of offerings at Avondale Estate’s new commercial buildings anchoring the Town Green is coming into focus as the businesses customize spaces along the city’s main thoroughfare.

The exciting mix of food destinations includes Italian and Tex-Mex restaurants, a rooftop bar and a renowned gelato shop that crafts sweet creations with innovative flavors (think banana pudding and lemon coconut cake) using traditional Italian techniques. A beloved local bookstore will also move into its new space, along with a modern dental office.

The city’s Town Green has quickly evolved into a vibrant community hub, complete with an open-air pavilion, performance stage, a children’s play area, and expansive green space. This latest development builds on the lively community spot and takes advantage of the dynamic and thoughtfully designed space. Plus, the buildings will include restroom facilities available to the public during the Town Green’s operating hours.

The development team, Healey Weatherholtz Properties and Fabric Developers, designed The Dale to complement the greenspace. Years of planning and collaboration through a public-private partnership between the city, the Avondale Estates Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and the



Patrons will enjoy an unmatched view of the Town Green from the second-floor patio of Bar Top when it opens this winter.

development team have resulted in a community-oriented space designed to align with the city’s Downtown Master Plan to build a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly downtown.

“We designed The Dale as a destination to serve the Avondale Estates community,” said Coleman Weatherholtz with Healey Weatherholtz Properties. “From the start, the vision has been to create a true extension of the neighborhood—a place where restaurants, shops and businesses work alongside the Town Green.

“We’re thrilled to see The Dale come to life, bringing shops, dining and services right to our beloved Town Green. The

DDA invested in the Town Green to attract downtown development that would not only benefit residents and draw new businesses but also boost existing businesses by increasing downtown visitors. This growth helps create a healthier balance in the city’s tax base, with the commercial district contributing more overall,” said Dave Deiters, chair of the DDA.

“It’s amazing to see the vision we’ve worked so hard on over many years coming to life,” added Mayor Jonathan Elmore. “The new development symbolizes progress with a purpose. This development serves as a testament to our dedication to smart growth as we continue to work to build a dynamic and inclusive downtown.”

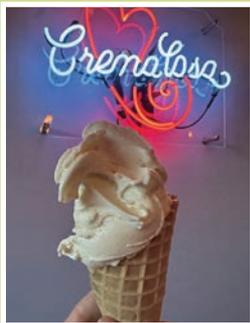
Cremalosa Gelato is set to open in this fall, making it the first business to launch at The Dale. Additional establishments will soon follow, with opening dates projected for later this year and early next year.

## Here’s a closer look at the businesses coming to The Dale.

### Anticipated Opening: Fall of 2025

#### CREMALOSA GELATO

Owned by Meridith Ford, an acclaimed pastry chef and local food writer, Cremalosa opened in February 2020, a mile away on E. College Ave in Decatur, on the pla-



za level of the Cortland Decatur East apartment. Known for its handmade gelato and sorbetto, its seasonal menu features traditional Italian flavors (Mediterranean Pistachio, Piedmont Hazelnut, Tiramisu) as well as flavors inspired by Ford’s personal background of Southern desserts and American treats (Sweet Potato Pie, Malted Milk Ball).

It’s a go-to spot for ice cream lovers, with multiple awards, from “Best of Atlanta” in Atlanta magazine to “Best Ice Cream in Georgia” from Food & Wine magazine.

“I’m so excited to be moving to a larger, more visible location,” Ford said, “and I can’t wait to see again all the families we’ve served over the years, once we reopen.”

The new, larger location will offer more indoor and outdoor seating, as well as a new dessert case featuring various treats, including traditional tiramisu, Boston Cream Cupcakes, Chess Bars, and Dubai Chocolate Mousse. Ford will also feature a seasonal spritz bar with Aperol, Hugo and Limoncello as mainstays, and seasonal spritzes with house-made syrups, beginning with a Pomegranate Spritz this fall.

## Anticipated Openings: Late 2025/Early 2026.

### GREEN COYOTE



Expect bold Tex-Mex flavor with fresh ingredients and plenty of Southwest flair at this first-floor restaurant. It's the kind of place where the salsa and guacamole keep coming, the margaritas stay cold, and the vibe will invite you to stick around awhile. Menu highlights include a rotating lineup of tacos from chicken tinga and fried chicken to veggie, shrimp, and a Korean cowboy taco that keeps things fun. Margaritas will be made with house-pressed juices from Persian limes and tangy oranges, balanced with organic agave nectar. They'll also be available in skinny and seasonal varieties, offering fresh takes on a classic.

### PARMA TAVERN



Enjoy a refined neighborhood gathering place for Italian-inspired comfort food in a no-fuss atmosphere. The menu draws from Italian tavern classics, with pizzas crisped in a 600-degree brick oven, fresh pasta tossed in scratch-made sauces, juicy house-ground burgers, and plenty of small plates to share.

Both restaurants are also prioritizing to-go ordering to make it easier for busy families to order and pick up meals.

### BAR TOP



A rooftop bar above Parma, Bar Top features a spacious covered patio overlooking the Town Green. Inside, a cozy bar complements the outdoor setting, while a fireplace and private event space create a welcoming backdrop. The menu features classic cocktails, delicious mocktails, and light bites, along with a wide selection of local draft and bottled beers, and curated wines.

The three establishments will be operated by MooCoo Group, an Atlanta-based company owned by industry veterans Rob Caswick and Jeff Newsham.

### THE BOOK BIRD

This cozy independent bookstore in Avondale Estates will soon relocate to an expanded space in The Dale. Known for offering an array of books, including a special section reserved for local authors, the owners created an inviting space with comfy seating areas.

Originally opened in 2023, the bookstore holds a variety of events, including book clubs, thematic events (like a Halloween event on the psychology of being scared) and a "Not Your Mother's Menopause Talk," as well as open mic poetry.

They also host several book clubs, including ones focused on non-fiction, fantasy, romance, and one that reads banned books. They even have a Cookbook Club, which partners with Vivian Lee, local chef and owner of Leftie Lee's.

Co-owners of the bookstore, Avondale residents Brittany Smith and Amie Waltzer emphasize The Book Bird is always about connection—through stories, conversations and community.

"Reading gives us this sense of empathy and self and world awareness that things like social media can whittle away at," said Waltzer. "Like we tell our kids, the store is named The Book Bird because reading allows us to spread our wings and take flight on the adventures books offer."

Smith also stressed that The Book Bird is a "space for anyone and everyone." She said she and Waltzer are deeply committed to curating programming centered around books, authors and stories that create meaningful conversations and real connections.

"We see our move into The Dale as an opportunity to broaden our impact, allowing us to cater to a wider audience where folks can shop, grab a light bite or drink, and engage in some of our book and story-related events that create experiences that are outside the box," said Smith.

### BIRDI DENTAL

A modern dental practice with a patient-first approach, Dr. Jalpa Birdi's new location on the upper level of the Dale will offer comprehensive dental services in a calming, contemporary setting.

"I want to be a space that centers around the patient from the very first phone call," said Birdi. "I want to support people who feel anxious about dentistry. No rushing, no judgement, no stress, just personalized care, with a bit of British humor in there."

Birdi completed her undergraduate studies at Queen Mary University of London, England, graduating with a bachelor's degree in biochemistry. She then earned a master's degree in biology from Georgia State University and a Doctor of Dental Medicine degree from the Medical College of Georgia.

Her practice focuses on delivering excellence in dental care and educating patients about their scope of treatment options. She is an avid student of her profession with continuing education courses on implant placement, cosmetic dentistry and conscious sedation.

She is also committed to serving those without adequate access to dental care, having served on annual "Give a Smile Days" a national initiative that provides free oral health care, education and preventive treatments to underserved children, and the Georgia War Veterans "Dentist for Della" project. She also volunteers with The Special Olympics, providing free dental care to athletes.



Book Bird owners Brittany Smith (left) and Amie Waltzer



# North Avondale Complete Street Project Update

## Big Progress Made with More Exciting Milestones Ahead

by Helena Oliviero

The extensive North Avondale Complete Street Project is moving full steam ahead. The project spans from Sams Crossing to Ashton Place and includes a landscape buffer, a center median, new pedestrian/bike crossings and a lane reduction from five to three. This major undertaking also includes road repaving and restriping, as well as the replacement and upgrading of traffic signals.

“The North Avondale Complete Street Project is more than just an infrastructure upgrade. It’s a powerful step toward building a more connected, walkable and bikeable community,” said Mayor Jonathan Elmore.

Several foundational improvements are now complete, and some of the most visible, community-enhancing upgrades, including lush landscaping along the corridor and new traffic lights, are just around the corner.

The project is nearing the final stretch and it’s going to be transformational.

“With this project, we’re fostering an environment where local businesses can thrive, residents can engage more fully with their neighborhood, and people of all ages can move freely and confidently through the heart of our city,” said Dave Deiters, chair of the Avondale Estates Downtown Development Authority.

Stay tuned — the best is yet to come!

### Here’s an update on where things stand:

#### **Underground Infrastructure: Complete**

- ▶ Stormwater pipe installation and underground utility relocations are now finished throughout the entire corridor.
- ▶ These critical upgrades significantly reduce flooding, eliminate water ponding,
- ▶ and allow stormwater to drain more efficiently from the roadway.



#### **Lighting and Traffic Signals: Taking Shape**

- ▶ Traffic signals and streetlight wiring are well underway.
- ▶ Most concrete bases for streetlights have been installed throughout the corridor.
- ▶ Full installation of all pedestrian and overhead traffic lights is expected in October and November – a major visual milestone for the project.

#### **Pedestrian and Pathway: Progress**

- ▶ Sidewalks and curbs on the south side of the corridor are now complete.
- ▶ 80% of the multi-use paths and curbs on the north side are also complete.
- ▶ The remaining section from Olive Street to Hillyer Avenue is on track to be completed by the end of September.

#### **Landscaping: Coming Soon**

- ▶ Landscaping installation is scheduled for October and November and will include trees, shrubs, mulch, ground cover and ornamental grasses.
- ▶ These elements will add vibrant greenery and a polished finish to the corridor.

#### **Plaza Pavers with Historic Character: Progress**

- ▶ Attractive pavers inspired by the area’s distinctive Tudor architecture have been installed in key plaza areas.
- ▶ Additional pavers will be placed at key pedestrian crossings.



#### **Final Roadwork and Safety Upgrades**

- ▶ Milling and paving will begin once DeKalb County completes the main water replacement and temperatures cool and are suitable for paving.
- ▶ Landscaped medians will be installed after paving is finished, improving the safety and aesthetic appeal.
- ▶ A rapid flashing beacon at Ashton Place will offer a safer pedestrian crossing.

## 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.

## QUESTIONS?



Stay Up-to-Date

Reach out to Kristin Moretz ([kmoretz@avondaleestates.org](mailto:kmoretz@avondaleestates.org)), city staff liaison, with any issues or concerns. Check the city's website to keep up with the current areas of work and the schedule for completion. If a change occurs, the website will reflect that change.

## Additional Corridor Work (Non-City Projects)

While not part of the city's Complete Street Project, two additional construction efforts are underway in the corridor:

### DeKalb County Watershed College Avenue Water Main Replacement Project.

DeKalb County is replacing the water main from Sams Crossing to Lakeshore Drive.

Crews continue to install 7,100 feet of new pipe between Sam's Crossing and Lake Shore Drive. Crews are working both day and night to avoid disrupting the city's project schedule.

The section from Sams Crossing to Ashton Place is expected to be completed by the end of September. The section from Ashton Place to Lakeshore Drive is expected to be completed by the end of October.

#### Customer Questions?

Reach out to DeKalb County Watershed Management for any questions or more information:

- ▶ Project Information: 1-800-986-1108
- ▶ Email inquiries regarding the project and to sign up to receive regular updates can be sent to: [projectinfo@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:projectinfo@dekalbcountyga.gov)

The DeKalb County College Avenue Water Main Replacement Project website ([dekalbcountyga.gov/watershed-management/college-avenue-water-main-replacement-project](http://dekalbcountyga.gov/watershed-management/college-avenue-water-main-replacement-project)) features notifications, a recording of the community meeting, a downloadable presentation, and will include any project updates as construction activity continues. Scan the QR code to visit the website.

#### DeKalb Watershed Emergency Contact

- ▶ 24-hour dispatch: 770-270-6243
- ▶ Email: [dekalbwaterops@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:dekalbwaterops@dekalbcountyga.gov)

### Fiber Installation for Broadband

Bandwidth IG is installing broadband infrastructure in Avondale Estates as part of a 170-mile expansion of its fiber network to provide faster internet access to homes and businesses in the greater metro Atlanta area.

Bandwidth IG has contracted with CEI to lay fiber in Avondale Estates along the entire U.S. 278/E. College/N. Avondale/Covington Highway corridor from Sams Crossing to Memorial Drive.

Construction hours will be from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Completion is scheduled for the end of September.

# Updates on Greenspace Initiatives

## Fletcher Park

Installation of benches, bike racks and picnic tables is underway, with all materials delivered and installation expected to be completed by the end of August. In addition, four large trees damaged in recent storms including three hickory trees and one box elder have recently been removed.

By the end of September, the following improvements are planned:

- ▶ Installation of pollinator-friendly plants around the Chimney Swift Tower
- ▶ Cleanup around the rain garden (following storm damage from a fallen tree)
- ▶ General mulching and invasive species removal along the bank

## North Woods



In mid-August, the City's Public Works Department and Yellowstone, the City's contractor, participated in green infrastructure training led by Roots Down. **Check out the project highlight** for details on the training.

Over the next few months, efforts will focus on:

- ▶ Continued invasive species removal along woodland edges
- ▶ Mulching of the rain gardens
- ▶ Additional wildflower seeding in the verge to expand the meadow
- ▶ Edge trimming to maintain pedestrian access along sidewalks and paths

## Dunwick Drive Stormwater and Landscape Improvement Project

All grey infrastructure elements—including pipes, OCS structures and riprap—have been installed. Remaining tasks include the construction of two bioretention areas and final landscaping. Most plants and trees will be native species, with installation scheduled for October and November. In the interim, mulch will be used to stabilize the area and prepare landscape beds for fall planting.

## Lake Avondale

This fall, Roots Down will conduct a training session with the Public Works team and the landscape contractor to support the identification and removal of invasive species. Additional improvements at Lake Avondale are planned, including potential ecological enhancements at the north end near the pedestrian bridge. Cost estimates and remediation concepts are currently under development and will be presented to the BOMC for consideration in the upcoming capital budget.

## DeKalb Sewer Replacement Project

DeKalb Watershed has completed all grey infrastructure work within city limits. Remaining tasks include:

- ▶ Regrading portions of the South Woods
- ▶ Rebuilding the stone wall at the end of Dunwick Drive
- ▶ Installing a split rail fence at the end of Berkeley Road
- ▶ Tree replacement throughout Banbury and South Woods, scheduled for the fall when conditions are more favorable

In the South Woods, DeKalb Watershed will plant:

- ▶ 3 Beech Trees
- ▶ 3 Scarlet Oaks
- ▶ 3 Red Maples
- ▶ 2 Scarlet Red Oaks

## Project Highlight: *North Woods Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Landscape Training*

Green infrastructure requires a different approach than traditional landscaping—one that many residents may not be familiar with. In addition to managing stormwater and improving water quality, green infrastructure provides critical benefits such as creating habitat for native plants and pollinators.

On August 12, the City's Public Works Department partnered with Roots Down and Yellowstone Landscaping to take part in a hands-on training focused on the maintenance of the North Woods green infrastructure project.

Staff learned and practiced several key techniques, including:

- ▶ native plant identification,
- ▶ invasive species removal,
- ▶ cleaning riprap to prevent sediment buildup in the rain gardens, and
- ▶ maintaining clear site edges to enhance greenspace aesthetics without disrupting habitat.

In the upcoming weeks residents will begin to see more mulch added along the trails for weed suppression.

This marks the first of many upcoming training sessions aimed at building a foundation for regenerative and sustainable landscaping practices in the city.



These areas will also be seeded with the same native riparian mix used in the North Woods nature trail meadow.

In Banbury, tentative plans include planting:

- ▶ 3 Beech Trees
- ▶ 3 White Oaks

### Invasive Species Removal – South Woods

Trees Atlanta is completing the first year of a three-year kudzu removal initiative to protect areas cleared during the DeKalb sewer project. On August 27, they applied what is expected to be the final foliar herbicide treatment for 2025.

Treated areas have been seeded with native grasses to establish a meadow. Monitoring will continue to determine if further treatment is needed. Treatments will resume in Spring 2026 as part of the ongoing effort. Before-and-after photos will be shared in the November/December newsletter.

### Town Green

Earlier this summer, trees at the Town Green were successfully treated for scale, and monitoring by City staff and Yellowstone continues. Irrigation issues have been resolved. Plans to replace turf in targeted areas are scheduled for this fall. Amphitheater staining is nearly complete and will help protect the structure from sun exposure.

### Clock Tower

General repairs and upgrades are underway and will continue into early September. Improvements include:

- ▶ Replacement of rotting wood
- ▶ Repainting
- ▶ Weathervane repair
- ▶ Shingle and brick paver replacement

### 278 Complete Street Project

Landscaping for the North Avondale/E. College Complete Street project is set to begin in October.

### City Tree Planting – 2025 and Beyond

In 2025, 51 trees were planted in partnership with Trees Atlanta, in alignment with the City's tree inventory and plan. A similar number is planned for 2026.

Going forward, staff—alongside Roots Down—will reassess tree species and sizing to ensure selections align with site-specific growing conditions. The potential to plant larger-caliper trees to deliver more immediate canopy impact is also under review.



[schwartz.emory.edu](http://schwartz.emory.edu)

## 2025-2026 CANDLER CONCERT SERIES

**UPCOMING CONCERTS TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW**

<p><b>SEP 26</b> <b>Harlem Quartet</b> featuring Aldo López-Gavilán piano</p>	<p><b>OCT 17</b> <b>Murmurs in Time</b> Third Coast Percussion and Salar Nader, tabla</p>	<p><b>NOV 07</b> <b>Cameron Carpenter</b> organ</p>
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# On the Ballot

The city qualified the following candidates for the Nov. 4 municipal election. Residents will vote for two commissioners for the Board of Mayor and Commissioners, and elected candidates will serve a four-year term beginning January 2026.

## MEET YOUR CANDIDATES FOR CITY COMMISSIONER



### LIONEL LARATTE

(INCUMBENT)

Website:

[www.facebook.com/commissionerlionellaratte](http://www.facebook.com/commissionerlionellaratte)



### DAN MARCEC

Website:

[dan4avondale.com](http://dan4avondale.com)



### LUIS SUAZO

Website: [luissuazo.com](http://luissuazo.com)



### LYDA STEADMAN

Website: [lydalistens.com](http://lydalistens.com)

Should a runoff election be required, it will be held on **December 2, 2025.**

# Special Election for Public Service Commission

A Special Election for Public Service Commission Districts 2 and 3 will also be on the ballot. The mission of the Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) is to exercise its authority and influence to ensure that consumers receive safe, reliable and reasonably priced telecommunications, electric and natural gas services from financially viable and technically competent companies. Its five elected commissioners set utility rates and decide who pays for infrastructure projects and cleanup costs—customers or utility companies. The PSC does not regulate water, cellular service or broadband internet. PSC commissioners are elected to six-year terms with no term limits, and are elected statewide, but must live in the district they are running to represent.



The following Republican (R) and Democratic (D) candidates won their respective primaries to represent their parties on the ballot this November.

- ▶ District 2: Tim Echols (R, incumbent) and Alicia Johnson (D).
- ▶ District 3: Peter Hubbard (D) and Fitz Johnson (R, incumbent)

## Ways to Vote

Be prepared to vote in this election. There are three ways to cast a vote:

- ▶ Absentee voting by mail,
- ▶ In-person early voting, and
- ▶ In-person voting on election day.

Election day is Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

## Additional election information

- ▶ **Oct. 6:** Deadline for voter registration and change of address.
- ▶ **Oct. 14:** First-day absentee ballots will be issued.
- ▶ **Oct. 14** through Oct. 31: Early voting occurs at multiple locations in DeKalb County from 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. The closest location to the city is 4380 Memorial Drive.
- ▶ **Oct. 24:** Deadline to submit an absentee ballot application.
- ▶ **Nov. 4:** Election day in-person voting at City Hall between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Visit [dekalbvotes.com](http://dekalbvotes.com) for detailed information about voting options and sample ballots.

To check voter registration, visit Georgia’s Secretary of State’s website [sos.ga.gov/elections](http://sos.ga.gov/elections).

# Beech Hollow

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# News and Updates

## Curbside Compost is Heating Up

The curbside compost pilot program is back in full swing. Sign up today and support the final three months of the program.

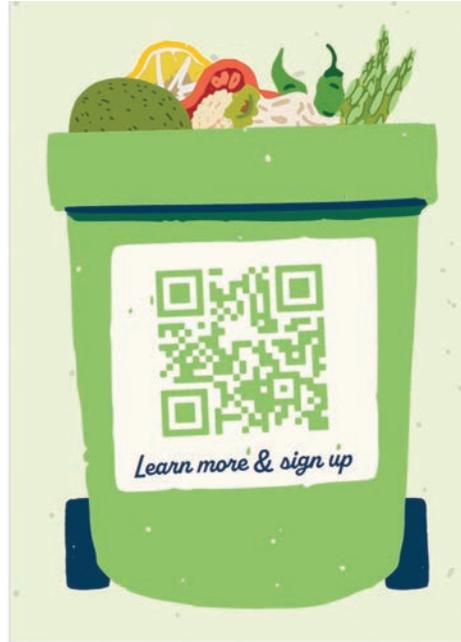
Did you know that about 28% of the average household waste stream in America is compostable?

Not only will participating residents reduce waste sent to the landfill, but the compost created will be distributed to local farmers and community gardeners in DeKalb County by Food Well Alliance and to the edible landscapes at DeKalb County libraries through Roots Down.

This pilot program is made possible through a \$323,800 U.S. Department of Agriculture Composting and Food Waste Reduction cooperative agreement. The city is partnering with CompostNow, DeKalb County Super District 6 Commissioner Ted Terry, Food Well Alliance and Roots Down.

### How it Works:

- ▶ Sign up to participate.
- ▶ Once registered, participants will receive an email with detailed information.
- ▶ Compost bins will be delivered to homes one week after registration.



- ▶ On collection day, place the compost bin at the curb, and CompostNow will empty it.

The program is available to all City of Avondale Estates residents.

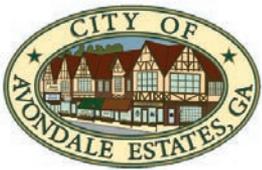
Residents, Sign Up Now. Scan the QR Code to check out the FAQs and program details, and learn what can be composted.

### What materials are accepted?

CompostNow can take more than a backyard compost pile because the compostables are processed at an industrial-scale facility.

### Acceptable items include:

- ▶ All food scraps cooked or raw (veggies, fruit, dairy, fish, meat, and small bones)
- ▶ Coffee grounds and filters
- ▶ Egg shells and paper egg cartons
- ▶ Flower arrangements
- ▶ Household plants and soil
- ▶ Items labeled BPI Certified Compostable
- ▶ Loose tea
- ▶ Paper towels and napkins
- ▶ Paper (not shiny or glossy)
- ▶ Pet food
- ▶ Pizza boxes



## 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony

The city will hold a 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on Thursday, Sept. 11, at the Dewey C. Brown Plaza across from City Hall. The ceremony will begin at 8:40 a.m. and include bell ringing by Peg Wyse to mark the times the two World Trade Center towers were hit. Between each bell ringing, attendees will have time for silent reflection in memory of the thousands killed in the terrorist attack in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C.

Join the city to honor those impacted by this tragedy 24 years ago and mourn fallen heroes.

# 2025 NATIONAL FAITH & BLUE WEEKEND

## Friday Night Family Fun with Faith & Blue

**Friday, Oct. 10, 5 to 7 p.m.**  
**Gospel Hope Church | 47 Covington Highway**

The Avondale Estates Police Department invites the community to a fun, family-friendly event coinciding with National Faith and Blue Weekend 2025, a national initiative fostering community-officer engagement as part of the nation's largest annual collaborative policing initiative. Join officers Friday, Oct. 10 at Gospel Hope Church for food, games, bounce houses and more. Strong communities are built on mutual respect and understanding. Law enforcement and faith institutions are key pillars of each community, and when they work together, neighborhoods thrive.

## National Drug Take Back Day

**Saturday, Oct. 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**City Hall, 21 N. Avondale Plaza**

The Avondale Estates Police Department encourages the community to participate in National Prescription Drug Take Back Day this fall. The Drug Enforcement Agency's National Take Back event provides an opportunity for all Americans to prevent misuse of prescription drugs that so often result in drug addiction and overdose.



## Leaf Season Reminders

With leaf season fast approaching, the Public Works team is asking for help from the community and their yard maintenance crews to avoid delays with service pickup and damage to equipment.

- ▶ Please do not park on the streets on the day of yard waste pickup between 8 and 11 a.m. This causes a traffic safety hazard; quite often, staff must block the street to retrieve yard waste.
- ▶ Do not place rocks, bricks, blocks or other items with leaves or grass clippings. This damages the leaf vacuum, disrupting pickups while the equipment is repaired.
- ▶ Please don't place yard waste next to power poles, mailboxes or vehicles. The Public Works team must have access to pick up yard waste without damaging structures or vehicles. If access is blocked, residents will receive a door knocker stating why the yard waste could not be retrieved.
- ▶ Do not mix limbs or yard debris with leaves or grass clippings. To prevent damage to equipment, including the leaf vacuum, leaves and grass clippings must be kept separate from other yard debris at the curb.
- ▶ Yard waste must be placed on the verge, not in the street or in yards.

Yard waste zone signs are put out the night before pickup, advising residents of their zone and the day of pickup. This information can also be found on the Yard Waste page of the city's website (<https://www.avondaleestates.org/2503/Yard-Waste-Collection>).

Help the Public Works team provide yard waste pickup service in the most efficient manner and with minimum impact on traffic flow.

# September 2025

## calendar of events



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Labor Day (City Hall Closed)					Waffle House 70th Anniversary
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Historic Preservation Commission Meeting 6 p.m.	Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting 5:30 p.m.	Board of Mayor and Commissioners Regular Meeting Work Session 5:30 p.m.	Patriot Day - 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony 8:30 a.m.		A Shakespeare Happening at the Town Green 2-5 p.m.
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.  Weekend Wind Down Concert with COT Band 5-8 p.m.						
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.  Team Hope Walk & 5k			Board of Mayor and Commissioners Regular Meeting & Work Session 5:30 p.m.			Southern Surf Stompfest! noon-9 p.m.
28	29	30				
Avondale Estates Farmers Market 10 a.m.-1 p.m.						

# October 2025

## calendar of events



SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THURS

FRI

SAT

1

2

3

4

Pride on the Green  
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

Avondale Estates  
Farmers Market  
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Voter Registration  
Deadline for  
the Election  
  
Historic Preservation  
Commission Meeting  
6 p.m.

Board of Mayor and  
Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Work Session  
5:30 p.m.

Faith and Blue  
5-7 p.m.

A Shakespeare  
Happening at the  
Town Green  
2-5 p.m.

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

Avondale Estates  
Farmers Market  
10 a.m.-1 p.m.  
  
Weekend Wind  
Down Concert with  
Bonaventure Quartet  
5-8 p.m.

Advance Voting  
Begins  
  
Downtown  
Development  
Authority Regular  
Meeting  
5:30 p.m.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

Avondale Estates  
Farmers Market  
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Planning and Zoning  
Board Meeting  
6 p.m.

Board of Mayor and  
Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Work Session  
5:30 p.m.

Last day to request  
Absentee Ballots

Avondale Ale Day  
  
National Drug Take  
Back Day  
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

26

27

28

29

30

31

Avondale Estates  
Farmers Market  
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Advance Voting Ends  
  
Halloween

# State Designation Provides Tax Benefits to Businesses

by Helena Oliviero

The City of Avondale Estates has been awarded a significant “State Opportunity Zone” designation, a powerful economic tool that allows businesses within the zone to receive valuable tax benefits.

This achievement follows extensive efforts by city staff who actively pursued the designation and made the case for the city’s eligibility.

The zones, designated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, recognize local governments undertaking revitalization efforts in certain older commercial and industrial areas and can help local businesses through tax credits.

The City’s Opportunity Zone includes parcels in the City’s downtown Central Business District.

Under the program, businesses can use job tax credits to cover up to 100% of what they owe in Georgia income taxes and payroll withholding taxes. They must use the credits to pay their income taxes first, before applying them to payroll withholding taxes.

Businesses within the zone can qualify for up to \$3,500 in annual tax credits for each new job created as long as a minimum of two jobs are created within a single tax year.

The credits are valid for up to five years. Businesses within the Opportunity



Zone boundaries can begin getting the credit for new jobs created in the taxable year on or after Jan. 1, 2025.

To claim the benefit of the Georgia payroll withholding tax credits, businesses must complete a State Opportunity Zone Certification form prior to filing for tax credit. For more information and resources for businesses as well as a comprehensive list and map of Georgia’s designated opportunity zones, go the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) website.

## Welcome New Businesses

The Avondale Estates Downtown Development Authority and the city of Avondale Estates are excited to have two new businesses in the city. Help welcome them by visiting and showing your support.

### The Pool Turtle

3409 Covington Hwy,

Avondale Estates has a new spot to relax and play. This bar and game cove is the perfect place to unwind with friends over billiards, darts, board games and more. Whether looking for some friendly competition or just a laid-back hangout, The Pool Turtle is ready to welcome you.

**Open:**

Monday through Saturday: 11 a.m. to 2 a.m.  
Sunday: 11 a.m. to midnight



### Joyful Jarra

32 N Avondale Rd, Suite C

Sustainable living just got even easier. Joyful Jarra, a refillery business offering eco-friendly home, personal care, and even pet care products, shares a space right in the city with Fiber Parts and The Book Bird. Have you checked them out yet? Stop by and explore simple ways to refill, reduce and reuse.

**Open:**

Tuesday through Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Sunday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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# Weekend Wind Down 2025 Concerts

**SUNDAYS**  
Avondale Estates  
**TOWN GREEN**

Sept. 14 • 5-8 p.m.  
**C.O.T. Band**

Oct. 12 • 5-8 p.m.  
**Bonaventure Quartet**

Nov. 9 • 3:30-6-30 p.m.  
**The Squirrelheads**

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## Fall Weekend Wind Down Concerts Return

The Weekend Wind Down concert series returns to the Town Green this fall on the second Sundays of September, October and November. The events are free to the public and food and beverages will be available for purchase.

**Sunday, Sept. 14: 5 to 8 p.m.**  
**COT Band**



Hispanic Heritage Month kicks off this year with the Weekend Wind Down Concert on Sunday, Sept. 14, featuring the Latin fusion COT Band, salsa dance lessons, and a variety of Hispanic foods from Avondale's own Santo Cantina + Cocina and the Buen Provecho.

Hispanic Heritage Month is observed annually from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 to celebrate the Hispanic community's rich history, culture, heritage and diversity.

**Sunday, Oct. 12: 5 to 8 p.m.**  
**Bonaventure Quartet**



This Atlanta-based acoustic jazz band combines gypsy jazz and American swing into original tunes. With the sultry, silky voice of former Lost Continentals frontwoman Amy Pike and the gypsy-jazz flavored guitar of Charles Williams, Bonaventure is a marvelous melting pot of Southern sass and the smoky jazz of Parisian cabarets.

**Sunday, Nov. 9: 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.**  
**The Squirrelheads**



The Squirrelheads have been carrying the flag for New Orleans funk, boogie-woogie, and Mardi Gras music in Atlanta and North Georgia since 2001. Their signature sound—built on the funk, that second-line beat, and the undeniable Big Easy groove—creates unforgettable nights at clubs, festivals, and private events alike.

Music will begin an hour after the event starts.

Parking is available on streets in the downtown district unless otherwise marked. Public parking lots are located off Lake St. and at City Hall. Please respect the city's businesses and do not park in their parking lots during business hours.

# Atlanta Shakespeare Company Headlines Fall Outdoor Series at the Town Green

by Helena Oliviero

DeKalb County's first free Shakespeare series is fittingly coming to Avondale Estates, a city whose Tudor-Revival style architecture is inspired by the playwright's birthplace.

A three-part, family-friendly series, "A Shakespeare Happening | Avondale Estates Town Green," will take place rain or shine on September 13, October 11 and November 15, with each event beginning at 2 p.m.

Audiences can look forward to Shakespeare events for kids, live music and sneak peeks of upcoming shows from the Atlanta Shakespeare Company, which performs at The Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse. The events will take place at the Town Green and are free and open to the public. No tickets are required.

The series is produced by Bard x Sage PR in partnership with the Atlanta Shakespeare Company, DeKalb County Commissioner Ted Terry (Super District 6), and the City of Avondale Estates.

Nicole Sage, a longtime DeKalb County resident and founder of Sage PR Consulting, developed the initiative under her creative moniker, Bard x Sage PR. She pitched the concept to Commissioner Terry with a goal of bringing more educational enrichment and accessible cultural programs to DeKalb County.

She recalled her mother taking her to the Shakespeare Tavern several times when she was in high school, a special experience she wanted to share with more people.

"My mother was a diehard champion of (Atlanta Shakespeare Company) Artistic Director Jeff Watkins. Watching his Shakespeare performances

with my mother is a memory I will cherish forever," said Sage. "Commissioner Terry and I wanted to create something welcoming for all. Whether it's your first Shakespeare play or your 50th, this is a space where families and children can experience the magic of Shakespeare together—outside and for free."

Terry also expressed enthusiasm for showcasing live Shakespeare at the Town Green. "Bringing Shakespeare to the Town Green is about more than theatre—it's about building community and ensuring that art and culture are accessible to everyone, regardless of zip code or income," said Terry. "I'm proud to support initiatives like this that uplift our shared spaces, celebrate creativity, and offer meaningful enrichment for families across DeKalb."

The connection between Avondale Estates and Shakespeare goes back to its beginnings. The City of Avondale Estates' founder George Francis Willis was inspired by a trip he and his wife Lottie had taken to Stratford-upon-Avon, England. He wanted to recreate the majestic Tudor-Revival style architecture found at the birthplace of William Shakespeare.

This is not the first time Avondale Estates has hosted a Shakespeare-inspired event. The city hosted a one-day Shakespeare festival in 2017.

City Manager Patrick Bryant said the City of Avondale Estates was proud to host this free Shakespeare series. "It's a fun nod to our Stratford-upon-Avon roots," said Bryant. "It's a unique cultural experience not offered anywhere else in metro Atlanta."

## WHAT TO BRING:

People are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets and picnics for an afternoon of theater on the green.

Here's a look at the upcoming performances:

### Saturday, Sept. 13, 2 to 5 p.m.

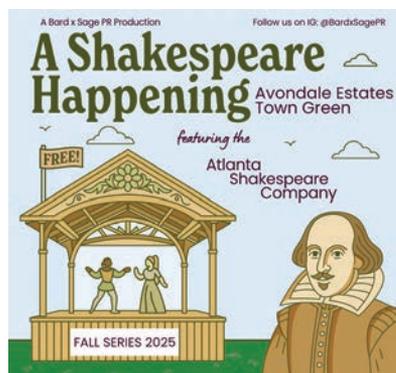
- ▶ Tempest, Jr., a Shakespeare performance for young audiences
- ▶ Live music by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company
- ▶ Sneak Peek of "Macbeth."

### Saturday, Oct. 11, 2 to 5 p.m.

- ▶ Shakespeare Shorts: a fast-paced comedy performed by two actors with one unsuspecting audience member turned co-star (geared toward children).
- ▶ Live music by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company
- ▶ Sneak Peek of "Hamlet."

### Saturday, Nov. 15, 2 to 5:30 p.m.

- ▶ Atlanta Shakespeare Company's signature educational workshop for young audiences: a play shop in performance featuring "Much Ado About Nothing."
- ▶ Live music by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company
- ▶ Sneak peek of "Much Ado About Nothing."



Audiences will enjoy sneak peeks of *Hamlet* and *Much Ado About Nothing* by the Atlanta Shakespeare Company in the fall at A Shakespeare Happening at the Town Green. Photo Credit: Jeff Watkins

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**ON THE GREEN**

**SATURDAY  
OCT  
4TH**

**11-5PM  
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ESTATES**

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- PET COSTUME CONTEST
- KIDS CRAFT TABLE
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- GAMES
- GIVEAWAYS
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## Proud to Celebrate Love and Acceptance Avondale-style

Kick off Atlanta's Pride month on October 4 at Pride on the Green from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. This uniquely Avondale Estates LGBTQ + Pride festival will bring neighbors, families and friends together for a day of music, food, local vendors and celebration. Hosted by W. Roy Salon, this festival honors inclusivity, authenticity and community connection in the heart of Avondale Estates. All are welcome, including pets, who can strut their stuff in the Pet Costume Contest. Come celebrate love and acceptance in the community.



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# LET'S RAISE A GLASS



at the 5th Annual

## AVONDALE ALE DAY

OCTOBER 25



## Time to Hit the Dale Ale Trail for the 5th Avondale Ale Day

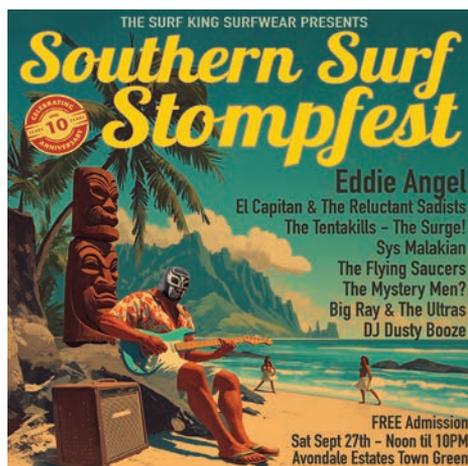
Avondale Ale Day returns on **Saturday, Oct. 25** with live music, food and more than 100 diverse draft beers along the Dale Ale Trail, a one-mile path through the heart of Avondale Estates' central business district. Stops include Little Cottage Brewery, The Lost Druid Brewery & Distillery, My Parents' Basement and Wild Heaven Brewery. The city's award-winning and talented craft brewers have already begun creating three specially crafted beers made especially for the weekend.

Pick up a passport at any one of the four locations along the Dale Ale Trail and earn a punch by purchasing a beer at each stop along the way. Submit your completed punch card by the end of the weekend at any of the four locations to receive a free, limited-edition Dale Ale Trail pint glass designed by local artist Matt Leunig (available while supplies last).

Follow Explore Avondale on Facebook, Instagram or online at [exploreavondale.org](http://exploreavondale.org) for updates.

## Surfs Up at the Town Green for the 10th Year

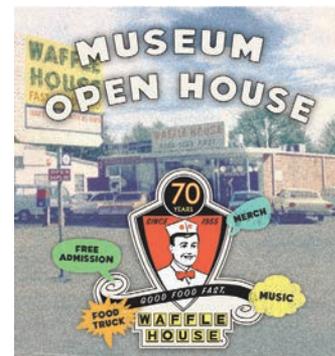
Celebrate the 10th anniversary of Southern Surf Stompfest at the Avondale Estates Town Green on Saturday, September 27, from noon to 9 p.m., featuring a full day of electrifying surf music. Headlined by the legendary Eddie Angel of Los Straitjackets, this free, all-ages festival promises vibrant performances, local vendors, and fun end-of-summer vibes. Join us for a family-friendly event filled with food, merchandise, and the best of the Southeast's surf rock scene



## An Avondale Estates' Original Turns 70

**The Waffle House Museum**  
2719 College Avenue

The Waffle House Museum will be celebrating Waffle Houses 70th anniversary by hosting an Open House on Saturday, September 6, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visitors can tour the very first Waffle House, sit at the original high counter, and view vintage artifacts and memorabilia. The Waffle House food truck will be serving free waffles, and Waffle House merch will be available for purchase. Admission is free.



Learn more about the event at <https://www.wafflehouse.com/museum/>

## Spring and Summer Full of Fun for Avondale Estates Art Guild

Avondale Estates Art Guild hosted a French-inspired dinner and art exhibit in conjunction with Avondale Community Club on May 24. The event was attended by 118 members of the Guild and Community Club. Eighty-six pieces of art produced by 33 artists in the guild were on display.

The tables were beautifully decorated in a French theme. Traditional French cheese puffs, known as Gougères, were offered as appetizers. Guests dined on a menu which included Chicken Cordon Bleu and Lyonnaise potatoes (catered by Café Alsace) along with salad and a baguette. The meal was topped off with French Silk pie for dessert. After dinner, guests viewed and purchased works of art. Many Guild members contributed time, talent and art to make the dinner and exhibit a success. It was a wonderful evening!

On June 25, Guild members enjoyed an excursion to Atlanta Printmakers Studio, a non-profit community studio located in Hapeville, Georgia. After participants toured the beautiful, well-equipped studio, an APS instructor gave a brief talk on relief painting and a demonstration on designing, carving, inking, and printing using Linoleum blocks. Lunch at a local restaurant completed the trip.

In July, our member-led workshop featured an introduction to cold wax medium—a blend of beeswax and solvent used with oil paint—by Diane Gould. Members of the Guild enjoyed learning about this ancient painting method.

If you are an artist, and interested in joining the Avondale Estates Art Guild, please email [infoaocartguild@gmail.com](mailto:infoaocartguild@gmail.com).



## Who's the Ghouliest? *Enter the Halloween Spirit Awards*

It's the spookiest time of the year – who's ready to get their ghoul on? Enter your home or business in the annual Halloween Spirit Awards. Take a photo of your property decorated and submit your entry by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 21. Your neighbors will be the judges.

Send a picture to compete in the following categories:

- ▶ Business Award
- ▶ Children's Appeal
- ▶ Most Creative
- ▶ Spookiest

Online voting will run from Wednesday, Oct. 22, through Tuesday, Oct. 28. Award signs will appear mysteriously in the winners' front yards.

# Avondale Estates Christmas Tour of Homes & Holiday Market

Plans are underway for the 33rd Annual Christmas Tour of Homes and Holiday Market on Sunday, December 14, 2025. Six homes representing the various styles of architecture in our city will be featured for the tour from 3 to 8 p.m.

The Avondale Holiday Market will be from noon to 6 p.m. and will include most of the old favorites selling their scarves, pecans, jewelry, photography, bird feeders, smoked salmon, jams, and ornaments.

You may purchase pre-sale tour tickets at Finders Keepers Consignment, Garage Door Studio and Ace Intown for \$20 or online at [bigtickets.com](http://bigtickets.com) for \$25.

Tour buses will pick up passengers at the downtown parking lot at 6 Lake Street for those who have reserved a spot. Be sure to sign up for an afternoon tour (3:00, 3:15, 3:30) or an evening tour (5:30, 6:00) at Finders Keepers Furnishings or contact Margaret at [mplcvl@aol.com](mailto:mplcvl@aol.com) to reserve a spot.

Be a Christmas Angel by supporting the Tour of Homes. A \$50 donation includes:

- ▶ Name on ticket/poster/flyer,
- ▶ Sign in yard,
- ▶ Pre-tour party, and
- ▶ One (1) complimentary tour ticket.

Contact Kathy Delaney (see below) to coordinate check payments

For more information or to volunteer, contact the following committee members:

- ▶ Christmas Tour: Margaret Lunsford, 404-388-9137, [mplcvl@aol.com](mailto:mplcvl@aol.com)
- ▶ Holiday Market: Sally Walker, 404-308-9292, [avondaleholidaymarket@gmail.com](mailto:avondaleholidaymarket@gmail.com)
- ▶ Sponsors: Connie Bryans, 404-408-9644, [lcbryans@bellsouth.net](mailto:lcbryans@bellsouth.net)
- ▶ Christmas Angels: Kathy Delaney, 404-925-1743, [kathy\\_tom@mindspring.com](mailto:kathy_tom@mindspring.com)
- ▶ Volunteers: Lynn Thompson, 770-617-0617, [benobo@bellsouth.net](mailto:benobo@bellsouth.net)

PLAN TO ATTEND  
**33RD ANNUAL**  
**Avondale Estates**  
**CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES**  
**& HOLIDAY MARKET**  
**SUNDAY**  
**DECEMBER 14, 2025**

Avondale Estates

# Avondale Estates Garden Club Updates

## “Nature Time” Puppet Garbanzo Kicks Off Bonnie Phelps Memorial Tree Walk



Garbanzo, the orange puppet from the YouTube Video series “Nature Time,” returns to the Gazebo beside Lake Avondale at 9 a.m. Saturday, October 25, for the Avondale Estates Garden Club Tree Walk.

Children are invited to meet Garbanzo and his friends from “Nature Time” as they open the Bonnie Phelps Memorial Tree Walk. Garbanzo headlined the last Tree Walk in 2023.

The Avondale Estates Garden Club hosts the free Tree Walk every odd-numbered year and invites the community to gather and learn about the importance of trees in Avondale Estates.

In addition to the program with Garbanzo at 9 a.m., the event will continue with:

- ▶ 9:15 until 10 a.m. - Children’s games and crafts led by club members
- ▶ 10 a.m. - A presentation from local arborists
- ▶ 10:30 a.m. - Arborist-led walks around the historic portion of Avondale Estates, where there are sidewalks. Walks leave from the shore of Lake Avondale near the Gazebo.

Hosted biannually by the Avondale Estates Garden Club, the Bonnie Phelps Memorial Tree Walk is named in honor of long-time Avondale Estates Garden Club member, the late Bonnie Phelps. The event is held in the fall every odd-numbered year (2025). On even-numbered years, the club hosts a tour of the city’s Secret Gardens — beautifully landscaped gardens behind homes and out of public view. The next Secret Garden Tour will be June 6, 2026.

Avondale Estates club members Helen Dorroh and Joe Foley are chairing the event.

## Avondale Estates Garden Club Hosts Open Meeting

Whether you’re a master gardener or a newbie who wants to start gardening from scratch, you’re invited to join the Avondale Estates Garden Club at its open meeting on Thursday, Sept.18, at 6 p.m. at the Lake House at 59 Lakeshore Drive.

The first meeting of the fall season is open to all prospective members. The program will be get-acquainted session with information about programs and activities of the club, and how local organizations fit into the mission of district, state, and national Garden Club organizations.



Shoppers gather at the 2024 garden club plant sale.

Meeting attendance is free, but advance registration is requested by texting Club Membership Chair Patricia Calcagno at 404-626-2103.

Founded in 1931, the Avondale Estates Garden Club is one of the oldest in the state. The first project of the Club was the planting of the Abelia hedge along North Avondale Road with labor provided by workers from the New Deal’s Work Progress Administration (WPA).

Upcoming events include monthly meetings with programs on topics from gardening to sustainability, a biannual Tree Walk and program on October 26, and the club’s biannual Secret Garden Tour on June 6, 2026. The club also hosts an annual plant. The next sale will be Saturday, April 18, 2026.

The Avondale Estates Garden Club distributes funds raised at its activities to local and regional nonprofits that support the horticultural arts and promote environmental responsibility.

## AEGC Forum on Environmental Responsibility Set

The public is invited to an Environmental Responsibility Forum on Nov. 10 sponsored by the Avondale Estates Garden Club.

Speakers will be Virginia Hudspeth, a UGA graduate student researching adaptability to climate change with a focus on trees, and Tres Crow, Chief Grower at GreenBox Homes, focusing on plants.

The forum will be from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Lake House at 59 Lakeshore Drive in Avondale Estates. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information, go to the Avondale Estates website at <https://avondaleestatesgardenclub.org/>



## Avon Garden Club Visits the GA Governor's Mansion

Avon Garden Club takes a special field trip each year. This spring the Club decided to venture out to the Buckhead area of Atlanta to tour one of its most imposing residential properties, the Georgia Governor's Mansion.

One surprising discovery on the tour was that Governor, and First Lady Kemp are not the only "First Family" inhabiting the property. The "First Flock", established in 2021, consists of laying hens of multiple breeds chosen for their hardiness and egg color. The hens provide the Mansion kitchen with fresh eggs. And, no, the hens do not reside in the Mansion but rather on the grounds in a chicken coop which was designed by 4-H and FFA students.

The Mansion, sitting imposingly on 18 acres fronting on West Paces Ferry Road, was constructed between 1960-1967. January 1, 1968, was the official opening date, and Lester Maddox was the first governor to live there.

Greek Revival is the style of the 30-room Mansion. The Mansion contains three levels and 24,000 square feet. A porch surrounds all

four sides. Thirty (30) Doric columns made from California redwoods support the porch overhangs. Because the Mansion's roof is primarily flat, these columns have been hollowed out and treated on the insides to direct drainage downward through the columns to cisterns below.

Club members toured the main level of the Mansion (the only level open to the public) and beheld rooms that were beautifully appointed with museum-quality Federal Period art and furnishings. All furnishings belong to the State of Georgia and remain in the Mansion when the administrations change. Knowledgeable docents were on site to describe the treasures and answer questions.

Members were also delighted by the lovely grounds which are maintained by a thirteen-member crew. In addition to the First Flock's coop, the grounds contain an outdoor entrance fountain, woodlands and gardens, including a vegetable garden. Azaleas are abundant. Logs from fallen trees have been creatively used as flower planters. Numerous native plants were observed.

# Get to Know Joe Weishaar

In 2015, Joe Weishaar, a young architect just starting his career, was selected from a pool of more than 350 international applicants to design the country's first National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Living in Chicago at the time, his winning design transformed Pershing Park, a run-down 3.7-acre space located just a block from the White House. Working in partnership with sculptor Sabin Howard, the memorial features a 58-foot-long sculptural wall made of bronze, two fountains, an educational overlook, and several other features. It was completed last year.

He and his wife, Stephanie, and their two children live on Berkeley Road.

## What inspired you to pursue a career in architecture?

When I was in high school, I was dead set on becoming a mechanical engineer. During my senior year, I decided to take an art class and discovered that I had a talent for watercolor painting. The teacher at the time, saw my paintings and was like, "Do you know that you could do this?" She told me I could do architecture and combine art and engineering.

As luck would have it, we had a program in architecture 15 minutes down the road from me at the University of Arkansas. From the first day of school, I knew this is what I was meant to do. There was just something about the rigor and creative challenge that caused my brain to start firing in a way that it hadn't been challenged before

## What was the process for being selected to be the lead designer of the World War I Memorial in D.C.?

I was working for a firm in Chicago and thinking about moving to a different firm. In order to do so, I decided that I needed a piece for my portfolio to show off the kind of work that I wanted to do. I came across various competitions online and they had just posted the World War I Memorial competition. It seemed like a good place to start.

At this point, I didn't really know anything about World War I. Honestly, I had totally blurred it together with World War II. On the competition site, they had posted a link to the National Archives photo repository, which had about 3,000 photos from the war. I clicked on every one. In



Photo credit: National Park Service

particular, there was this photo of two young guys in a trench covered in mud. One is sleeping and the other is writing a letter home. Being from Arkansas, I thought to myself, "If I was alive 100 years ago, this would have been my life." That photo got me into the process and made me want to learn more.

I submitted the design about three weeks later, and completely forgot about it until The World War I Centennial Commission called me back two and a half months later.

That catapulted me into phase two as a finalist. I was 25, and solo competing against professional firms. After a four more months of further design, I was selected as the lead designer for the project, and went on to work on it for eight years.

## So that singular photograph served as an inspiration for designing the memorial?

Yes, I felt this deep connection and realized maybe other people will see something in this design and feel connected.

What eventually got built is an incredibly complex weaving of landscape architecture, historic preservation, and figurative art. The most recognizable element is the sculpture. The piece is called, "The Soldier's Journey."



Joe Weishaar with his wife Stephanie and their two children at the National World War I Memorial in D.C.

It's the story about one particular soldier and his lived experience going from rural America through the entirety of war and emerging at the end, alive, but totally changed by it. In total, we've got 38 figures, covering multiple ethnicities which draw upon the collective experience of the United States during the war.

## What are some newer projects you are working on?

I now work for Smith Dalia Architects in Atlanta. When I first started there, I got immediately thrown into working on Assembly Studios, located on the former site of the General Motors Assembly Plant in Doraville. Right now, I am working on a bandshell for the public park at Assembly Studios. I'm also working on an African American History Museum in Thomasville, Georgia.

## How did you hear about Avondale Estates and why did you decide to move here?

My wife grew up in Druid Hills and my in-laws are eight minutes away in Scottsdale. After we moved from DC, we were living in a really small house in Forrest Hills and knew we needed to move into a bigger house when we were expecting our second child. The moment we walked into our house, we were like this is it. We don't need to change a thing. We could stay here forever. We moved here in 2023.

We love the feel of the neighborhood. People talk about how it's like Mayberry, especially with the triangle park on Berkeley. Kids come out and play baseball in the evenings and my kids like to fly kites. We go to the pool just about every day in the summer months. We are always at Willis park, and we love the Town Green and the Avondale Farmer's Market.

## Avon Garden Club Garden of the Month



**July:** 93 Berkeley Road, home of Alice and Jerry Guppy



**August:** 41 Wiltshire Drive, home of Alicia and Andy LaRocco

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## Avondale Estates Garden Club Yard of the Month



**July:** 31 Dartmouth Avenue, home of Carolyn and Tommy Adams



**August:** 59 Berkeley Road, home of Kevin and Anne Moran



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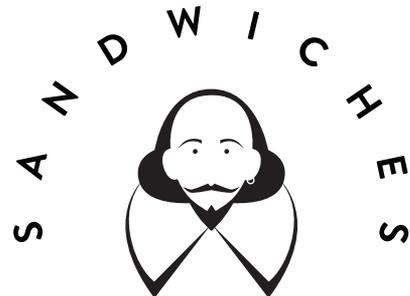
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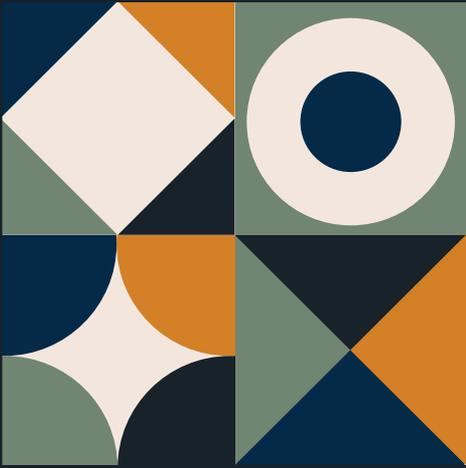
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