

Garden Scoop Newsletter – December 2023

Since its humble beginnings in 1934, the Arlington Garden Club has had a presence in the local community. When describing the garden club, Louise Sopher, AGC Member, 1938, wrote “We believe in planting and caring for growing things, in encouraging others to do likewise, so that our town and community may be a lovelier place in which to live.”

Many early efforts by the garden club focused on efforts to help create and establish some of the city’s parks. What is remarkable is that the club’s beginnings occurred during the American Depression (1929 – 1939). Club members’ contributions included both physical labor and fundraising efforts which helped turn a bare plot of land, formerly an eyesore, into Lebanon Park. Early members also worked on the beautification of Terrace Park and raised funds for its irrigation system. Eventually these early efforts to help create and build parks would shift over to the responsibility of the city park’s department and its maintenance employees.

As the years went by, the garden club continued its history of promoting pride in the community and its beautification but was doing this in different ways. As we head into the holiday season, it is fun to look back at one of the club’s events that took place during the 1970’s. The Arlington Garden Club partnered with the Arlington Chamber of Commerce and ran an annual Holiday Décor Contest. Prizes were offered for houses with the best festive decorations! First place, Overall Affect, was awarded to the Olson residence for several consecutive years despite their move and change in residence! Other categories included Best Window, Best Porch & Doorway, Best Religious, and Best Street/Neighborhood. Cash prizes were awarded depending on the category and ran \$4/\$5 for first place, \$4/\$3 second, and \$2 third!

In upcoming issues of the Scoop, more will be shared about how the club has evolved over the years as well as the many events and activities the garden club has sponsored over the years that helped promote gardening and pride in the community.