



THE GARDEN DIRT

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Website: Antiochgardenclub.org

Facebook: [Antioch Garden Club-Antioch IL](https://www.facebook.com/AntiochGardenClub-AntiochIL)



President’s Column

Daylight Savings time has begun! We made it through another season of darkness. The earth is warming up as we speak.

March 1 was the first day of meteorological spring. Huh? Yes. This is a thing! My friend “Google” is wonderful! March 1 through May 31, 2026.

Definition: “Meteorological Spring is used by meteorologists to align seasons with annual temperature cycles for better statistical analysis.

So, now you know. One of these days, I am going to try to explain *Growing Degree Days*. I understand it, but have a difficult time putting it into words.

In general terms, here is the definition: “GDD measure heat accumulation to predict plant and insect development stages, offering a more precise, climate-based timeline than calendar days.”

That “clock” starts about April 1st.

—See *President’s Column*, cont. on page 5

Birthdays:

3/1—Cris Crego

3/8—Joan Vitello

3/22—Chris Priller

March Meeting Program:

Rainscaping by U of I Extension
Lake County Master Gardeners.

This presentation will teach you how to direct and manage water flow in your yard.

March Hospitality: George

Weckbacher, lead host, with Patricia Hays, Kevin McCarty & Jayna Legg.

Board meetings—you are invited.

Please RSVP to Holly if you plan to attend. The executive board and committee chairs are expected to attend. The next one is March 25, at the Antioch Village Center, 817 Holbek Drive.

CALENDAR

March 14—General Meeting, 1 p.m., Antioch Village Center, door opens 12:30 p.m.

March 25—Board Meeting, 6 p.m., Antioch Village Center

March 28—Spring Cleanup, 9 a.m., Mini-park

April 11—General Meeting, 1 p.m., Antioch Village Center, doors open 12:30 p.m.

Antioch Garden Club is a member of Garden Club of Illinois, Inc.; Central Region Garden Club, District IX and National Garden Clubs, Inc. **Officers:** President-Holly Markwart Swehla, Co-Vice Presidents-Susan Ullrich & Betty Sprovieri, Secretary-Chris Priller, Treasurer-Jennifer Wittenberg, *The Garden Dirt* is published electronically nine times a year, emailed to members and posted online: <https://antiochgardenclub.org/>

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AGC Plant Sale Fundraiser May 16

Mark your calendars for Sat., May 16; our annual plant sale will need “all hands on deck!” The roofed William’s Park pavilion, 741 Main St., (behind the library, near the train depot) will be the location again. The sale will be 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Your donations of time, baked goods, established perennials, annuals, herbs, and garden-related items will be needed for our fundraiser. Seed-starting and houseplant divisions can take place soon. Please think about what you can contribute and volunteer for, from the tasks below:

- Help organize/price/conduct the bake sale with Cris Crego (at least one more person needed)
- Help Holly place and remove signs, before and after, on the morning the sale (at least one more person)
- Help dig/pot plants for members unable to do so themselves
- Bring donated coffee for workers on sale morning
- Arrange for lunch donation

I’ll be bringing pots with trays and Craft Stix (for you to label/ID your plants) to the April and May meetings. You can always contact me for more. Please remember to save your pots from past seasons. I’ll be making colorful horticulture ID’s with photos, so let me know if you’re bringing anything unusual.

We always have fun and learn more about horticulture at this event. Mark your calendars, tell your friends, and save your purchasing dollars to support our club on Sat., May 16.

Thank you, in advance, to everyone who has already volunteered for key sale positions. You make my job easier. I look forward to working again this year with all the AGC members. Please contact me if you have any questions or are interested in volunteering.

Cindy Cartner chrysaliscindy@aol.com 224-406-6615



*“All through the long winter,
I dream of my garden.*

*On the first day of Spring, I
dig my fingers deep into the
earth.*

*I can feel its energy, and my
spirits soar.”*

Helen Hays

2025 AGC Plant Sale

Antioch Garden Club General Mtg. Minutes Feb. 14, 2026

WELCOME: Holly Swehla, President

CALL TO ORDER: 1:05 p.m.



Pledge of Allegiance and Garden Club of Illinois Pledge were recited. Meeting was paused for program *Animal Resistant Gardening* presented by Mel Zaloudek. Holly thanked Mel for this very informative and humorous program.

Secretary's Report: There was no formal meeting in December. Chris Priller turned in an informal report on ourclub Pajama Party. Report was approved by Holly and is published in the current issue of *The Garden Dirt*. There was no January meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Jennifer Wittenberg reported both the November and December treasurer's reports are published in the current issue of *The Garden Dirt*. Ending balance Dec. 31, 2025 was \$6,305.68. The report has been filed for audit. Jennifer is also collecting membership dues. These are due by April 1st. If you are interested in attending the GCI Annual Meeting & Luncheon on Tues., **March 10**, the deadline for registration is Feb. 28. If you need additional information, you may contact Jennifer, Chris, or Holly for details.

Correspondence: Current mail included a Heartland Bank Scholarship Fund Statement, which was forwarded to Jennifer. A scholarship application came in and was also forwarded to Jennifer. In addition, Javi Sanchez, last year's Scholarship recipient, sent us an update on his schooling. Jennifer read the highlights to the club. Thank you cards received in January were turned over to Historian Joyce Kufalk.

Standing Committee Reports

Audit: Norma Lucansky - No report.

Bylaws: Judy Caldwell, Lana Svitak and Jennifer Wittenberg will meet soon. Any suggestions of changes should be sent to them. Chris will be sending Judy some possible re-wording of an article discussed at an Executive Board meeting.

Historian: Joyce Kufalk is missing the November *Garden Dirt*. Jayna will send it to Joyce.

Horticulture: George Weckbacher reported a White Birch tree has been chosen for the Mini Park. This will be our Arbor Day tree. Planting and dedication date to be announced once determined. Please sign up for your Maintenance Week. This year, a Horticulture Committee member will be available to assist members during their week. There is also a Maintenance Guide handout for our gardens to assist you. Mark your calendars for **March 28 Cleanup Day**. This is an all-member event. We will also pot plants for sale at the plant sale at this time. Theme for this year's gardens is Red, White, and Blue in honor of the 250th anniversary of the United States. Next Horticulture meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, **March 18**, 11 a.m., at the library. All are invited to attend.

Hospitality: Sharon stated we still need a lead hostess for the June meeting.

—Minutes, continued on page 6

January AGC Treasurer's Report

Respectively Submitted by Jennifer Wittenberg, Treasurer

Beginning Bank Balance		<u>\$ 6,305.68</u>
Disbursements Cleared		
	Check #	Paid to
1/13/2026	1338	Open Arms Mission
1/28/2026	1339	Holy Swehla
1/28/2026	1336	Holy Swehla
		Committee
		general fund donation in honor of Jackie Horneck
		hospitality December hostess
		publicity seed expo
		50
		25.3
		25
		Total
		<u>\$ 100.30</u>
Deposits		
	From	
		Total
		<u>\$ -</u>
ending bank balance 1/31/2026		
		<u>\$ 6,205.38</u>
Disbursements Outstanding		
		Total
		<u>\$ -</u>
Ending Book balance 1/31/2026		
		Total
		<u>\$ 6,205.38</u>

News briefs

- ◇ **Sock Donation Drive** —We still collect socks to donate to Open Arms Mission's *Socks for the Soul*. Donate **new** socks in original packaging. Please help Open Arms "Warm the hearts & feet of our neighbors."



- ◇ **Volunteer Hours:** Remember to track hours you volunteer to the club and report them to Donna Rieter, jdrieter@sbcglobal.net. The hours are important because they represent the value the club adds to the community.
- ◇ **Save the Date:** The Antioch Public Library is hosting the free program, "Our Migratory Pelicans - Neighborhood Naturalist Series," 6:30-7:30 p.m., March 18. Registration is required. Go to the library website. This program is presented by environmental educator Holly Garvey.
- ◇ **Calling all photographers!** Nancy Colby would like to swap out the cover photo on the club's Facebook page every month. Send photos to her at petart4U2@gmail.com.
- ◇ **Welcome** to our newest members! Say hello to **Tom Bossier, Jose Martinez and Kathleen Martinez**, who all joined at the February meeting! **Glad** to have you!



Social & Community Happenings by Nancy Colby, Publicity



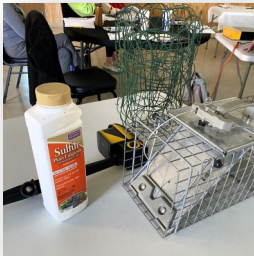
Get them while they last!

Thanks to the members who took advantage of our “shirt sale” at the last meeting. We had five shirts and five sweatshirts on sale for \$10 each. All of the sweatshirts now have new homes with members. **BUT** there are still five shirts available. With summer coming, you may want a nice club T-shirt to wear while you’re doing community garden maintenance.

Shirts available: 2 Small, 2 Medium, 1 XXL

Thanks for the club spirit and the wearing of the green!

February Speaker Mel Zaloudek, right, was a “hoot,” sharing many jokes with his advice on “Animal-Resistant Gardening.” Pictured below were some of his tricks of the trade.



THREE members joined! On the left, Holly introduces Tom Bossier. Below, Antioch Trustee Jose Martinez and his wife, Kathleen, seated, both joined.



February Meeting Snapshots

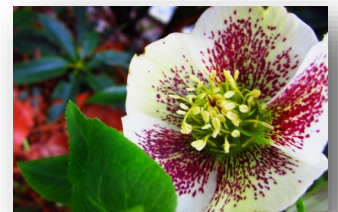
President’s Column *(continued from p. 1)*

Please check with our Horticulture Chair George Weckbacher to sign up for a time to help maintain our village gardens this summer. Do not fear, there will be someone there from the Horticulture Committee to help! You will never be left alone. You may also read up on maintenance duties, and about our gardens, in your yearbook. We thank everyone for their help, as always!

REMINDER: It is time for dues. Annual dues is \$30 per person; \$50 per couple. Our fiscal year runs July 1 to June 30. We will collect dues by our April 11 regular meeting, which gives our treasurer time to get the money sent in to Garden Clubs of Illinois. Thank you!

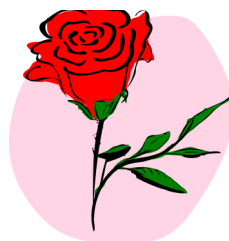
My gardening motto - *“Bloom where you are planted.”*

Yours Truly, **Holly Swehla, President**



— *Hol*

—*Minutes*, continued from p. 3



Please start thinking ahead about the upcoming club year and when you can host/hostess. Thank you for the goodies provided by this month's hostesses!

Membership: Carol Zwiazek announced there were 29 members, 4 guests, and 1 speaker in attendance. All four guests joined the club! Names to follow next month.

Nominating: Please consider sharing your talents with the club. Jane Buck will be announcing the candidates at our next meeting.

Programs: Betty Sprovieri is doing this in Susan Ullrich's absence. Betty reported we are set for this year and thanked today's speaker for his informative presentation.

Publicity: Nancy Colby delivered the blankets to Open Arms Mission, and once again, they were very appreciative of our support. Nancy also has several club T-shirts and sweatshirts available at the bargain price of \$10. See Nancy if interested.

Scholarship: Jennifer reported we received 1 application today. Application has been updated and is available on our website. Applications have also been distributed to area schools.

Newsletter: Jayna Legg reported the February *Garden Dirt* was emailed last week. **Deadline** for next month's articles is **Feb. 25**.

Yearbook: No report.

Facebook: Holly reported we have 546 followers. Nancy Colby is hoping to change the header each month. If anyone has appropriate photos for this, please forward them to Nancy.

Special Projects

Wreath Decorating: Mary Yott did a fabulous job organizing this event. We have received many Thank You's and positive responses. **Monarch Initiative:** No report. **Blankets:** Thanks to Mary & Nancy Colby for all their work on putting this together. Twenty-eight blankets were donated to Open Arms Mission and they were very appreciative of the club's continued support.

Dorissss: No report.

Ways & Means: Cris Crego has volunteered to chair. Thank you Cris!

Plant Sale: Cindy Cartner reminded everyone to keep **May 16** on your calendar for our big fundraiser. It will be in the updated pavilion at Williams Park. Sale hours are 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. More information will be sent out before the event. Cindy is waiting on confirmation of the \$750 donation from Heartland Bank and our goal this year is \$4,000. Cindy still needs a bake sale person. Reminder: We not only accept plants but also pots, garden accessories, cash, anything relative to gardening. Veggies always sell out fast so the more we have, the happier our customers are. There is more information on pages 63-65 of your yearbook.

—*Minutes*, continued on page 7

—*Minutes*, continued from p. 6

This is Cindy's 21st year running this, and she is thinking of stepping down. Please contact Cindy if you think you may be interested in taking over. Cindy has done an incredible job!

Old Business: We continue to collect Socks for Souls for Open Arms Mission.

New Business: Dues are now due—\$30 per person, \$50 per couple. They are due by **April 1st**.

Announcements: Mark your calendars for **Seed Expo, March 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., CLC Gym**. Nancy C. and Holly will man (woman?) our booth. Mary Yott had surgery recently and is recovering nicely. Happy healing, Mary! Cindy needed to change her email and has sent out the new one yesterday. Check your email.

Raffle Proceeds: \$125.

Meeting adjourned: 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Priller, 2-16-26

Horticulture Committee Report by George Weckbacher

Spring is just around the corner. The ground is warming up, and bulbs are showing signs blossoms will be here soon. The AGC Mini Park garden has snow drops that are up, and we are waiting for the newly planted crocuses to show their blossoms.

The AGC Spring Cleanup for the gardens is March 28. Join us and other club members to learn from our Master Gardeners and help get the gardens ready for the coming year.

This year, the Horticulture Committee will be separating some of our plants at the same time as we clean the gardens. The plan is to pot the excess plants to sell at the AGC annual plant sale.

The Arbor Day tree project - planting a white birch tree on the west end of the Mini Park garden - is going well. The village has okayed the ground for digging, and we are coordinating with Jane Buck and the Arbor Day Committee to plan an event and plant the tree.

The Horticulture Committee is putting together a garden plant guide that will match the yearbook layout. This should be ready by the next club meeting March 14.

The next Horticulture Committee meeting is scheduled for 11 a.m., March 18, at the Antioch Library. All are welcome to attend or even join the committee.

Hope to see you there!



Snow Drops are blooming in the Mini Park

~ANTIOCH GARDEN CLUB ANNUAL MEMBER DUES~

2026-27

Individuals \$30; Couples \$50

Membership dues apply July to the following June and are **due by April 1**

Make checks payable to: Antioch Garden Club

Membership includes: Garden Clubs of Illinois Central Region District IX
and National Garden Clubs, Inc.

Please fill out the following information return to:

Treasurer, Antioch Garden Club

P.O. Box 4283

Antioch, IL 60002

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NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP CODE+ 4 DIGITS _____ + _____

Home phone number _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Birthday _____

(leave blank) PAID _____ DATE _____

THE GARDEN DIRT

ANTIOCH GARDEN CLUB

Jayna Legg, Editor

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Antioch, Il 60002

