



THE GARDEN DIRT

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Website: Antiochgardenclub.org

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President's Column

Summer greetings! Our gardens are looking so beautiful! Every year, I am so happy to see these plants come back. Most of them are over 30 years old and still going strong!

We are now dividing them and selling them at the plant sale each year. I love making them pay for themselves. We still have dividing to do in about July. More details on that in the near future.

Time to get your red, white and blue on for our participation in this year's 4th of July parade. Mary Yott is organizing the paper flower party. The kids last year LOVED these. We gave them all out before we passed the high school! (One block).

This year, Jane Buck's son Wayne will be decking out his fancy pickup truck, and pulling a 20-foot trailer. I believe that will allow many more "riders." We had a blast last year! And the crowds really loved us! More details to follow on that also. Michelle Goldstein is taking the reins from Nancy Colby as Publicity Chair.

—See President's Column, cont. on page 5

Birthdays:

6/1—Kathy Martinez

7/19—Tom Bossier

7/21—Jane Buck

8/7—Kevin McCarty

8/16—Sharon Pendergast

8/27—Jayna Legg

June Program: POTLUCK & "Landscaping with native plants," by David Brooks. Learn the benefits of using natives. You'll be introduced to a wide range of plants for home gardens & learn how to incorporate them in your landscaping.

June Hospitality: Cindy Cartner, lead hostess, with Jennifer Wittenberg, Donna Reiter and Collette Monahan. They'll bring desserts; **members bring potluck dishes.**

CALENDAR

June 13—Regular Mtg., 1 p.m., Dolly Spiering Center, door opens 12:30 p.m.

June 24—Board Mtg., 6 p.m., Dolly Spiering Center

Aug. 26—Board Mtg., 6 p.m., Dolly Spiering Center

Sept. 12—Regular Mtg., 1 p.m., Dolly Spiering Center, door opens 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/>

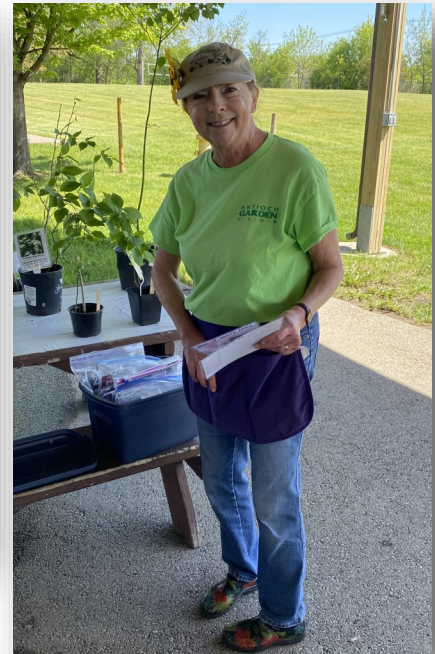
Plant Sale Review

Plant Sale Chairperson Cindy Cartner reported to the board a net income of \$3753.51 from this year's annual plant sale! **We THANK Cindy for her many, many years of hard work as the plant sale chairperson.** Reminder to club members, this was Cindy's last year as chairperson. We are actively recruiting for a new chairperson!

Thank you to all who dug and donated plants, who baked and brought items for the bake sale, who brought garden items to sell, who hung signs and banners, who worked the sale, and who purchased items! Everything helps make the sale a success!



Above, Carol Zwiazek and Nancy Zitkus pose at their beautiful membership table. Cindy Cartner starts cleanup on the right. Pat Hays and Joyce Kufalk work at the ground covers table below.



For more photos of the plant sale and much more, go to the Antioch Garden Club website: <https://antiochgardenclub.org>



New members Jose Martinez and Tom Bossier pose for a picture at the start of the sale.

AGC General Meeting Minutes May 9, 2026



WELCOME: Holly Swehla, President

CALL TO ORDER: 1 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance & Garden Clubs of Illinois Pledge were recited.

Meeting was paused for program *Improving Your Soil the Natural Way* by Ken Benson. Ken discussed various methods to improve our soil, reminded us the PH in our soils is 6.5 -7.0 and various methods to amend if needed. Holly & Betty S. thanked Ken for a very informative & entertaining program.

Secretary's Report: Chris P. gave clarification regarding PrideFest participation. We are concentrating on recruiting new members locally at this time by participating at the Farmers Market and Concert Series. The May issue of *The Garden Dirt* regarding this subject includes the General Meeting Minutes of April 11 (under *New Business*) and the decision that was made at the board meeting under *News Briefs*. Minutes of both meetings have been approved and filed.

Treasurer's Report: Jennifer W. reported the Ending Book Balance for March 31 was \$7,055.51. The March statement is also in *The Garden Dirt*. Effective in June, Jennifer will be sending the monthly report to all chairs. The report has been filed for audit.

Correspondence: Chris P. reported this week's mail pickup had several post office problems. Three pieces of mail were received with the label "damage to your mail during handling by Postal Services". One from Antioch Public Library was an open and empty envelope dated Dec. 13, 2025. The next was a ripped and open Thank You from Open Arms Mission dated Dec. 4, 2025. The third was a Happy Holidays and update from last year's scholarship winner, Javi Sanchez, dated Dec. 22, 2025, which was opened and ripped. It also said "photos enclosed," and there were none. Two pieces of mail were received intact: Heartland Bank checks, which were given to Jennifer W. and a "Donation to the Antioch Garden Club of \$195 in honor of Karen Coulter." The Thank You card expressed how much the garden club meant to Karen.

Standing Committee Reports

Audit: Norma L., Dee O. No report.

Bylaws: Nancy Z. Presented proposed Club Bylaws revisions. The proposals are included in the current *Garden Dirt*. **Article V: Duties of Officers Section 1** was approved with a vote of 1 Nay; all other present members voted Yay. **Article VII: Board Section 3** ensued in a discussion and has gone back to the Committee. Tabled until next meeting. **Article IX: Duties of Standing Committees Section 7** was also tabled until next meeting due to discussion.

Historian: Joyce K. No report. If any member is interested in seeing the AGC History Books, see Amy Blue at Antioch Library. These may not be removed from the library.

Horticulture: George W. George thanked Jane Buck for the wonderful Arbor Day presentation and thanked the members who attended. He reminded us to check our Garden Maintenance schedules and to mark May 30th as our Annual Planting Day. Hours will be 1-4 p.m. Next Horticulture Meeting is 11 a.m., June 19, at the library. All are invited.

—Minutes, continued on page 7

April AGC Treasurer's Report

Respectively Submitted by Jennifer Wittenberg, Treasurer

Beginning Bank Balance					\$ 7,055.51
Disbursements Cleared					
	Check #	Paid to	Committee		
4/11/2026	1354	Cindy Cartner	Horticulture committee		67.95
4/11/2026	1355	Cindy Cartner	Plant sale		31.24
4/11/2026	1356	Dee Obrackta	membership		15.6
4/11/2026	1357	Karen Thomson	April Program		100
4/22/2026	1358	Holly Swehla	Arbor day		135
4/21/2026		Heartland Bank	check chg deluxe PPD Antioch Garden Club		28.25
				total	378.04
				balance	\$6,677.47
Deposits					
	From				
4/4/2026	2026 dues				260
4/10/2026	2026 dues				30
4/15/2026	April Raffle				85
4/15/2026	donation plant sale Chris Priller				40
4/15/2026	donation plant sale Heartland Bank				750
4/29/2026	2026 dues				30
				Total	\$ 1,195.00
ending bank	balance 4/30/2026				\$ 7,872.47
Disbursements Outstanding					
4/11/2026	1352	George Weckbacher	March Hostess		25.00
4/11/2026	1353	George Weckbacher	Horticulture committee		33.48
				Total	\$ 58.48
Ending Book	balance 4/30/2026			Total	\$ 7,813.99

News briefs

- ◇ **Do you have a "Garden of the Month?"** — Submit your photos to Lana Svitak & Stacy Vogt for "Garden of the Month" on the website!
- ◇ **Next Horticulture Committee meeting** is 11 a.m., June 19, at the Antioch Library. All are invited to attend.
- ◇ **Philanthropy Committee Announcement:** The club will donate two children's books to the Antioch Public Library: "Tree Full of Wonder" and "Up in the Garden, Down in the Dirt."
- ◇ **Flower-making night for the July 4 parade** will be 5-7 p.m., June 9, at the Antioch Library. Mary Yott plans for the club to make 600 tissue paper flowers this year since we ran out last year at the beginning of the parade! All are invited to help make flowers! If you can't make it to the library event but want to help make flowers at home, contact Mary Yott.



Social & Community Happenings by Chair Michelle Goldstein

Plant sale was a success!

Rain, rain really did go away. May 16, 2026 turned out to be a beautiful day for a plant sale! All our lovely members arrived first thing Saturday morning with sleeves rolled up ready to work. And work we did! Thank you to everyone for making this day amazing, friends and spouses, too! Even though some are not official members, they're the glue that helps us hold things together! During the sale, we met some wonderful like-minded neighbors who share our passion for all things green. Wouldn't we all love to see where our nurtured babies go? Hope our customers loved all the goodies, baked and canned. Thank you to our resident beekeeper, knife sharpener and sponsor (Heartland Bank & Trust) for their support. Cheers to another successful sale and celebrating over pizza donated by a community favorite, Antioch Pizza!

In future happenings: Stay tuned for the details of our 4th of July parade! We'd love to see as many members as possible come out to pass out the beautiful crepe paper flowers we'll soon be busily making. They were such a hit last year; we can't wait to put smiles on the faces of our neighbors as we celebrate our country's 250th anniversary. Can you say *Semiquencentennial* ten times fast?



Antioch Garden Club members pause for a photo before the start of the May 16 plant sale.

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

We thank Nancy for her incredible talents and will miss her. I'm sure Michelle will do an outstanding job also. For many years, we did not have much in the way of publicity, so I'm thrilled we are getting so much more exposure!

Speaking of exposure, please consider any of the committees available before the yearbook goes to print. Check your yearbook for our many committees to get your name in lights also.



Jennifer Wittenberg, Nancy Colby at last year's July 4 parade

Bloom where you are planted!

—Holly Swehla, President

Horticulture Committee Report by George Weckbacher

How to care for spring bulbs for vibrant blooms next year



Everyone loves and enjoys the spring bulbs when they show the world their colors.

Deadheading for better blooms

Spring flowers that you enjoy must be deadheaded after their show time if you want the same or better flowering next year.

Removing spent blooms encourages the plant to produce more flowers and prevents seeds from forming, which can sap energy from the plant. Regular deadheading also helps maintain a neat appearance in your garden.

How to deadhead spring bulbs



It's easy to do and takes only minutes a day.

You can use trimmers or even pinch the spent flowers and seed pods off the stems.



Feeding bulbs after blooming

Once the bulbs have blossomed, now is another good time to apply nutrition to help the bulbs grow for the next season. Spring bulbs store energy in their bulbs before their foliage dies back. So now is the time to give them the best opportunity to shine for you next year. You can use a 5-10-5 or 6-10-4 fertilizer for bulb beds. Also recommended is a bone meal application for most spring bulbs.

Benefits of proper care

Do a little research on your garden bulbs to find the best source of nutrition you can apply. A little time spent in the garden this spring will make a better garden showing next year.

— **May Minutes**, continued from p. 3

George also wished all Moms present a Happy Mothers Day!

Hospitality: Sharon P. Thank you to today's hostesses: Dawn S., Nancy Z., Jane B., and Jill M. All the goodies were delicious! Signup Sheets were passed around for next year. If you were unable to sign up today, please contact Sharon. **June Hostesses:** Cindy C., Jennifer W., Donna R., Colette M.

Membership: Trina J. reported today's attendance as 37 members. Raffle amount: \$105.

Nominating: Jane B. presented the officers nominated for the 2026-2028 term. President: Holly Swehla; Vice-President: Betty Sprovieri; Secretary: Chris Priller; Treasurer: Jennifer Wittenberg. Nancy Z. made a motion to accept these nominations with a vote. All members voted Yay. The chairs will be presented at the next meeting.

Philanthropy: Jane B. reported the committee is choosing a book to be donated to the Antioch Public Library. This will be presented at June meeting.

Programs: Betty S. reported most programs have been chosen for next year. Big thank you to Susan U. for all her assistance in this endeavor. If members have any requests or suggestions for future programs, please contact Betty.

Publicity: Nancy C. has been going over information on Publicity with our new Chair Michelle Goldstein. We will be in the 4th of July Parade. Thank you, Nancy, for all your ideas and hard work during your term as chair!

Scholarship: Jennifer W. announced Danielle Hewitt as our scholarship winner this year. Danielle is currently a student at Purdue University, studying Horticulture with an interest in Native Plants. More information on Danielle is forthcoming.

Newsletter: Jayna L. left extra copies of *The Garden Dirt* at the officers' table. No deadline was given for next newsletter but based on previous deadlines, it is probably by May 27.

Website: Lana S. reported AGC Website is up to date and she thanked Stacy V. for all her assistance.

Yearbook: Trina J. is hard at work on our new yearbook. She still needs some information from committee chairs. First draft should be complete by end of June. Review Meeting date to be determined.

Facebook: Holly S. reported we are up to 559 followers.

Special Projects Reports (Active)

Dorisssss & Dugless: Nancy C. for Mary Yott. Dugless has moved to the berm area. Dorissss remains at the Mini Park.



4th of July Parade: Mary Y. will be heading up a group to make flowers to be distributed at the parade. Dates will be announced once determined.

—Minutes, continued on page 8

Scholarship Committee Report *by Jennifer Wittenberg*

The recipient of the Nancy Zitkus/Antioch Garden Club scholarship is Danielle Hewitt.

Danielle is in her final year at Purdue University, and after graduation, she plans to work with a team that prioritizes restoration, habitat creation and large-scale environmental planning.

Danielle wants her future career to focus not only on creating meaningful places for people, but also on improving the ecological health of the land itself. She is passionate about incorporating native plants, restoring ecological systems and designing and designing spaces that actively support wildlife. She has a GPA of 3.96.

Congratulations Danielle!



Scholarship Winner Danielle Hewitt

— *May Minutes*, continued from p. 7

Ways & Means: Cris C. continues to work with ideas for fundraisers.

Plant Sale: Cindy C. has an article (page 2) of *The Garden Dirt*. It has everything you need to know about the upcoming plant sale. Workers – please be there by 8 a.m.

Old Business: Open Arms Mission now serves over 1,000 clients monthly. The need is great in our area. We donated a lot of socks last month. Please continue to donate socks and toiletries.

New Business: 1) Holly S. has a call into GCI regarding the new password for the website. Many were unable to access the latest issue of *Garden Glories*. 2) Kathleen Martinez shared information regarding the Lake County Fair. Dates are July 29-Aug. 2. 3) Carol Z. presented more information on the possible “Garden to Table” event at Oliveri North. Club members could drop off fresh herbs and veggies one to three days prior to Sept. 12(?). A meal will be prepared with our ‘donations’. This will be a private event with a cost of \$25 plus tip, and cash bar. More information to follow. 4) Jose Martinez introduced Joseph Hettich, a Scout working on his Eagle status. Joseph’s proposed project is to fix up planters at the old Scout House and to plant them with flowers as part of a community beautification project. They are asking AGC to assist with design and flower recommendations for this project. More information to follow.

Announcements: Please remember to keep track of and report your volunteer hours to Donna R monthly. These Service Hours assist us in keeping our continuing eligibility as a 501(c) 3 organization. Page 13 of your yearbook designates what counts as volunteer hours.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Priller, Secretary

Antioch Garden Club

Proposed Bylaws Revisions 2026-27

Please read over carefully as these bylaws will be voted on by all members present at the June meeting. They were read at the board meeting and accepted.

Article V: Duties of Officers

Section 1: No change

Section 2: Reads: Term begins at installation.

ADD: The officers of the Club shall be President(s), Vice Presidents(s), Secretary. and Treasurer. The officers may serve two(2) consecutive terms upon re-election (a term consists of 2 years). No member shall be eligible for the presidency unless she(he) has served on the Board at least one(1) year.

Article VII: BOARD

Section 3. Reads: The control and management of the club shall be vested in the Board, subject to the Bylaws and policies voted by the Club. It shall approve expenditures and present recommendations to the Club.

ADD: All non-budgeted expenditures over \$50.00 shall be voted on by the membership following consideration by the Board.

Article IX: Duties of Standing Committees:

Section 7: NOMINATING:

READS: Submit candidates for each officer position. Recruit chairpersons and committee members at election time.

DELETE: and committee members.

To read: Submit candidates for each officer position. Recruit chairpersons at election time. Chairpersons may select members for their committees.

Article X: Elections:

Reads: The Nominating Committee presents a full slate of officers and chairmanship of each standing committee. This report is presented in April and voted upon in May.

TO READ: The Nominating Committee presents a full slate of officers and chairpersons of each standing committee. Chairpersons may select members for their committees. This report is presented in April and voted upon in May.

Bylaw Committee:

Judy Caldwell, Chairman

Lana Svitak

Jennifer Wittenberg

Nancy Zitkus, Past President and Parliamentary Advisor

THE GARDEN DIRT

ANTIOCH GARDEN CLUB

Jayna Legg, Editor

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