**Homer Garden Club Meeting Minutes**

**Sunday November 19, 2023 2-4 PM Aspen Hotel**

President Kathy Dube brought the meeting to order at 2:06 pm. She reminded people to renew their memberships if they haven’t done it yet.

1. Secretary’s Report – Tina reported that Minutes from the October 15 meeting were published in the Garden Club newsletter and could be found on the website – Homergardenclub.org
2. Treasurer’s Report – Kendall reported membership income of $265., total expenses of $449.72 leaving a total balance of $26,796.72.
3. Committee Reports
	1. Speaker’s Committee – Jan reported that Marsha Rouggly will be our January speaker. Jan said her term ends after May so we are looking for a new Vice President after that. The Vice President is in charge of recruiting and organizing speakers for Garden Club meetings.
	2. Social Committee – Michael is out of town, no report.
	3. Gardener’s Weekend – Annie reported that they have gardens signed up for this year’s tour but are always looking for gardens for future tours. Three gardens are signed up for a members-only tour, but no date is set yet. The Garden tour is set for July 21, with an ‘After-party’ for gardeners on the 23rd. In the past the Gardeners Weekend included a speaker but that has not happened for a few years. If anyone wants to organize that please speak to Annie.
	4. Database/Membership Report – Barb reported that only about half of the membership has renewed.
	5. Baycrest Garden Committee – No report
	6. Newsletter – Paula asked that members send her articles to add to the newsletter.
	7. Plant Sale – Will be in May.
	8. Scholarship Committee – The Scholarship Committee has not been formed but since the HS invited us to offer a Garden Club scholarship Francie will attend the HS scholarship meeting to inform students and faculty about the requirements (which will also be advertised to college students and the community)
	9. Giving Committee – Two proposals have been submitted and 2 volunteers were asked to stay after a few minutes at the end of the meeting to review proposals and give recommendations to the Board.
4. Bylaws/Constitution updates – Updates have been made to treasurer/audit procedures. Look for a redlined version in the next newsletter and a vote will be taken at the January membership meeting to adopt the updated bylaws and constitution.

Speaker

Jan introduced Don Bladow, tech coordinator at an Anchorage high school. When he retired, he took a Master Gardening class and then started a food pantry garden at a church in Anchorage. His 10,000 square foot garden now produces about 4,000 lb. of vegetables for the food pantry.

Don gave instructions to build 9’X3’X8” tabletop garden boxes for seniors and showed how they could be turned into low tunnels using PVC arches with a remay or plastic cover. You can find this information at the UofA Master gardener blog: <https://alaskamastergardener.community.uaf.edu/>

Don talked about his favorite tools for successfully working such a large garden. First is a ‘Jung’ seeder, which can space seeds from ½ to 24 inches apart. He said he never has to thin carrots again! He uses a small rototiller to keep weeds down between the rows and a weed burner before he plants seeds and transplants.

Don said an irrigation system is a very important timesaver in the garden. He set up a permanent PVC system with 6 sprinkler heads that can be drained in the fall and left in place.

He said it is important to find out what the food pantry wants and when, and then plant and harvest accordingly. Vegetables should be harvested and taken to the food pantry when fresh. Louise remarked that the message she had from the food pantry was: “more carrots, less kale”

Don noted if you are providing advice to groups, it is nice to have the credentials of a Master Gardener and said he always learns something new from their meetings. A Master Gardener class can be taken online from UAF. Kathy noted that the club has provisions to scholarship anyone interested in taking the master gardening class.

Compost is another important part of a successful garden. Don has six compost bins and uses grass clippings from the church lawn and collects leaves from friends and neighbors. He composts cabbage leaves and Brussel sprouts in place. To prevent root maggots, he plants root crops as far away as possible from where they were planted the summer before. He starts his own lobelia, peppers, leeks and onions, Brussel sprouts and brassicas in the spring to save quite a bit of money.

He invited anyone to come see the garden and volunteer!

* Kathy reminded people to renew their membership
* Next meeting January 21, 2 PM
* Two volunteers reviewed the applications submitted to Giving Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 with 20 members attending.