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Homer Garden Club

Newsletter

The next HGC meeting will be **May 18** at 2:00 at the Aspen Hotel.

May 2025

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May 18 Speaker will be Brenda Adams on Creating a Beautiful & Low Maintenance Garden

Everyone wants a low maintenance garden, yet too many find ourselves struggling with one that is nearly impossible to maintain. How can you create something that's both beautiful *and* enjoyable?

Join Brenda Adams for a fresh perspective on ways to create a new garden or renovate an existing one to reduce your maintenance. You'll leave the presentation with an understanding of the most important design concepts that will help you achieve your goal. You'll see how your plant choices can affect your success, explore innovative techniques that make parts of the garden *nearly* maintenance free, and why a little bit of regular maintenance goes a long way. She'll help you take a new look at soil and site preparation and the basics of a plant's horticultural needs. Finally, you'll learn how to increase the pleasure you gain from your gardens, which after all, is what gardening is really supposed to be about.

Brenda Adams is the author of the acclaimed books, *Cool Plants for Cold Climates: A Garden Designer's Perspective*, winner of the Garden Writers' Association 2018 Silver Award, and



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Homer Garden Club Treasurer's Report for April 2025

Income

Membership	\$65.00	
Newsletter Ads	\$240.00	
Total Income		<u>\$305.00</u>

Expenses

Speaker expenses	\$364.00	
Website domain	\$24.85	
Computer - Microsoft 365	\$107.84	
HCOG - Peony sponsor-	\$250.00	
Aspen Hotel Venue	\$200.00	
Total Expenses		<u>\$946.69</u>

Checking Beginning Balance	\$ 16,384.80
Income	\$ 305.00
Expenses	\$ 946.69
Transfer to 18 month CD	\$ 10,000.00
CD dividend	\$ 16.36
Interest	\$ 0.38
Ending Balance 4/30/2025	<u>\$ 5,759.85</u>
 Money Market Beginning Balance 4/1/2025	 \$ 6,235.47
Interest	\$ 1.03
Money Market Ending Balance 4/30/2025	<u>\$ 6,236.50</u>
 CD 18 month term (maturity 10/10/2026)	 \$ 10,000.00
interest/dividend	\$ 23.42
CD 18 month term (maturity 3/30/2026)	\$ 5,000.00
interest/dividend (transferred to checking)	
CD Ending Balance 4/30/2025	\$ 15,023.42
Total Ending Balance 4/30/2025	<u>\$ 27,019.77</u>



*(Speaker Brenda Adams
Continued from page 1)*

There's a Moose in My Garden: Designing Gardens in Alaska and the Far North. She has taught four different garden design-focused classes at the University of Alaska as well as the landscape

design section of the Alaska Master Gardeners' course.



Directions for May Zoom Meeting

by Kathy Dube', President

Join us in person or by zoom for the May Garden Club Meeting:

Topic: May Homer Garden Club Meeting

Time: May 18, 2025 02:00 PM Alaska

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83540669452?pwd=P45Wbxq0tSHOb6jYTrH50X9zaBRgTl.1>

Meeting ID: 835 4066 9452

Passcode: 246917

One tap mobile

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HGC Plant Sale May 24

by Paula Riley

Just a reminder that the annual Homer Garden Club Plant Sale will be held **Saturday, May 24**, on the Chamber of Commerce lawn. **Volunteers need to there to help set up by 9:00 and the sale will begin at 11:00. It is usually over by 12:00.**

Now is the perfect time to dig up any extra plants from your garden and put them in containers for the sale so they have time to recuperate from the transplanting and look perky for the sale.

As usual, we need volunteers to help set up, price plants for sale, cashiers to take the plant payments, and knowledgeable gardeners to help identify the plants that are not marked. We will also need cardboard boxes suitable for taking purchased plants home.

This sale is a major fundraiser for the Homer Garden

Club, so contributions of plants and labor are greatly appreciated.

I can be reached t 907-435-7055 or email me at pauril@yahoo.com.



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HGC Giving Committee—Homer Senior Center

by Tina Seaton

The Homer Garden Club received a request from the Homer Senior Center for a grant to purchase materials to smother the Orange Hawkweed infestation at the Senior Center. The Board researched the request with the Homer Soil and Water Conservation Office and it was determined that the material requested is the best solution for controlling hawkweed other than spraying it, which the Senior Center did not feel was a viable option due to its toxicity.

At the April 27 meeting the Homer Garden Club Giving Committee approved the grant to the Homer Senior Center for supplies to smother the Orange Hawkweed infestation in the back lawn at the center. Subsequently, 5 Rotary members, 2 Garden Club members, and a Girl Scout all worked together to lay down the woven road fabric. The fabric will be left on for at least two years in an effort to kill the invasive hawkweed. The total cost was \$367.97.



******* SPRING CLEAN-UP WILL BE SATURDAY, MAY 17th,
BEGINNING AT 10:00 AM *******

Please join us for the spring clean-up of the Baycrest Garden. It only take 1 1/2 to 2 hours with a full crew and is a lot of fun.

All you need to bring is your enthusiasm and your favorite hand tools, especially clippers. If you can bring a shovel and a lifting fork, that would be helpful for loading debris for the landfill.

Any questions: Call Brenda at 235-3763 or 299-4701. Thanks for your continued support of this flourishing, well-maintained garden.



The refreshment volunteers for May are:
Francie Roberts
Marie Williams



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MON-FRI 10-6 & SAT 10-5**

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HGC April Minutes

by Tina Seaton

4-27-25 Homer Garden Club Meeting - Minutes

1. Attendance – 34 in the room and 18 on Zoom
2. Announcements -

Yarrow, from the Pratt Museum, announced that they would have a full garden program this summer and would like some help with maintenance. You can sign up on the Pratt website.

Tina announced that the Senior Center/Friendship Terrace has been having financial issues from the prior administration and could use some help with weeding and watering their garden this summer. She passed around a sign-up sheet.

Lori Jenkins noted there will be an HCOA fundraiser Gala at the Norman Lowell gallery on May 16.

Don and Donna Rae have fresh asparagus from Oceanside Farms for sale after the meeting.

3. Additions to Agenda - none
4. Secretary's Report – nothing to report
5. Treasurer's Report – Kendall reported that memberships are still trickling in, the club made a \$500 donation to the seed library and renewed our \$10,000 CD. The total balance is \$27,626.27.
6. Committee Reports

- a. Garden Tour– there will be no big Garden Tour this summer for lack of volunteers to organize it. There may be pop-up tours for members only with short notice.

- b. Speaker's Committee – Fran reported that Brenda Adams will be the speaker in May.

- c. Baycrest Garden Committee – The Baycrest Garden clean-up will be May 17 at 10 am. Bring gloves & weeding tools. Meet at the Baycrest Garden.

- d. Social Committee – Michael thanked everyone who brought snacks, and he will contact volunteers before the next meeting. Michael reminded everyone about “No mow May” to leave dandelions in bloom for the bees.

- e. Newsletter – No report.

- f. Publicity – No report.

- g. Plant Sale – Paula reported that the plant sale will take place May 24. Volunteers should come about 9 to help set up and bring extra plants from your gardens. The sale will start at 11.

- h. Scholarship - Francie reported that there were no scholarship applications.

- i. Giving Committee – Francie asked for 2 or 3 volunteers to serve temporarily on the Giving Committee. The committee will consider a request from the Homer Senior Center for an up-to-\$600 grant to deal with an orange hawkweed infestation in the back yard. Tom Ballard, Anita Critchett and Donna Rae Faulkner volunteered. They approved the Homer Senior Center request to reimburse them after the project is completed.

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Jeff Lowenfels, Speaker.

Fran introduced Jeff Lowenfels, the author of the longest continually running garden column. He is also the author of 'Teaming with Microbes', 'Teaming with Nutrients', 'Teaming with Fungi', and 'Teaming with Bacteria', all of which are available at the Homer Bookstore.

The topic was the Soil Food Web. Jeff gave a fascinating talk that I will try to give the highlights of here. He said: Plants are in charge. Exudates from the plants attract the right nutrients. Mycorrhizal fungi bring the nutrients back to the roots and the fungi get the carbon that is produced. This is called the bacterial loop. He said bacterial slime creates soil structure, plants eat sunlight and poop oxygen. Chemicals in fertilizers, weed and feed, etc. cause bad things to happen. The food web can become dependent on them.

Best practices are to feed the soil with living mulches, monitor nutrients, add compost, and mulch. He emphasized not to disturb the soil because it breaks up the fungal network that feeds the plants. Don't till!

Jeff recommended a microbiometer test kit sold at microbiometer.com. This will tell you if you have good soil microbiology. "Research shows that microbial biomass (fungi and bacteria) is the leading indicator of soil health. Living soil fixes nutrients, improves plant immunity, stores water more efficiently and builds soil structure, therefore, a healthy level of microbes increases productivity while reducing inputs."

Compost! Compost! Compost!

Jeff noted you should make compost out of the plants you grow. He said it needs to be completely composted (no identifiable pieces). This can be accomplished by turning frequently. He said the microbes will move down through the soil so just put the compost on top, you do not need to till it in.

Jeff remarked that you can/should reuse your soil and that you should treat containers just like garden soil. In other words, do not break it all up every spring, just add compost on top.

The next meeting will be May 18, and the plant sale will be May 24th.

10 Tips for Staying Safe in the Garden by Mel Childs, Lawn Starter.com



Nearly 118 million Americans count themselves as gardeners, and that means nearly 118 million Americans are susceptible to injuries or illnesses connected with gardening. Before you pull up a

single clump of crabgrass in your flowerbed, check out these 10 tips for staying safe in the garden.

Gardening may seem like a safe hobby — and for the most part, it is — but it can lead to injury or illness. For instance, ERs treat more than 400,000 injuries each year related to outdoor garden tools, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission says.

1. Check The Ground Below

Before starting your gardening project, it is a good idea to know where you're digging. Unfortunately, the ground beneath you may not be as safe as it appears. There could be pipelines or cables below.

2. Wear Gloves

Garden gloves are one of the best ways to protect yourself when gardening in your yard. Believe it or not, there are many hidden dangers lurking as you work outside. So, when you plan to garden, it's a good idea to purchase gardening gloves that have a protective rubber coating on them.

3. Perform warm-up exercises

If you plan to spend some time in the garden, it is a good idea to do some warm-up exercises. Gardening can affect your body in the same way that a moderate-intensity workout can. It works various body parts, including the legs, arms, abdomen, and back. You will also burn calories while performing such movements.

4. Avoid Repetitive Motions

Did you know that prolonged and repetitive motions, such as digging, raking, trimming, pruning, and planting, may strain your muscles? To avoid this, it is ideal to switch up your tasks every 15 minutes and take

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between-task breaks. Changing your activities throughout gardening can allow you to work different muscle groups, helping to prevent muscle strain.

5. Banish Back Bending

When performing any exercises or strenuous activity, it is critical that you protect your back. Not doing so could cause muscle spasms or a much more serious injury, such as a herniated disk. Constantly bending while performing gardening tasks can create back discomfort. To minimize injury while gardening, experts recommend to hinge at the hip as you bend, not the waist.

In addition, kneeling instead of bending will put less strain on your back if done correctly and may be a better option for activities like weeding. For extra comfort, consider wearing kneepads.

6. Check Your Lifting

As with bending, lifting heavy objects can also cause strain on your back. When lifting objects, especially heavy ones, experts recommend to engage your legs and knees, not your back. When you're carrying heavy objects, hold them close to your body to reduce strain.

7. Block the Sun

Whether it is hot or cold out, the sun's powerful rays can burn your skin. To prevent sunburn, experts advise you to apply sunscreen that provides an SPF of at least 15, as well as ultraviolet A and B protection. Put on a wide-brimmed hat to keep the sun off your face, head, ears, and neck.

8. Watch Out For Pests

After a day of gardening, check your clothes and body for ticks. Pests can latch onto your clothing and burrow into your skin, causing skin irritation, blisters, and disease. Besides ticks, look out for other pests that could harm you: wasps, mosquitos, fleas

You can use insect repellent to keep some of these pests away and prevent insect bites. Additionally, wear protective clothing (long pants and long sleeves), spray the yard with pesticides (or use an Integrated Pest Management approach to keep pests away), and possibly avoid areas where these pests are in your yard.

9. Protect Your Eyes and Airways

Whether you have allergies or not, experts suggest using eye protection and a surgical face mask to protect your eyes and airway from dust, dirt, pollen, and large particles as you garden. Although it may not trigger an asthma attack or cause allergies for everyone, there may be things within your garden that can get in your eyes and nose.

10. Stay Hydrated

Gardening doesn't seem like it is a very arduous task, but it can take a toll on the body. As a result, it can leave you parched. Ideally, you should start drinking plenty of water before going outside. Whether you're gardening in warm weather or cooler weather, it is critical to stay hydrated. Not getting enough water in cold weather can cause hypothermia.

As you garden, it is a good practice to keep drinking water, even if you don't feel thirsty. Sometimes your body may experience dehydration before you start to feel thirsty. Be sure to keep water near you in the garden if you start to feel the effects of dehydration.

