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

January 2026

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Jan 18 Meeting Will Feature Marion Owen On Garden Myths Worth Breaking

You Can't Grow That Here!
And Other Garden Myths Worth
Breaking

“You can't grow that here!” Sound familiar? In this lively talk, Marion Owen takes on five stubborn garden myths—from sterile seed-starting soil to composting rules, and even whether AI really knows best. Drawing on

more than 40 years of hands-in-the-dirt experience, she shows how breaking a few so-called rules can lead to surprising breakthroughs—giving you better harvests and greater confidence in your garden.

WHO IS MARION OWEN?

Marion Owen is an organic gardening educator based in Kodiak, Alaska, with more than 40 years of hands-in-the-dirt experience. She writes a weekly gardening column, co-authored the New York Times bestseller *Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul*, and teaches



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November/December 2025 Treasurer's Report

by Kendall Dellaesperanza, Treasurer

Income

memberships	\$280.00
Books	\$34.50

Total Income \$314.50

Expenses

Total Expenses \$0.00

Checking Beginning Balance 11/01/2025	\$ 6,048.78
Income	\$ 314.50
Expenses	\$ -
CD dividend	\$ 33.26
Interest	<u>\$ 0.52</u>
Ending Balance 12/31/2025	\$ 6,397.06
Money Market Beginning Balance 11/01/2025	\$ 6,242.80
Interest	<u>\$ 2.09</u>
Money Market Ending Balance 12/31/2025	\$ 6,244.89
CD 18 month term (maturity 10/10/2026)	\$ 10,230.83
interest/dividend	\$ 69.70
CD 18 month term (maturity 3/30/2026)	\$ 5,000.00
interest/dividend (transferred to checking)	
CD Ending Balance 12/31/2025	\$ 15,300.53
Total Ending Balance 12/31/2025	\$ 27,942.48

*January Speaker Marion Owen
Continued from page 1)*

gardeners how to grow better plants—and a healthier you—using plain-spoken, Reader's Digest-style explanations that actually make sense. After a family medical emergency, Marion adopted a plant-based diet, deepening her interest in the powerful connection between soil health, food, and human well-being. Through years of outreach, including her YouTube channel and Instagram (@theupbeetgardener), she's a popular speaker and podcast guest, known for busting common

garden myths, lively storytelling, and a good sense of humor. And yes—she's the one whose Instagram post of leopard slugs mating somehow racked up more than 5 million views.

Connect with Marion:
[The UpBeet Gardener YouTube channel](#)

Blogsites: [The UpBeet Gardener](#)

Notes From the President

by Kathy Dube', President

Here's the info for the Zoom link:

Homer Garden Club January Meeting

Time: Jan 18, 2026 02:00 PM Alaska

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82630594091?pwd=dzCWQDScX9tBoDj9QT9nc58BpQGykk.1>

Meeting ID: 826 3059 4091

Passcode: 525527he following is the Zoom link for the January 18, 2026 Homer Garden Club meeting:

IN MEMORANUM

On January 12, at the regular meeting of the City Council, there was a proclamation honoring **Elaine Grabowski**, a longtime Homer Volunteer Fire Dept. member and longtime HGC member as well, who passed away on December 29. For many years, Elaine and I met at City Hall to sell tickets to the Garden Club tours on the morning of the tours. She was a delightful person and it was our running joke—see you the same time next year! —Fran Durner



HGC November Minutes

by Tina Seaton, Secretary

My AI program can't distinguish different voices if they are all coming from the same computer so the AI thought Kathy was the only speaker. I don't know who the slide presenters were. Please know your presentations were very much appreciated and we are sorry we could not give you the recognition you deserve.

11-16-25 Homer Garden Club General Membership Meeting – Minutes

President Kathy Dube' opened the meeting at Aspen Hotel convention room on November 16th at 2 pm.

Additions to Agenda – No additions

Secretary's Report – No report

Treasurer's Report – Kendall reported a total balance of \$27,522.41. She noted an upcoming CD maturity in March. Louise addressed membership updates, noting responses from members regarding their payments and offering to verify membership statuses using her tablet. Additionally, she highlighted the ongoing sales of club books, both locally and through Amazon, and mentioned there would be a need to restock due to low inventory.

Committee Reports

Garden Tour - The club decided to organize pop-up

member tours instead of a formal garden tour this summer, inviting members to host small group visits to their gardens.

Speaker's Committee - Kathy requested volunteers to coordinate speakers for upcoming events, emphasizing the need to manage travel and accommodations for out-of-town speakers. She highlighted the importance of sharing responsibilities within the volunteer organization and offered support by suggesting potential speakers and coordinating travel. The board discussed the possibility of co-chairing the position to ensure coverage during absences, and Kathy confirmed that instruction manuals and support from existing board members are available to help new volunteers. She mentioned that May would be the last meeting for speakers, and she would continue to contact volunteers through phone calls and texts to ensure coverage.

Baycrest Garden – No report

Social Committee - Kathy highlighted the efforts of Michael, the social committee chair, expressing gratitude for the snacks brought to gatherings

Newsletter – Kathy acknowledged Paula's work on the newsletter and encouraged everyone to contribute articles.

Scholarship - Kathy announced that the Master Gardener program has resumed after a hiatus and offered scholarships for members who wish to participate. The Master Gardener class runs from December to February, and Kathy mentioned the possibility of having Garden Club members fulfill part of their volunteer requirement by working with the Garden Club.

Giving Committee – provides funds for community gardening projects and members are encouraged to apply for these resources.

Program – Members shared photos and stories about their gardens last summer.

Gardening Challenges and Successes

Gardening experiences were shared, including challenges with grass and successful planting of peonies. She discussed the process of preparing the soil, planting the peonies, and the subsequent flooding that almost ruined the plants. Kathy also mentioned adding other plants like forsythia and lilies to her garden. She learned that moose tend to avoid her plants, but noted that forsythia is a favorite snack for some moose.

Bumblebee Conservation and Garden Practices

Kathy shared her passion for bumblebees and their importance in gardens, highlighting that Alaska has 22 species of bumblebees. She emphasized the need to plant suitable flowers for bees, especially late-blooming plants like monkshood and sedums, and advised against cleaning gardens in the fall to protect hibernating bees. Kathy also discussed her experience with a citizen science project in Anchorage and encouraged attendees to support bumblebee populations by providing the right plants.

Garden Plant Updates and Insights

Kathy shared details about various plants in her garden, including a magnolia that recently produced seeds after 10 years, a hops plant that she uses for screening, and two hemlock trees that she and her husband brought from Anchorage. She discussed the blooming patterns of these plants and mentioned that she is researching how to grow magnolia seeds. Kathy also described a blackberry vine that Larry Jones gave her, which grew significantly in its second year but did not produce berries.

Garden Tour and Plant Innovations

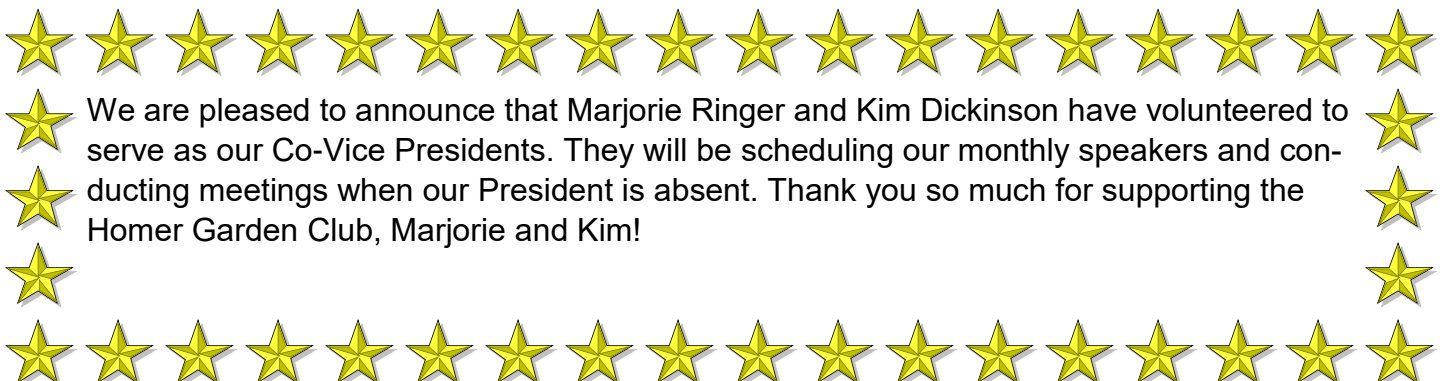
The group discussed a garden tour featuring beautiful plant arrangements, including lilies and daylilies, with a focus on invasive species and storage solutions for bulbs. They admired creative garden features like pallet fences and hanging planters, with particular interest in a fishing pole device for accessing lower plants.

Seasonal Garden Design Strategies

Kathy shared her garden's seasonal transformations, focusing on bloom succession and foliage color schemes. She explained her approach to garden design, emphasizing the importance of considering foliage colors throughout the year and creating multiple bloom changes. Kathy also discussed her experience with daffodils, noting their reliability as perennials and the need for proper deadheading to ensure energy is directed back into the bulb.

Garden Design and Volunteer Opportunities

Kathy shared her garden design philosophy, emphasizing the use of foliage and color themes, particularly burgundies and blue with tangerine accents. She discussed her experience with moose damage to plants and shared a gardening trick learned from Rita Jo involving the use of containers to hide unsightly areas.



We are pleased to announce that Marjorie Ringer and Kim Dickinson have volunteered to serve as our Co-Vice Presidents. They will be scheduling our monthly speakers and conducting meetings when our President is absent. Thank you so much for supporting the Homer Garden Club, Marjorie and Kim!

One of the benefits of being such an avid gardener is that friends and family, who all know how much I love gardening, strive to find clever, thoughtful gifts related to my passion. This cadre of loved ones never ceases to amaze me with the treasures they find. Among their special gifts are my favorite gloves (Bellingham Wonder Grip), and a Bucket Boss which, unlike many gardening buckets available, has all the right sized pockets for my tools and an optional lid for odd bits that also serves as a comfortable and welcome seat.

One year my older daughter sent a gallon paint bucket filled with aromatic bath crystals made by Burt's Bees. They are divine and incredibly restorative for me when sprinkled into a hot bath after a long day in the garden. A dear friend designed and fabricated my most treasured hand tool. It is a trowel like no other and must be seen to understand its special magic. My Goddaughter found the best gardening attire, a now well-worn T-shirt that says, "Plays in Dirt".



Then there are the many and varied frogs that reside in several of my gardens. A concrete one that oversees

the pond, a couple of metal ones that peak out from the summer foliage and a very silly one that spins on a metal spike when a breeze blows.

Subscriptions to magazines are always welcome gifts. My favorites among these are *Fine*

Gardening and Garden Design.

One year my younger daughter came up with a novel new garden accessory. It is a most charming little book called *The Gardener's Companion*, edited by Vicky Bamforth and published by Robson Books in 2004. It's filled with all sorts of tidbits about gardening – quotes by famous people, botanical bemusements, stories of inventions, historical factoids and funny anecdotes. It's the kind of book you can pick up for five minutes or spend an afternoon over. And it's still available today.

The book teems with thought provoking sayings like, Sir Walter Scott's "Nothing is more the child of art than a garden," and Gertrude Jekyll's "The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies." At the bottom of each page is a numerically based factoid having to do with the page number. For example, page 143 declares the "Number of insects dependent on the Hawthorne tree." Several species of the hawthorne tree (*Crataegus*) are hardy here. Hopefully most of those 143 insects are beneficial! Hawthornes also support a variety of birds as well as providing edible fruit for us.



There is an entire page devoted to facts about garlic including "Egyptian kings gave garlic to the workmen building the pyramids in the belief that it increased their stamina," and "In 1858, Louis Pasteur discovered garlic was capable of killing bacteria. During World War I,

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it was used to dress wounds and treat gangrene.”

For those who enjoy garden art take heart in this tale. “In 1997, a garden gnome, believed to be the oldest in the world, was insured for one million pounds.” I guess I would be even



more impressed if it had sold for that, but now I have a great justification for my garden art expenditures!

As it is January and the snow is drifting down (finally) while I write, a quote from Clyde Moore, who is described in *The Gardener's Companion* only as a gardener, seems appropriate. “There’s one good thing about snow; it makes your lawn look as nice as your neighbor’s.”

THE HOMER GARDEN CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____ PHONE _____

Email Address _____

(Please print clearly to make sure you receive all club newsletters and messages)

Membership Type: _____ Basic (\$10) _____ Supporting (\$15) _____ Business (\$25)

Suggestions for future meeting topics or speakers: _____

Homer Garden Club Membership year is Oct 1st to Sept 30th

This membership will expire on September 30th

Please make your check payable to “Homer Garden Club” and mail it along with this form to:

Homer Garden Club, PO Box 2833, Homer AK 99603

HGC is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization (EIN92-0133642)