



Brighton Bloomer

JANUARY 2026

BRIGHTONMIGARDENCLUB
MEMBEROFMICHIGANGARDENCLUBS, INC.
CENTRALREGIONGARDENCLUBS, INC.
NATIONALGARDENCLUBS, INC.



NOLA J. HOGGE & LYNN O'SHAUGHNESSY, EDITORS; LYDIA C. CADENA, DESIGNER

JANUARY GUEST SPEAKER & MEETING DETAILS

Brighton Mi Garden Club

BUTTERFLY AND POLLINATOR GARDENS

JOHN BLAIR



- Thursday
- January 8, 2026
- 10:00 am
- 555 Brighton Street



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- 7 Let's Spice Up Winter

Preparation,
Design



Plant Selection,
Use of Native Plants



Dear Members,

Reflections

As 2025 draws to a close, we would like to reflect on what an amazing year we had as a club. While we could mention so many things we have done, the functions highlighted here are perfect examples of how we came together to achieve something awesome. These functions helped all of us foster a sense of community, gave us purpose and showed how we belonged to something greater than ourselves. They opened up opportunities to make new friends and touched the lives of others in many ways.

- We did our first plant sale again after several years off and it was extremely successful. Many of our club members participated ... including lots of our newer members ... to give the public an awesome buying experience along with the kids projects.
- We just completed our third annual Greens Workshop a few weeks ago and each year it keeps getting better and better. This project combined the creativity and ideas of our talented members who organized this with the efforts of more than half of our membership who pitched in to make this the most talked about event around town.
- Together, the community garden teams created something breathtaking and beautiful in each of the seven locations we work on. So beautiful, in fact, that the City of Brighton gave us a special recognition for our efforts.
- We completed our sixth successful year of the Great Gnome Adventure. It was successful not only because of the love that our members put into making it happen, but mainly because of the fun and playful concept we developed for the public to enjoy the work we do in our community gardens. And if that wasn't enough, we also did the Fourth of July gnome float again this year to get the word out to everyone about our club projects.
- In keeping with giving back to the community, our fundraising efforts allowed us to award a \$1,500 scholarship to a deserving Brighton High School senior and more than \$700 in grants to the Hornung and Hawkins elementary schools.
- Lastly, we donated a White Pine to Brighton High School as a living gift from the club that will keep on giving for years to come.

2025 was an incredible year, wasn't it? Take a deep breath, exhale and smile. You were a part of something very special ... reflect on that.

Now, let's all carry these wonderful reflections forward into 2026 as we plan for an even better year ahead. Think of ways you can be a part of this amazing journey in the coming year ... a journey that begins with all of us being the inspiring individuals that we are and continuing to work together as the Brighton Michigan Garden Club. Looking forward to making things happen together in 2026!

Lynn and Nola

JANUARY Important Dates & Birthdays*

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR!	2	3
4 * <i>Connie Thomas</i>	5 * <i>Diane Plocek</i>	6	7	8 BMGC General Meeting	9	10
11 * <i>Pat Tasich</i>	12	13 * <i>Carolyn McIntyre</i>	14	15	16	17
18 * <i>Sharon Burnett</i>	19 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day * <i>Karen Alberts</i>	20 * <i>Sue Sutherland</i> * <i>Carmen Novak</i>	21	22	23	24
25 * <i>Claudia Jablonski</i>	26	27	28	29	30	31 National Hot Chocolate Day

The Official Stuff – November Minutes

**Brighton Michigan Garden Club
General Meeting
Brighton Community Center
November 13, 2025
“Cultivating Joy One Garden at a Time”**

Meeting called to order at 10:15 AM by President Nola J. Hogge. Co-President Lynn O'Shaughnessy present.

There were 48 members present. Sally Bender and Keri Wasylik were accepted as new members and were given their yearbook. There were two visitors: Sara Nelson and Diane Brown.

The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a poem by Lynn O'Shaughnessy.

Welcome and Announcements:

- The Brighton City Hall Award received by our Club was highlighted by showing to everyone at today's meeting the Power Point that was seen by the Mayor, City Council Members, and members of the public present at the City Council Meeting on October 14, 2025. The presentation identified the seven community gardens we plant and maintain; grants we provide to schools and students; roses our member, Jeannine Haag, tends at several Brighton Fire Stations; educational programs we provide to schools; and conservation projects we support with our native plant sale and native plant garden.
- At the October meeting, we collected 158 pounds of canned food for the Annual Food Drive. Diane Follis delivered the food to Gleaners.
- The Winter Green's Event is planned for Saturday, December 6, with workshops at 9:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Help is still needed the day of the event. Sign-up sheets for various activities are being circulated at the meeting today. Boxes are needed to put the centerpiece supplies in. Christmas trees are needed for decoration in the front hall. Items can be dropped off at the Community Center on Thursday, 12/4 or Friday evening 12/5. There are presently 11 openings for the morning session, and 21 openings for the afternoon session.
- Our Holiday Party and Luncheon will be on December 11, at 10 a.m. There is no charge. Part catered by Jonas Market, and part homemade by members. We are making donations to Ennis Center for Children. Dishes and dinnerware will be provided. There will be a raffle for centerpieces by Carmen Novak. There will be entertainment. Catered food will include chicken, mashed and roasted potatoes, and grilled vegetables. Holiday Committee providing other dishes and desserts.
- Spring Plant Sale will be May 9, with setup on May 8. There will be fliers about the plant sale available at the Winter Green Event. Chairs for plant sale are Mary Menosky and Hilary Sproule.
- The basket created by Debbie Miller and Sue Diebol for the District 2B meeting sold for \$99.
- 50/50 raffle yielded \$28. Karen Rebiger gently implored us to be more supportive of the raffle.

November Minutes Continued

Vice President: Dionna Guy (not present)

- Today's speaker was Dr. Wolfgang Bauer, Distinguished Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy, Michigan State University. He gave a very interesting presentation on Solar Gardens with an emphasis on what is happening on MSU's campus with solar parking structures and other environmentally friendly initiatives.
- No outside speaker in December as we will be having the Holiday Party and luncheon instead.
- January 8: Butterfly and Pollinator Gardens. John Blair
- February 12: Land Conservancy. Jill Lewis
- March 12: Planting for Pleasure and Purpose. Susan Betz
- April 9: Control Weeds and Pests Naturally. Jolanta Piecuch
- May 14: Installations and Awards
- June 11: Making baskets from Materials in Your Garden

Secretary: Marsha Lesley

October general meeting minutes were included in the November newsletter, so members had a chance to read them ahead of time. The minutes were approved as written.

Treasurers' Report: Claudia Jablonski & Debbie Miller

We welcomed Jeanette Darbe, our previous Treasurer, back after some time away. There is presently \$17183.20 in our checking account.

Membership: Sue Diebol & Cindy Mann

We had 52 members and 7 visitors at the October general meeting, and 48 members with two visitors at today's meeting.

Ways & Means: Hilary Sproule & Mary Menosky

See above re: Winter Greens Event and Spring Plant Sale. Julie Amman is helping to improve our Website and to increase marketing for our events.

Lynn O'Shaughnessy reports that she still has quite a few 2026 calendars for sale. They will be available for sale at the Winter Greens Event. The cost is \$21.20.

Old Business:

The Farmer's Market Booth will be run by Mary Menosky and other members who volunteer to help out. The Booth will be open on May 2, in time to advertise the Spring Plant Sale. Then again on May 16. Plants left over from the sale will be available at the Booth. We have the small nursery license for the spring sale.

Kudos go out to Lydia Cadena for a stellar job on the November Brighton Bloomer newsletter.

November Minutes Continued

New Business:

Regarding committees: The BMGC Board decided to combine the Conservation and Environmental Chair into one topic. Mary Menosky has agreed to fill this role.

- The Pine Tree has been planted in front of High School—it is looking very healthy.
- The School Grants Committee met this week. Committee Chair, Hilary Sproule, reported that there were four applications to review, and the application from Spencer School was accepted for a \$500 grant. This project will focus on native gardens and will include students in grades pre-K to grade 4. The other three applicants were from Hornung Elementary and did not meet the information requirements on the application. They were given feedback and encouraged to apply again next year.
- Tracie Richards from Brighton High School (810) 299-4114. This is a Volunteer Opportunity: Would someone be interested in doing a workshop for our BHS Garden Club members in December? We have 15 club members, and we meet on Wednesdays after school from 2:30-3:30 pm.

November Luncheon Hostesses

Debbie Miller Chair, Carol McKeon, Cheryl Yelen, Coral Adas, Judy Turnbull, Carolyn McIntyre, Sue Rusnik, Julie Cooper, Kathryn Rockol, Ana Dunk

November Birthdays

- 2 Liz Gaines
- 3 Lynn O'Shaughnessy
- 8 Cindy Mann
- 11 Arla McPeck
- 14 Nancy Samples
- 14 Dawn Montagano
- 23 Nola Hogge

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m. in order to set up for speaker and lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Marsha Lesley, BMGC Secretary

Let's Spice up Winter in Brighton Mi Garden Club

By Nola J Hogge

It's that time of year when days are shorter, sunlight is scarce, and our motivation often feels lower than it does in spring. So why not take a moment to **spice up winter**? Learning about the spices we use in our food can add warmth, comfort, and a little excitement to the season—brightening both our meals and our winter days.

Spices are made from non-leafy plant parts:

Seeds – cumin, coriander, cardamom

Fruits/Berries – black pepper, chili peppers, vanilla pods

Bark – cinnamon

Roots/Rhizomes or creeping shoots– ginger, turmeric

Flower buds – cloves

Stigmas or female reproductive organ that catches pollen– saffron (from crocus flowers)

Arils or covering of the seed–mace

(Leafy parts like basil or thyme are called herbs, not spices.)



1. Ground Cinnamon



2. Bay Leaf



3. Nutmeg



4. Allspice

1. **Ground cinnamon** starts as the bark of cinnamon trees, aged typically up to 20 years in the tropical climates of southeast Asia. Harvesting bark from fully mature trees enables them to develop the high volatile oils that give our cinnamon its warm aromatic flavor and rich mahogany color.
2. **Bay Leaf:** Bay leaves, a firm, light green leaf, come from Bay Laurel trees. When trees are ready for harvests, farmers trim and collect the branches, the crop is then gently dried to preserve natural color and flavor. After drying, the leaves are gently removed from the branches and then sent for production where they are machine- and hand-selected.
3. **Nutmeg:** Nutmeg is a seed that comes from the fruit of a nutmeg tree. The nutmeg tree reaches its prime in 25 years, yields fruit eight years after planting, and bears fruit for 60 years or longer. Once fully mature, the fruit (which closely resembles an apricot) splits in two, showing the mace and a single shiny brown seed: the nutmeg. The nutmegs are then dried in the sun for six to eight weeks, where the nutmeg shrinks away from its hard coat. The shell is then broken, and the nutmegs are picked out.
4. **Allspice:** Allspice, also known as "Jamaican pepper" or "pimento," comes from the evergreen tree of the myrtle family. The tree's berries, which are the source of the spice, are picked before they are fully ripe and then dried in the sun.

Spice up Winter Continued



5. Pepper

5. **Pepper:** Pungent, earthy, and brash, black pepper enhances nearly any dish, making flavors bolder in the way salt reveals them. The pepper plant grows as a climbing vine, producing small flowers that become rows of berries. When the first berries turn from green to red, the entire spike is harvested and sun-dried, transforming the fresh fruit into the familiar hard, wrinkled peppercorns used worldwide.



6. Cloves

6. **Cloves:** The tight clusters of green-to-pinkish red buds are harvested before they open. Once dried, these buds become familiar cloves used as a spice. Clove trees are evergreen and belong to the myrtle family (Myrtaceae). The buds are rich in eugenol, which gives cloves their strong aroma and medicinal properties.



7. Ginger

7. **Ginger:** This spice is a flowering plant whose rhizome—commonly called ginger root—is widely used as both a spice and a traditional medicine. It is an herbaceous perennial that produces annual pseudo stems about one meter tall with narrow leaves. Pale yellow flowers edged in purple grow on separate shoots that arise directly from the rhizome.



8. Saffron

8. **Saffron:** The most expensive spice in the world is saffron, often called "red gold," due to the extremely labor-intensive process of hand-harvesting its delicate stigmas from the *Crocus sativus* flower, with thousands of flowers needed for just a small amount, making it pricier per gram than gold.

Winter may bring shorter days and quieter moments, but it also invites us to slow down, warm our spirits, and add intention to each day. Like spices in a favorite recipe, slight changes—fresh air, sunlight, connection, nourishing food, and joyful hobbies—can transform the season into one of comfort, creativity, and renewed energy.