



Brighton Bloomer

FEBRUARY 2026

BRIGHTON MICHIGAN GARDEN CLUB
MEMBER OF MICHIGAN GARDEN CLUBS, INC.
CENTRAL REGION GARDEN CLUBS, INC.
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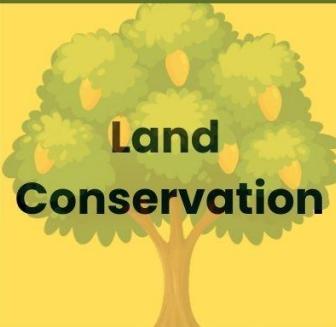


NOLA J. HOGGE & LYNN O'SHAUGHNESSY, EDITORS; LYDIA C. CADENA, DESIGNER

JANUARY GUEST SPEAKER & MEETING DETAILS



Brighton Mi Garden Club



Speaker:

Jill Lewis, Executive Director
of the Southeast Michigan
Land Conservancy.

THURSDAY
FEB. 12, 2026

10:00 am Brighton
Community Center



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FEBRUARY 2026

A letter from your presidents

“February is the border between winter and spring.”

Dear Members,

I am sitting here at my computer, and it is very dark and a big 9 degrees outside. It is January 20th and I need to write all of you a President's letter for the coming month. I was wondering what I could write about that wouldn't bore you all to death. So, I thought I would write a little about myself and some of my gardening experiences.



Borders, Fences & Gates

I grew up in Southern California, and my grandmother lived next door to a nursery. Her home was surrounded by a white picket fence and there were three gates. All the borders around the lawn were filled with beautiful plants. I would open one of those gates and take a few steps into another place that was filled with plants in every corner. It was magical and in the middle of this **“for sale”** garden was a pond with golden koi and lily pads.



Just down the road from Grandmother's home was a place called **The Arboretum and Botanical Garden**. It was 230 acres of sprawling manicured grounds filled with plants and roaming peacocks.

There were many themed gardens with vegetation that I had never seen before. It was a magical place, and it was there that I realized how our world can change so much by being around plants. The rose garden filled the air with that sweet scent that only a rose garden can.

“An arboretum is a specialized botanical garden focusing on woody plants (trees and shrubs) for study and display, while a botanical garden is a broader collection of diverse plants (flowers, herbs, trees, etc.) cultivated for scientific, educational, and ornamental purposes, often with themed sections like rock gardens or conservatories.”

Like many of you, I have been to many gardens around the world. Each professional garden has its own theme, history, climate, and support. Here in Michigan Zone 6a we must deal with four hardy seasons, wildlife, fungus, mold and many other deterrents to our gardens. We really can't put new plants outside until June 1.



A letter from your presidents continued

One summer I wanted to make a rain garden and so I spent days (with help) planning, digging, and planting. In the end it looked like a sand garden. A lot of money was used as fodder for the rabbits and deer.

After a rainstorm I still go down and watch my little stream bed fill up with water and pour into my rain garden. I don't have a fence or a gate, but I had 5 colorful spinners which the animals all ignore. It's not grandmother's garden or the arboretum, but my little piece of heaven.



Now back to my topic, borders, fences and gates.

1. **Let's spread our borders** with gardening, growing beauty, connection, and joy one plant at a time. It's not just about adding new plants or techniques—it's about widening our perspective as gardeners.
2. **Beyond fences**, let's keep growing with new knowledge through gardening education. This is one of the wonderful things about our garden club speakers. Gardens can become open classrooms.
3. **An open gate** invites everyone to garden and grow with plants. Make new friends at Brighton Mi Garden Club this year. Gardening friendships often cross ages, backgrounds, and experiences.

We have 81 members in our club and we are growing each month. We have active, associate, and honorary members. We serve on standing or special committees, in our gardens, help as hostesses, and on the board. Thank you for your time, knowledge, and help in our garden club.

Lynn and Nola



FEBRUARY Important Dates & Birthdays*

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2 Groundhog Day World Wetlands Day	3	4	5 BMGC Board Meeting <i>*Ruth LePatourel</i>	6	7 National Send a Card to a Friend Day
8	9	10	11	12 BMGC General Meeting <i>*Ouida Cooper</i>	13	14 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!
15	16 Presidents Day	17	18	19 <i>*Marsha Lesley</i> <i>*Carol McKeon</i>	20	21 <i>*Lori Walters</i>
22 <i>*Bernadine Byk</i>	23	24	25	26	27	28

Practice Makes Perfect

Winter Photography

By Lynn O'Shaughnessy

I know it may be difficult for most...including me ... to want to go out and take photos during the winter, especially with these sub zero and single digit temperatures we have been experiencing lately. However, there are ways to work around this if you would like a break to spend a little time with nature.

One way would be to spend some time at your window without even going outdoors. Grab a chair. Look into a nearby tree for a squirrel. Watch the feeder for birds. Enjoy the antics of natures creatures while you stay warm.



If you know of some areas in the country on some of the back roads, go for a drive. When you get to these places, there is usually very little traffic and you can stop, roll your window down, and take some shots. While these two examples were taken in my yard, you can find spots like this on a drive through the countryside as well.

Shutterfly

It's where all of our BMGC Photos are stored. Take a minute to check them out.

user

BrightonMGC@gmail.com

password

BMGclub2026#



And, of course, if we get a little warm up and you feel motivated, you can get some really pretty photos by just taking a walk outdoors. Maybe you have some coneflowers in your garden that you didn't cut down that are topped with snow or covered in frost. Take some time to appreciate their beauty with a photograph. If you find some subjects to take close up photos of, remember to pay attention to what is in the background to get the best possible photo you can.



If you decide to take some winter photos and are on the BMGC Facebook group ... please share! I am sure it could bring a little joy to all of our members.

The Official Stuff – February Minutes

**Brighton Michigan Garden Club
General Meeting
Brighton Community Center
January 8, 2026
“Cultivating Joy One Garden at a Time”**

Meeting called to order by President Lynn O’Shaughnessy with Co-President Nola Hogge also present.

There were 45 members and two visitors (Guy Pardes and Becky Martin) present. Sara Nelson is a member as of today. There were also two members on zoom for the Speaker’s presentation. Group Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a poem “Thinking of Spring” written and presented by Lynn O’Shaughnessy.

Welcome and Announcements:

- “The Good, the Bad, & the Bloom-iful” talk by member Ann Tice is on January 14th. Sponsored by the Champaign County Master Gardener and Horticulture Program. “Join plant trialing expert, Ann Tice, on Zoom to celebrate the standouts, sort the strugglers & spotlight 2025’s Garden Stars.”

Go to this site to register: go.illinois.edu/CCMGTrials

- 50/50 raffle by Karen Rebiger. Winner received \$39 and gave it back to the club.

Secretary: Marsha Lesley

November minutes were available to members to read in the January newsletter. The minutes were approved as written.

Vice President: Dionna Guy (not present)

- January 8 (today): 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

Treasurers’ Report: Claudia Jablonski & Debbie Miller

There is currently \$18,412.41 in our checking account.

Dues are now being collected by the Treasurers for the 2026-27 year. Yearly dues are \$30.

February Minutes Continued

Membership: Sue Diebol & Cindy Mann

We have 80 members, 9 are honorary.

Ways & Means: Hilary Sproule & Mary Menosky

Winter Greens Workshop: We made a profit of \$2900 from the workshop. This reflects the excellent work of Chairpersons Cindy Mann, Cheryl Yelen, and Cindy Morianti plus the 36 member volunteers who made the event run smoothly.

The Spring Plant Sale will be on May 9th with set-up on May 8th. Details to be worked out include who all will be providing plants and labels. Lynn will need several drivers to help transport her plants to the Community Center. A suggestion was made to have educational materials available about the various plants that could be used by club members volunteering at the event. Sue Resnick and Linda Battison will be acting as advisors on this project. Volunteer groups will be formed at our next general meeting. Chairpersons are Hilary Sproule and Mary Menosky.

Calendars: There are only three calendars unsold out of 125 created. The BMGC stands to make over \$1000 on this fundraiser.

New Business:

NGC Plant America grant—red, white, and blue flowers for nation's 250th. Presidents Nola Hogge and Lynn O'Shaughnessy are requesting that each community garden committee create a space in their gardens for a display for the grant. More details regarding what is required in the grant proposal will be available from Lynn soon.

Nominating Committee has begun inviting members to run for Board positions. Several positions are open as current members have served two years or more. Lynn O'Shaughnessy and Nola Hogge have served more than two years consecutively as Co-Presidents, Marsha Lesley has served two years as Secretary. Nominating committee members are Peggy Fukuda, Carole Estes, and Jeannine Haag.

Gardeners on the Go: Dawn Montagano & Sonia Davis are Committee Chairs. A suggestion was made to visit John Blair's property which is open by appointment. He is the speaker this month for the general meeting.

Awards Chair: Diane Schrock is working on this.

Garden Buds Committee is inactive.

January Birthdays

- 2 Marilyn Bray
- 4 Connie Thomas
- 5 Diane Plocek
- 11 Pat Tasich
- 13 Carolyn McIntyre
- 18 Sharon Burnett
- 19 Karen Alberts
- 20 Carmen Novak
- 25 Claudia Jablonski

Luncheon Hostesses

Head Hostesses: Arla McPeek & Cindy Mann. Hostesses: Julie Amman, Hilary Sproule, Claudia Jablonski, Angela Precht, Evelyn Dionise

Prayer: Sandy Markham

10:45 Break

11:00 Introduction of Speaker: John Blair,
"Butterfly and Pollinator Gardens"

12:00 Luncheon

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m. in order to set up for speaker and lunch.

**Respectfully submitted,
Marsha Lesley, BMGC Secretary**



The Beauty of Surrender

by Lynn O'Shaughnessy

My name says it all when it comes to my form,
About my elegant ways,
And my cute little curls will draw you in
To remind you of better days,
When my intricate flower was wide open to all,
To see what the summer might bring,
Now my tight-clenched whorls with the remnants
of fall,
Hold on to the promise of spring.

Native Plant Feature



Great Blue Lobelia in the Circle Garden.



Great Blue Lobelia in the field near the Swamp White Oak.

Great Blue Lobelia

Lobelia siphilitica

by Lynn O'Shaughnessy

While this native plant is more of a violet blue, it is still a pretty addition to any garden. It blooms from July to October and only gets to about two to three feet tall. This makes it a nice mid-size plant for most gardens. It does very well in full to part sun. It is supposed to prefer wet to medium soil moisture, but I am successfully growing this in two different soils. The first is in my Circle Garden where I have the 50/50 (topsoil/peat) and a sprinkler system. The other area is near my oak tree and in my fields in the native clay-base soil with only nature to water them. I am starting to see some plants popping up near my pond now that must have re-seeded on their own. These plants seem quite adaptable.

Great Blue Lobelia are a favorite of native bumble bees and some other smaller bees as well as a few butterflies and hummingbirds. Lobelias are known to produce a compound called lobeline, a toxin that deters deer and rabbits. Great Blue Lobelia is a host plant that supports six species of moths and butterflies throughout its range, including the larvae of the pink-washed looper moth. This plant is highly recommended for increasing biodiversity in native, wetland, or woodland gardens, providing essential food for pollinators and foliage for larvae.



Common Eastern Bumble Bee on Great Blue Lobelia flowers.



Close up of Great Blue Lobelia flowers.

Membership

Time to Update Your BMGC Contacts

Here are some changes to our membership contact info as well as the new members to add to your yearbook.

1. Bessie Hamm

C/O Abel Care
51 Endicott
Howell, Mi 48843

2. Dee Rataj – email

deerataj@gmail.com

3. Diane Valente

303 Texknoll Dr.
Brighton, Mi 48116

4. Betty Steele

5805 Lakeway Dr.
Brighton, Michigan 48116

Bender Joined '25	Sally (Patricia) 6253 Wagon Drive Brighton, Mi 48116-9748 C:810-229-1903 H:810-599-7765 sally.bender@scbglobal.net	
Sheehan Wasylk Joined '25	Keri (Steve) 10621 Buno Road Brighon, Mi 48114-8123 C:810-599-1978 kerilsw@gmail.com	
Christina Joined '25	Kathy (Robert) 9017 Riverside Drive Brighton, Mi 48116 C: 586-596-9431 katrob81@yahoo.com	
Szafron Joined '25	Linda (Charles) 7584 McClements Brighton, Mi 84114 C: 810623-6963 szafronl@yahoo.com	
Nelson Joined '26	Sara (Brian) 8219 Hammel Road Brighton Mi, 48116 C: 248-506-4623 SBDMorgan5@gmail.com	

You can print, cut and paste the new members content into your yearbook.

Elections

Throw Your Hat in the Ring

By Jeannine Haag, Peggy Fukuda and Carol Estes
Elections Committee

The Elections Committee is looking to fill a few positions for our upcoming year 2026-27.

We need two co-presidents and one secretary or (two co-secretaries).

You must be an active member for one year to serve on the board.

Thank you to our elections committee for filling the following positions as shown.

Please contact the Elections Committee if you are interested in the open positions.



Officers	
Co-President	
Co-President	
Vice President	Terry Such/Marsha Lesley
Secretary	
Co-Treasurer	Debbie Miller
Co-Treasurer	Claudia Jablonski
Co-Membership	Cindy Mann
Co-Membership	Sue Diebol
Co-Ways and Means	Hilary Sproule
Co-Ways and Means	Mary Menosky
Advisors	Nola J Hogge/Lynn O'Shaughnessy

Environment

Baby It's Cold Outside

By Mary Menosky, Environment and Conservation Chair

The first snowfall in Michigan this Winter was on November 8th! Way too early if you ask me. In fact, in November and December there have already been record-setting totals in many cities across the state. In Marquette there was almost 50 inches already by the end of November and the number of inches has been increasing with each snowfall. With the snow comes the hazardous driving, snow plows and of course SALT. We use over 2 million tons of road salt every Winter to keep our roads clear.

That's 4.4 billion pounds! It is very important that we keep the roads safe for everyone that needs to drive to work, to school, to doctors' appointments, to the grocery store and to many other important places. However, there are many negative impacts from using SALT.

The road salt is applied to most hard surfaces in Michigan. The salt melts the snow and creates runoff. The runoff then drains directly into our water. Have you ever heard of the saying "The Great Lakes – No Salt – No Sharks"? Well, we are putting tons of salt into our great lakes each year as well as into our inland lakes and underground water supply.

Road salt runoff is a major environmental issue in Michigan. It is harming aquatic life, damaging infrastructures and polluting our groundwater. There has to be something we can do!

There are alternatives to road salt. Agricultural byproducts such as beet juice, molasses, and alfalfa meal have proven to be effective at melting snow in many areas. Alternative traction aids such as sand, wood ash, coffee grounds, kitty litter, or wood chips are currently used in some states.



Many countries have installed heated roads in order to avoid having to use chemicals or other treatments to the surfaces of the roads. In fact, Holland, Michigan installed a heated street and sidewalk system in 1988! They have been using waste heat from a local power plant to warm water that circulates through pipes under the streets and sidewalks for almost 40 years now!

Well, it would be nice if we all could afford to install an underground heating system for our driveways, but that probably isn't feasible. One thing that we can try to do is shovel or plow our driveways as soon as possible, before we drive on it and pack it down making ice. We can also try using some of the alternative traction aids discussed. If we all make some small changes, it **WILL** have an impact.