Extension Master Gardeners of Platte County
Chapter Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 19, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.
Mid-Continent Library – Parkville, MO

Attendance

Carolyn Vellar, Mary Jane Kuehn, Scott Wilkerson, Claire Bowers, Julie Weisz, Kimberley Oxley, John Smith, Jill Ballard, Beth Windsor, Tonisha High, Cindy Boersma, Glenn Reinhart, Kristey Andrews, Lorna Earnest, Bryan Woodring, Leslie Rausch-Derra, Victoria Hillstrom, Laurie Stuckey, Todd Higgins

Welcome and Acknowledgments

Carolyn expressed her appreciation to all volunteers for their contributions to the greenhouse plant sales, the Platte County Community Garden, and the KC Northern Miniature Railroad project over the past year.

Julie Weisz was presented with her Master Gardener badge.

Treasury Report

Carolyn presented the treasury report with financial information through the end of August.

- The chapter's current balance is **$12,000**, which includes funds from the greenhouse plant sales and a donation from the Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City. These funds will support the purchase of supplies and plants for the May greenhouse sale.
- Outstanding reimbursements totaling **$3,500** are due to members for plant and supply purchases.
- The annual greenhouse lease and utilities total **$5,400**, which are currently funded by the Platte County Extension Council. The chapter's long-term goal is to self-fund this expense.

Chapter Updates

The Platte County Master Gardener Chapter continues to grow and now includes **46 members**—**13 interns** and **33 certified Master Gardeners**. Between January and October, members reported **2,617 volunteer hours** and **258 education hours**. Carolyn

emphasized the importance of timely logging of hours, as Todd relies on this information to represent the chapter's community impact to MU Extension.

Additionally, John provided a demonstration on logging hours in the VMS system using a mobile phone.

Carolyn also highlighted several notable chapter activities:

- Several members opened their personal gardens for chapter tours, providing both social and educational experiences. Six member Master Gardeners have volunteered to open theirs next year.
- The Mid-Continent Libraries in Platte City and Parkville showcased informational displays about our chapter in April and May. These displays were developed by several of our members. Platte City will host another display in 2026.

Bylaws and Policies & Procedures

Debbie Johnson will lead a committee to update the chapter bylaws and develop policies and procedures. The current bylaws were written in 2023 and approved by Todd and the Extension Council. Todd anticipates that new statewide Master Gardener Chapter guidelines will be issued and recommends waiting until June to finalize any work on our bylaws.

Field Specialist Update

Todd and Field Specialist Gwen Funk will conduct two Master Gardener training classes in northern Missouri counties next spring and two in the fall.

Todd will notify the chapter of any Master Gardener online program graduates in our area. He is also awaiting guidance from MU Extension on future train-the-trainer opportunities for classroom training in our area.

Future Master Gardener training updates include:

- Training will expand to **14–15 weeks**, rather than 7–8 weeks.
- New slide decks will be developed for core training.
- A new training manual is forthcoming.

Todd will meet with Carolyn and Debbie on November 21 to discuss training needs. Members with topic requests are encouraged to contact an officer. Todd noted that March is a particularly busy month for training activities.

Speakers Bureau

John will oversee presentation development for the chapter. He reminded the group that teaching the public is central to the Master Gardener mission. A Zoom meeting will be held on **January 7 at 6:00 p.m.** via ZOOM to provide further details about the Speakers Bureau.

Members are encouraged to email John with educational topics they are interested in presenting. All resources should be reputable sources (e.g., .edu, .org). Topics will be posted online for organizations seeking presentations. Carolyn and her team will assist with content development before final approval by Todd. Arrangements will be made for members needing access to PowerPoint to develop slides. A PowerPoint template can also be provided. A sample speaker topic handout was available at the meeting.

KC Northern Miniature Railroad Project

Scott provided an update on the KC Northern Miniature Railroad project, which envisions a **60' x 60'** garden area featuring a Children's Teaching Garden and a Community Teaching Garden. The latter may eventually replace the current community garden if that property is sold. Scott hopes to involve Scouts, 4-H, and Rotary Club members in planting activities under Master Gardener guidance. Scott emphasized the visibility of this project and its importance to the future of our chapter. Volunteers are needed and all are encouraged to help!

Scott also discussed his upcoming role with the Platte County Extension Council and stressed the need for volunteers to take over greenhouse maintenance in 2026.

Reminder: December 4, 2025 6:00 pm - at the Green Hills Library Center, 8581 N Green Hills Road, KCMO 64154. The first meeting of the KCNRR native garden design teams will take place. We will present an overview of the project, introduce the design team leads (Mary Jane Kuehn & Susie Ahearn) and answer questions. We have invited youth from Scouts and 4-H and home schooled to join our teams. Representatives from KCNRR and KCMO Parks and Recreation will also be present.

Platte County Community Garden

Glen reported a strong year at the garden, recognizing John for his efforts and volunteer coordination. Approximately **500 pounds** of produce were donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry at St. Therese. Glen plans to survey the pantry to better understand their needs for next season. Lesley volunteered to assist.

Glen is working on priorities for 2026 such as removing a dying tree, purchasing weed barrier, planning children's activities such as decorative rock projects, and working with Lorna to beautify the patio area with flower beds. Glen also hopes to organize volunteer hours by project area.

Greenhouse Report

Mary Jane will soon distribute information on upcoming volunteer opportunities related to preparations for the May plant sale. SignUpGenius will be used for scheduling. Weekly volunteer opportunities include planting—starting with natives, then perennials—as well as ongoing watering responsibilities.

The greenhouse is currently planned to accommodate **14 tables** with **460 pots per table**.

Several members recently completed winter seed sowing in milk jugs. The jugs will remain with members throughout the winter for natural stratification and will be returned in March for greenhouse growing.

Members who attended fall planting sessions at the greenhouse, but did not sign the volunteer log should notify Mary Jane to ensure their hours are recorded. Members are also asked to email her if they wish to assist in the greenhouse. Many volunteers are needed to ensure a successful May sale!

Scott stated the goal for the spring sale is $15,000 - $20,000.

Election of Officers

Glen Reinhart, Susan Ahearn, and Claire Bowers developed descriptions for officer roles and collected nominations. Congratulations to the 2026 officers elected:

- **President:** Carolyn Vellar
- **Vice President:** Debbie Johnston
- **Treasurer:** Cindy Boersma
- **Secretary:** Open – must be a Certified Master Gardener

Next Meeting

Monday, January 21, 6:00–7:30 p.m.
Mid-Continent Library – Platte City Branch
2702 NW Prairie View Road, Platte City