

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS INC.**  
**General Meeting Minutes**  
**February 4, 2025**

President Margo Carroll called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. at the Country Store. She introduced the new Board members and asked each of them to say a few words.

Carol Burdett was introduced first as she had to leave early. She is head of the Speakers Bureau and wanted everyone to know about this committee and to let us know she needs speakers. She passed around a clipboard for people to list kinds of things they would care to speak about. Gregg has several PowerPoint presentations that can be used.

The new master gardeners of the class of 2025 were recognized as being present and welcomed.

**Secretary's Report:** The minutes from the last general meeting on November 5, 2024 had been previously distributed via email. Deni Martin moved to accept the November minutes as submitted. Eileen Hansen seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Briggs reported that as of 1/29/25, the balance in the checking account is \$28,603.00 There were no expenses or income for the month, other than Festival vendor income. Ron Drechnik moved to receive the treasurer's report. Sue Maruska seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Budget:** The 2025 budget was distributed. Discussion ensued on various items, one of which was hospitality. Ron Drechnik objected that \$100 was not nearly enough. After much input and discussion, Dick Kaleba moved to authorize the Board to meet with Ron to determine an amount appropriate for funds in place, not to exceed \$500. Elaine Hansen seconded. Any amount more than \$500 should be discussed by the Board and brought before the membership for approval. The motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

Julia Woods asked about printing expenses for brochures, etc. at the Gardens. The Classes in the Garden line item is \$1,000, which should cover any expenses. Sue Partch pointed out the Promotional Materials line item covers any other publications.

Sid Morgan moved to accept the budget as amended. Dick Kaleba seconded. The motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Classes in the Garden:** Julia Woods reported. The first class on turf grass, presented by Gregg Upchurch, will be held in late February. The class schedule will be online in the next 1-2 weeks.

**Teas in the Gardens:** Sue Partch reported the committee have had meetings. The first Tea will be the Honey Bee Tea on June 14, and the second will be a Cranberry-Orange Tea on September 13.

**Christmas Luncheon:** Connie Farley will head up luncheon this year. It will be catered, here at the Country Store, on December 2, 2025 at 12 noon. We will have an ugly sweater contest.

**Flower, Lawn & Garden Festival:** Leslie Mullican reported. Committees have been formed. Signup sheets are on the counter. Once the committee heads see who has volunteered, they will contact those on the list about getting together to plan.

Tomatoes have been ordered. Mike needs 3" pots, if you have any.

A steering committee has met twice to oversee the other committees. We have already received approximately \$4,000 in vendor fees through Eventeny, our online partner. Out of 58 booths in Bldg. #1, 13 are left; three are left in Bldg. #2 and five in Bldg. #4.

If you need signs, let Greg Recht know. Festival setup is Thursday only.

Renee Lloyd is in charge of a plant sale at the Festival. She's looking for potted plants from your garden, your shed, your house. The purpose is to provide as many plants as possible.

Kristi DuBois is in charge of publicity for the Festival. She needs writers, photos and/or articles for the *Chronicle* insert by early March (ideally). Email Kristi at [kristidubois1@gmail.com](mailto:kristidubois1@gmail.com).

Carla Lund is in charge of the Silent Auction. Some vendors have indicated they will donate items. She will collect donations at any membership meeting, in March and April as well as at the intern classes. She can pick up items if you need them gone.

Vicki May is the new PDG Coordinator and will be transforming the PDG Adopt-A-Spot program. She'll be asking teams of people, instead of a single person, to adopt a spot. Look for more information to come.

**Plant Sale:** Gregg Upchurch stated he has spoken to Shalena and the sale will be in May, following the Festival. She'll need volunteers. Friends of the Gardens receive 10% off. More info to come.

**Bird Seed Wreaths:** Linda Ferris reported. She showed a sample of the wreaths being produced at the Gardens. Vicki has all the materials ready to go when volunteers come for a called session. They sell for \$15 each and can be ordered online or by calling Jennifer at the Gardens. She wondered if they shipped well and was assured they ship very well.

**Intern Classes** are Tuesdays from 9:00 – 12:00 noon. Any master gardener is welcome to attend along with the interns.

Margo mentioned the next Board Meeting is February 18 at 1:00 at the Country Store. Anyone is welcome to attend and to bring ideas or items to discuss.

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Deni Martin, seconded by Linda Ferris, to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Ferris for  
Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

# Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.

## General Membership Meeting

March 4, 2025

President Margo Carroll called the meeting to order at 1:09 p.m. at the Country Store.

**Opening Remarks:** Margo recognized our guests from the Master Gardener group in Fentress County.

Renee Lloyd was our guest speaker; she did a presentation on greenhouses.

### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. Minutes of the previous general meeting (thank you, Linda Ferris!) were distributed via email. Deni Martin moved to accept the February minutes as corrected. Connie Farley seconded. The motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Briggs reported. Through 3/3/25, total income was \$1845; total expenses were \$103 for a net operating gain of \$1,742. The ending bank balance was \$28,603.53. The memorial bench fund and the PDG support fund remained unchanged. Linda Schaffer moved to receive the treasurer's report. Tracy Scrimsher seconded. The motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

### Old Business

**Speakers Bureau:** Carol Burdett reported. She has a list of speakers and their preferred topics.

**Classes in the Gardens:** Julia Wood reported. Brochure has been printed, but some of the info needs to be revised. Teas tickets will go on sale March 15. Something will have to be posted on the website. Kelsey will update the website. They had 33 people at Gregg's turfgrass class.

**Front Beds:** Sue Maruska reported. The beds out front need sprucing up. Volunteers welcome.

**May Membership Meeting:** The 1 p.m. meeting will be a celebration in the big room for all the interns, and Gregg will pass out hour pins. We'll also discuss whether to do evening meetings.

**FLAG Festival:** Leslie Mullican reported. She held up a map of booths already sold. Applause ensued. There are 16 booths left, including three outdoor booths. She's got a stack of cards for folks to distribute to small vendors to sign up. Volunteers: "It's a lovely day to sign up to be a volunteer for this festival." We need 40 volunteers for Thursday, 56 for Friday and 60 for Saturday. Sign up now (please)! Please include your cell-phone number when you sign up so she can nag you incessantly. Tomatoes and peppers will be picked up March 26. Potting will begin at 9 a.m. on the 27<sup>th</sup> in the greenhouse behind the equipment buildings at the PDG. He's looking for volunteers. Greg put together a book on the various tomato and pepper varieties last year, and he will do it again. Someone else is needed to put the variety names on popsicle sticks (Tony and Andrea volunteered to do this). We need popsicle sticks, too. Items for the silent auction are being accepted at the next general meeting. Workshops: We've got Crystal Blankenship doing a canning/jelly class; Angela from the Dogwood Exchange will do a class on tile mosaic plant trivet; a man from the hiking club has also agreed to speak. She's looking for a lead for the yard sale committee. Kathy

Limp has agreed to step up as lead. It'll still be in the chicken coop and can be just about anything; they don't even have to be garden related. Margo is working on a list of signs and sign quantities for Greg. We'll also have a plant sale; see Renee Lloyd about that. She'll accept plants on load-in day and will have pots if you need them.

## **New Business**

**PDG Coordinator:** Vicki May reported. She talked about the Adopt-a-Spot program. She said she loves the first quote on the new website: "Where Gardening Knowledge Blossoms." She sent an email February 19 and a reminder on February 26, with a request for input from master gardeners. Results thus far:

- Requests for a tour for MGs/interns, sort of an overview of the various garden spots available for adoption.
- Define expectations; talk about communications; how to manage the gardens seasonally. Managing water hoses.

Vicki bribed folks to commit to tending the daylily beds by offering a dozen eggs to each person willing to sign up to tend the daylilies.

Vicki said "common areas" aren't designated as spots to be adopted (e.g., the spots around the garden restrooms) and are available for "citizen gardeners" to tend on an as-needed basis.

Margo reminded us this is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the PDG.

**Website:** Kelsey Whitefield demonstrated the functionality of the new website, and showed how to update our information.

**Bird-Seed Treats:** Vicki has four bird-seed treats available for sale.

President Carroll adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

# Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.

## General Membership Meeting

April 1, 2025

President Margo Carroll called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. at the Country Store; 43 members and 11 interns attended.

Mime Barnes and Bradley Baldwin from TWRA were our guest speakers. Topic: "The Good Guys Wear Green."

### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. Minutes of the previous general meeting were distributed via email. They're also always available in the members-only section of the website. The May meeting will be held at the PDG, not the Country Store, as previously reported. Vicki May asked that surnames be noted for folks for whom we have multiple names (e.g., Greg and Gregg, Sue, Sue and Sue, etc.). Ron Drechnik moved to accept the March minutes as amended. Sue Maruska seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Briggs reported. Through 3/11/25, total income was \$1,462.64; total expenses were \$104.27, for a net operating gain of \$1,358.37. The ending bank balance was \$29,961.90. We have 38 people with unpaid dues. Vicki May moved to receive the treasurer's report. Connie Farley seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**FLAG Festival:** Leslie Mullican reported. We need more volunteers for vendor load-in from 4-7 on Thursday. We also need wagons on Wednesday. Folks will be available all day Wednesday and Thursday to receive yard-sale items in the chicken coop area. A volunteer meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. Wednesday in the Country Store. It'll probably last half an hour to an hour. She'll update various crews via email or text. Kathy Limp is doing the yard sale and will accept items starting on Wednesday, as well as on Thursday 9-7. She's got price stickers for donors to price their items. Sue Maruska is doing decorations; the gardens out front need to be cleaned up/mulched. Cleanup time is Friday, April 18, from 9-noon; meet out front. Bring gardening tools, rakes, shovels, gloves, tarps. Carla Lund is handling the silent auction. She's here every Tuesday for the intern class to accept items; she'll be here Wednesday and Thursday of the FLAG Festival week. Rita sent around a signup sheet for volunteers to bring food for the Hospitality Room.

**Teas in the Gardens:** Sue Partch reported. The June tea is already sold out; tickets are still available for the September Tea.

**Garden Loom:** Sue Partch reported. The loom is set up in the gardens, thanks to Mike Barron. On an unrelated note, a local florist has a wedding coming up in May and is looking for chamomile flowers. If anyone can help her out, she'd really appreciate it.

**Painting Party:** Rhoda Hiller reported. She has six flower boxes made by Janet Coe's father (and a dozen flower pots for the Kinder Garden) to be painted. She's planning to do the painting party on April 14 at either 9 a.m. or 1 p.m. at the PDG. Walt will find her a space to accomplish this.

**Classes in the Gardens:** Julia Wood reported. More than 60 people signed up (but only 35 attended) for Vegetable gardening with Fred and Sid. She still needs volunteers for the April 10 class with Mime Barnes. Rita asked why we're not charging for classes. Margo suggested she bring it up at the board meeting.

**May Meeting/Celebration:** Margo said Gregg wanted her to remind everyone to get their hours in to the system so they can get recognition for said hours at the May 6 meeting (at 1 p.m.). If you need help getting the hours entered, contact Gregg Upchurch or her. The meeting will be a celebration of the interns' completion of their instruction, as well as recognition of master gardeners' hours, and distribution of pins.

**Storage Room:** Connie Farley reported. If you've got stuff in the storage room, please clear it out. She'll get the Christmas tree out of there and over to the yard sale area.

**FLAG Festival Plant Sale:** Renee Lloyd has taken over the MG-grown plant sale. Please mark your plants and deliver them on Wednesday to the chicken coop. This year we have the entire chicken coop for yard sale and plants. Margo asked whether volunteers were interested in having early shopping at the plant sale/yard sale starting Thursday at 5.

**Tomatoes and Peppers:** Greg Recht thanked everyone who volunteered to pot tomatoes and peppers. Mike Barron said they were finished within an hour and fifteen minutes.

**Garden Spots:** Vicki thanked everyone who's signed up for garden spot adoptions. Eight people signed up to take care of the Daylily bed. Applause for Vicki for her efforts. She has 52 people signed up to take care of the gardens; she wants to get 30 more spots filled.

**PDG Plant Sale:** Leslie said, "It is a madhouse that day, but it is super fun!" She needs eight people Friday morning at 8 to transport and put out plants. On Saturday, she'll need folks to help with parking. Spouses' volunteer time counts toward your hours (for this event only). The plant holding area is set up by the bathrooms. Table re-stockers will keep the tables full. Roamers are needed in the pavilion. She has a lovely, illustrated, full-color PDG Plant Sale guide. If you sign up for this role, she'll email you a PDF of the guide; you'll even get education hours for reading through it. We'll need six people in the roamer role. Ginger Brindley (intern) asked if you volunteer, do you get to do your shopping early? Leslie said emails went out in January about pre-sales, and that period is over. It's a UT thing; we're trying to work with them on that. Vicki said Kristi Dubois mentioned something at the end of her FLAG Festival article about the Plant Sale, but she included the wrong date. Folks who ordered plants during the pre-sale may pick them up Friday. People start lining up at 7 on Saturday, an hour before the event starts. The event brings in \$30,000+ for the PDG in the three hours it's open.

The next board meeting is April 15 at 1.

President Carroll adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

# Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.

## General Membership Meeting

May 6, 2025

President Margo Carroll called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. in the indoor classroom at the Plateau Discovery Gardens.

### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. Minutes of the previous general meeting were distributed via email and are posted on the website. Ginger Brindley moved to accept the April minutes as submitted. Linda Glenn seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa reported. FLAG income was \$14,849. Through 4/30/25, total income was \$17,594.11; total expenses were \$8,211.83 for a net operating gain of \$9,382.28. The ending bank balance was \$42,055.17. Ron Drechnik moved to receive the treasurer's report. Susan Partch seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote. Today is the last day to turn in dues.

**FLAG Festival:** Margo reported. We brought in \$15,162. Attendance was 500 less than last year. We had over 100 kids 18 and under. Specifics are included on page three. Applause for Leslie Mullican. "Y'all have been such a pleasure to work with... I'm so thankful." She's asked for ideas of what could be improved. "I need all your eyes and ears and experiences" for next year's FLAG Festival and PDG Plant Sale. Connie asked about other counties' master gardeners. Some folks said Fentress and Roane counties were represented. Margo said the FLAG Festival newspaper insert will be submitted for a Search for Excellence award.

**Dragonfly Habitat – Class of 2024:** Vicki May reported, and recognized the folks who took part in the project: Carla Lund, who agreed to lead the group. "It's not a hard group to lead," Carla said. She recognized Peggy Mullett, whose husband made the dragonfly; Cindy LeClair, whose husband also helped with the project; Michelle Cole Williams, who honed her auguring skills; Kathy Towles; Patricia Dominguez, who stained the back wall. Lisa Briggs; Renee Lloyd; Makayla Vanlandingham, our intern; Layne Ticker; Margo carved the sign above the wall; Rhoda Hiller made a glass dragonfly. Greg Recht was outstanding; he was our carpenter, our mason, he was our sign maker. "It was such a pleasure, working with all these lovely ladies," he said. Alan Baker cut the perimeter rocks. "Unfortunately, we've had some vandalism out there... we'll take care of it."

**Class of 2025 Graduation:** Gregg presented certificates and name badges. Sue Weber, from Blount County, has moved to Cumberland County and is transferring in to the CCMGA. Sixteen of 28 interns have already achieved their 40 hours: Don Molen, who's already logged over 100 hours; Pat Kester; Bear Lesko; Mary Doran; Denise Cooper; Cheryl Dean; Ginger Brindley; Sharon McKinney; Tammy Randolph; Melissa Rueff; Darlene Peterson; Natalie Stopyak; Carolyn Simmons; Karen Wyatt; Susan Stoneberg; Connie Bowman. Gregg invited the rest of the class up for a round of applause. He said he'll get a photo around the cake, a group picture outside and a group picture of everybody before we cut the cake.

Kevin Howard from 2024 class has his hours in (but couldn't be here today). Debra Brown has her hours in and has her badge.

Three-year pins: Janet Russell; Lisa Dillard; Sue Maruska; Linda Engel.

Ten-year pins: Rita M. Reali; Janet Coe

Twenty-five-year pin: Debbie Banfield

Hour badges: Linda Ferris – 100; Linda Glenn – 104; Sid Morgan – 105; Janet Russell – 106; Patricia Dominguez – 107.5; Jan Pitzer – 110.5; Deni Martin – 111; Michelle Williams – 111; Patti Smith – 111.5; Katie Depoortere – 113; Elaine Hanson – 113.3; Rhoda Hiller – 116.5; Peggy Mullett – 117; Kristi DuBois – 122.5; Carla Lund – 126; Debbie Banfield – 126.75; Dick Kaleba – 136.2; David Armbrust – 139; Alan Baker – 150.75; Renee Lloyd – 151.5; Julie Lesko – 153; Greg Recht – 159.5; Connie Farley – 161; Julia Wood – 167; Susan Maruska – 167.25; Erin Fletcher Conley – 173; Brian Graska – 190; Mike Barron – 194; Linda Engel – 204; Carol Lorenc – 205; Laura Riestler – 218; Janet Coe – 243; Leslie Mullican – 253.5; Susan Partch – 272; Rita Reali – 291.5; Margo Carrol – 371.5; Vicki May – 527.5.

At this point, Gregg ordered everybody except the Class of 2025 outside for a group photo. After a photo around the cake, the 2025ers joined us for a photographic extravaganza behind the seating area. Revelry ensued.

President Carroll adjourned the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

(FLAG Festival financials follow on page 3)

2025 BUDGET Flower, Lawn & Garden Festival		2025 ACTUAL	2025 PROPOSED BUDGET	2024 ACTUAL	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET	2022 ACTUAL
SPONSORSHIP/DONATIONS	\$	-		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750
FIRE SALES	\$	454.00	\$200.00	\$209.00		\$185
GATE ADMISSIONS	\$	6,355.00	\$9,500.00	\$8,390.00	\$9,000.00	?
SILENT AUCTION	\$	2,406.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,679.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,300
CD'S ALMANACS ASK M/G BOOTH	\$	112.00	\$300.00	\$297.00		
TEA BOOTH	\$	282.00		\$8.00		
RIVER BIRCH PLANTERS	\$	-		\$600.00		
TOMATO PEPPER PLANT SALES	\$	1,228.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,498.00	\$1,500.00	?
YARD SALE & CRAFT	\$	1,127.75	\$2,000.00	\$1,439.00	\$1,500.00	\$300
M/G GROWN PLANT SALE	\$	933.00	\$2,000.00			
VENDOR BOOTH SALES	\$	7,603.43	\$9,000.00	\$7,860.00	\$9,000.00	
	\$	-				
LIABILITY INSURANCE	\$	1253.00	\$	1255.00		
NURSE INSURANCE	\$	1125.00				
FACILITY	\$	11,670.50	\$	12,500.00	\$	11,939.00
DECORATION COMMITTEE	\$	1566.85	\$	1,000.00	\$	1268.00
VENDOR & VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE	\$	1455.15	\$	1450.00	\$	1259.00
ADVERTISING/MARKETING/SIGNS/PRINTING COMMITTEE	\$	300.00	\$	1,000.00	\$	1540.00
SPEAKER COMMITTEE	\$	100.00	\$	1800.00	\$	1408.00
MUSIC	\$	1400.00	\$	1500.00		\$800.00
HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE	\$	300.00	\$	1400.00	\$	1346.00
TOMATO PLANT EXPENSE	\$	1641.00	\$	200.00		
M/G PLANT SALE EXPENSE	\$	-	\$	200.00		
SILENT AUCTION COMMITTEE	\$	1235.59	\$	100.00	\$	152.00
TEA BOOTH EXPENSE	\$	156.53				\$150.00
YARD SALE	\$	-	\$	200.00		
NET PROCEEDS FROM EVENT	\$	15,297.56	\$19,895.00	\$19,913.00		

# Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.

## General Membership Meeting

June 3, 2025

At 1 p.m., in President Margo Carroll's temporary absence, Vice President Carla Lund introduced our speaker, Brad Fox, who's a business professor at Roane State Community College. He discussed the American Chestnut: [www.tacf.org](http://www.tacf.org). (Sid mentioned Dunstan chestnut trees and how hardy they are on the plateau.)

Margo reconvened the meeting at 2:06. Dr. Natalie Bumgarner was in attendance.

### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. Minutes of the previous general meeting were emailed to the board and Alan Baker yesterday for distribution to the membership. Elaine Hanson moved to accept the May minutes as submitted. Ginger Brindley seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa reported. Through 4/30/25, total income was \$17,594.11; total expenses were \$8,211.83. The ending bank balance was \$42,055.17. Flower Power fundraising \$296 in bulb sale. Christian Academy of the Cumberlands sent a thank-you note for our donation of bark butter to their recent capital fundraiser. Some reimbursements are still filtering in to be paid. Julia moved to receive the treasurer's report. Rita seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

Margo said Alan Baker has "really, really been helping the board" in continuing to run smoothly. "He is priceless to us in the guidance he has given us... throughout the years." Applause for Alan.

July 1 meeting will go back to 5 p.m., with a potluck meeting. Dinner at 5:30; speaker at 6; meeting to follow.

**Certificates and Pins:** Gregg Upchurch tried to distribute certificates and hundred-hour pins. Only two people (Elaine Hanson and Renee Lloyd) were here to receive their pins. Photo ops ensued.

Gregg invited Dr. Natalie here to talk about the Fall Gardeners Festival and ways to "kill as many birds with one stone as we can." She's looking into a vegetable plot at the PDG, a summer turf plot and some cool-season plots – kind of like research-based trials. He's hoping we can pursue a research-based Search for Excellence award.

Dr. Natalie took over. "Every time we get a good idea we know might work... we go to the people who can get it done." She referred to us as "beta testers." Lofty ideas vs. small specks of realism.

Food-safety plot – three 50-foot-long beds; they'll consist of two 20-foot plots separated by a 10-foot center plot in each bed. She's crushed there'll be no lettuce. Cut flower cultivars will go in the buffers between the vegetable plots. Some benefit in companion planting for addition of pollinator plants.

Tomatoes & peppers in the large beds, including disease-resistant cultivars. Twelve plants in each large plot; different mulching plans (black plastic, straw, none) in each plot bed. Organic and commercial fertilization will be incorporated, as well (cultivar x mulch x fertilizer).

Produce will be counted, weighed and given away. Planting plan is week of June 16. “The plants are about this big right now,” she said, holding her hands about ten inches apart.

The soil will be the same in all of the plots. The tomatoes are all hybrids, but they’re all established, determinate varieties. Peppers will include an open-pollinated, older hybrid and newer hybrid varieties.

Pest management: observation and note taking, possibly “a couple of low-spray options. ... I’m not sure we really even sprayed that much last time,” she said.

What would the master gardeners actually be doing? “We’d all plant together, well-labeled plants.” Drip irrigation will be established. MG involvement would be once or twice a week management: light weeding, observation. Then “60, 70 days after planting, there’ll be some harvesting.”

She’ll have data sheets for folks to record findings.

The plot will be to the left of the outdoor classroom, over where the blueberries are. On September 23, we’ll have the Central Region educational event. The plot will be available for display for Steak & Potatoes Day, the Fall Gardeners Festival and the Central Region meeting.

Gregg’s looking for 6-8 people for each of the food-safety trial and turf trial opportunities.

The turf plot will be to the right of the rose rosette trial plot. Dr. Bolling is envisioning 64 blocks of turfgrass. Gregg estimates each turfgrass sample in the plot will be 3x3 to 5x5 feet square.

**Classes in the Gardens:** Julia Wood reported. Several classes are coming up this month and next. We need volunteers to sign up to help with hosting.

**2025 Class Project:** Greg Recht reported. It’s done. Everybody pitched in. “The water feature is now a premier event out at the PDG.” Brief discussion about whether class projects will resume, going forward. Gregg Upchurch said it depends on how many interns we have in each year’s class.

**Teas in the Gardens:** Both teas are sold out. The June tea is slated for next Saturday afternoon. There’ve been no glitches. Brief tea committee meeting after this meeting. Ginger Brindley attended our first tea, which is where she learned about the CCMG; she took the intern class this year and is now an active member of the CCMG and the tea committee.

**Speakers Bureau:** Carol Burdett reported. We’ve had two calls recently about people wanting to know how to plant a garden.

**Birds, Bees, Bucks & Trees:** June 14 at the fairgrounds. Margo needs volunteers to help staff the MG booth.

**Fall Gardeners Festival:** August 26 at the PDG. We need volunteers.

**Garlicfest:** September 27 at the fairgrounds. CCMG gets 40% of booth proceeds. It's the same day as the newly established Apple Festival (which will be at the back of the fairgrounds). Attendees will have to pass through the Garlicfest to get to the Apple Festival displays. Laszlo from Galena Garlic will be heading up the event.

**Steak & Potatoes Field Day:** August 21, the Thursday preceding the Fall Gardeners Festival. Need volunteers to help serve lunch.

**Eventeny Renewal:** Margo reported. This past year, \$1,500 was approved by the board to pay for Eventeny to support the FLAG Festival. Renewal is \$3,400/year. We need to vote today whether we want to continue using Eventeny. MGs who have used it for organizing/implementing events said it's easy to use. Leslie Mullican said we had nine vendors at the FLAG Festival out of our local area, who found us via Eventeny. Susan Partch moved we continue our membership with Eventeny for 2025-26. Elaine Hanson seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote. Leslie encouraged everyone to get onto the site and check it out and investigate the functionality of Eventeny.

**Announcements:** Susan Partch said the daylilies are blooming. Weeds are coming through the mulch. It's also deadheading time. Ron and Rosie Drechnik said the theme for the July 1 meeting is an old-fashioned potluck meal. Please don't everyone bring dessert. Margo said Janet Russell has moved to North Carolina, and there may be a plant rescue at her old house. Margo said it's not too early to start thinking about nominations for next year's board.

President Carroll thanked Dr. Natalie Bumgarner again for joining us and adjourned the meeting at 3:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

# Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.

## General Membership Meeting

July 1, 2025

Margo called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. at the Country Store.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Briggs reported. As of 5/31/25, the opening balance was \$42,055.17; total income was \$987; total expenses were \$3,450.28. The ending balance was \$39,591.89. The hydrangea lady who taught the class last weekend turned over her speaking fee to the CCMG. Rosie Drechnik has written a thank-you note. Julia Wood moved to receive the treasurer's report. Rita Reali seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

Margo suspended the business meeting to introduce our guest speaker, Jeff Harvey.

Following a ten-minute break, Margo reconvened the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. Minutes of the previous general meeting were distributed via email and should be posted on the website. Linda Ferris moved to accept the June minutes as submitted. Sue Maruska seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Fall Gardeners Festival:** Leslie Mullican reported. She'd love it if we could have enough volunteers signed up (we need about 25 people per shift) so we can have people only work one shift. She described the various areas in which we need staff. She'll be in the back of the room doing signups.

**Classes in the Gardens:** Julia Wood reported. She thanked Linda Klingerman for her donation of her workshop fee to the CCMG. The frog speaker didn't have us on his calendar, disappointing the 20 people who showed up. A lavender wand-making class is coming up, as is the kids' dragonfly craft class and garden tour. Julia needs folks to host classes; they've encountered difficulty with people either showing up without registering for a class, or registering for a class and not showing up. "If you sign up, show up," she said.

**Teas in the Gardens:** Susan Partch reported. There's a report in the *Thymes* about it. The tea was moved inside, due to the threat of rain. The next tea (September 13) is already sold out. Planning is going along well. They'll be getting together July 29 to make favors. The tea committee will meet briefly, immediately after the meeting.

**Fair Booth:** Connie reported. She and Susan are confirmed for the MG booth at the Cumberland County Fair, August 18-23. The theme is "We Goat This."

**Emails:** Alan Baker is working on straightening out email gaffes. If you're not getting emails, see him and he'll inundate you with them.

**Badges and Certificates:** Gregg distributed badges, certificates and hundred-hour pins to several members. A new badge was presented to transferring member Sue Weber. Carolyn Simons was not here to receive her badge and certificate. Katie DePoortere got her 100-hour pin and certificate, as did Jan Pitzer.

**Vegetable Demonstration Plots:** Ten master gardeners are participating. Gregg said he's "very happy with how it's going." The demo plots will be part of the Fall Gardeners Festival education portion. The turfgrass plot (with Dr. Becky Boling) is also underway. "My compliments to all of you and I appreciate everything that you do," Gregg added.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates:** Margo reported. The MG Board meeting is July 15, 1 p.m., at the Country Store. The Umbrella Committee meeting will be July 24, 12:30 p.m., in the classroom at the PDG.

Gregg reminded everyone to sign up for Dr. Natalie's master gardener newsletter (as mentioned at last month's meeting). You have to opt in for it, he said. "We can't just put you on that list." Alan offered to forward the most recent issue to everyone so we can sign up.

**Survey:** It's the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the PDG, Margo said. Fill out the survey and help contribute to the direction of the PDG in its next 20 years.

**Clothing:** Margo reported. Order forms for CCMG clothing items are on the food counter.

**Food Theme for August:** Rosie Drechnik reported. "Summer Salads" is the theme for next month's potluck.

**Leftover Plants:** Susan reported. She's brought leftover plants from the Tea; they're free for the taking.

President Carroll adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

# Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.

## General Membership Meeting

August 5, 2025

In the temporary absence of President Margo Carroll, Gregg Upchurch introduced Shalena Durkot, who presented the guest speaker: Sydney Hohmann, our summer intern at the PDG. She's a senior at TTU, majoring in agricultural business with a focus in marketing. After her presentation, Sydney answered questions from Gregg and other members of the audience.

Afterward, President Margo Carroll called the business meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. at the Country Store.

Gregg handed out certificates and intern pins to Rita Rice and Carolyn Simons. Diana Halcox has not been here to accept her certificate and pin.

### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. Minutes of the previous general meeting were distributed via email and are posted on the website. Deni Martin moved to accept the July minutes as submitted. Connie Farley seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Briggs reported. As of 6/30/25, the opening balance was \$39,591.89; total income was \$1,091.00; total expenses were \$317.66. The ending balance was \$40,365.23. We got a thank-you card from a family whose final farewell to their beloved dog was somehow facilitated by the Master Gardeners. They enclosed a check for \$700. Rita moved to receive the treasurer's report. Carol Burdett seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Cheers to 20 Years:** Mike Barron reported. "We've got a lot to be proud of out there [at the PDG]; it is a legacy for the Plateau," he said. The event is slated for Friday, August 22, the day after Steak and Potatoes Day, starting at 5 p.m. Spouses are welcome. We're inviting local dignitaries... and hoping those folks will contribute to the PDG Endowment Fund. Margo asked Mike if we can invite folks with deep pockets. Without waiting for Mike to consider the question, Gregg replied, "Yes." Refreshments, wine and appetizers will be served. At 6 p.m. we'll have a brief speaking program about the Garden. No speechifying. RSVP to Jennifer at the PDG. We'll be done by 7:00 and it'll be a good time. Gregg asked folks to send photos that tell a story about the PDG. He's going to assemble them into a visual presentation. Mike said he's been talking to folks who were there when the PDG got started. He mentioned Rae Hozer had copies of the master plan for the Gardens. "This wasn't a UT project," Mike said. "Master gardeners did this." "That master gardeners built a garden at a UT cow facility blows my mind," Margo said.

**Garden Rally:** Gregg spoke about "Vicki and the Bucket List." It's a window of opportunity to work at the garden to get the PDG in order for Steak & Potatoes Day, the anniversary celebration and the Fall Gardeners' Festival. Poison ivy in the main garden has been flagged; Shalena will take care of that. Vicki's planned a drawing for prizes; there's a special category under MG volunteer hours for "PDG Rally." Everyone logged for the rally will be entered into a drawing to be held at the September meeting; three winners will receive \$50 gift cards for The Feed Store, The Country Cupboard and Galena Garlic.

Vicki would have liked to make a motion to approve a \$2,000 master-gardener budget line item to pay for tools needed in the garden, and add a first-aid kit with Tecnu (poison ivy remedy). Tools will be labeled so folks can keep track of where they belong, so edgers don't end up in the cow barn. Connie suggested this should be tabled until the next board meeting. We spent all our PDG funds already (for KinderGarden repairs). Julia Wood said it needs to be voted on by the membership because it's an allocation of funds from MG coffers. Apparently, Margo made the motion on Vicki's behalf. Julia seconded. Discussion of the propriety of an absent party making a motion. Lisa wanted to know where we'll take the money from. Margo said we have an excess of funds. Alan said the motion should be to amend the budget for the PDG to increase the amount by \$2,000 for the purchase of tools. Elaine Peters said we should have an annual allocation for tools, because they get plenty of use. Joy Danley suggested getting a lighter shovel (a "lady shovel," she termed it). Carol Burdett requested lighter rakes. Mike suggested augmenting the tools at the PDG, but to simply throw \$2,000 toward it is impractical; he'd prefer we provide an inventory of what we need and allocate necessary funds. Mike asked to amend the motion to specify an itemized listing of what we need (e.g., lady shovels, edgers). Ron Drechnik seconded. Michelle asked for snips; Mike suggested a sharpening device for said tools, and added we ought to have instructions on proper sharpening technique for volunteers. Linda Glenn said we need to adequately clean and maintain the tools we already have. Connie asked who would purchase the tools. "I'm sure Vicki May has a plan," Margo said. Gregg suggested we table this until the next board meeting. Gregg said he'll buy us an edger. Bear Lesko said they've had months of discussions on edging plots. Edgers are not necessarily easy to maneuver. Margo reiterated we're going to table the discussion. Gregg would like the folks who do the edging to form a committee, develop a consensus and present their findings to the board. Margo concurred. "We need our garden, the Plateau Discovery Garden, to be sustainable," she said.

**Fair:** Connie Farley reported. Fair theme is "We Goat This." Our booth will be set up August 13. Fair runs August 18-23. She and Susan are doing the fair booth. Senior Day is August 20. The Fair Office is open Monday through Friday.

**Teas:** Connie Farley reported in Susan Partch's absence. We're on schedule and we have a speaker: Sonia Tremblay.

**Holiday Luncheon:** Connie Farley reported. Our last meeting of the year, December 2 at noon, in Building 3. Lunch served at 12:30; tickets are \$10/person; spouses are welcome. See Lisa Briggs for tickets, starting in November.

**Website Password:** Margo said it's been changed to from clover to phlox.

**Speakers Bureau:** Carol Burdett reported. We need a speaker who can talk about planting a garden.

**Steak & Potatoes Field Day:** Carol Burdett reported. She still needs four people to work at the event.

**Classes in the Gardens:** Julia Wood reported. "Practical Landscapes" is coming up August 9. If you sign up, show up; we have a "chronic issue" of about 50 percent of people not showing up for classes. "Creating Stable Meadows" is set for August 16, 1-3 p.m. "Improving Water Quality Through Native Plants" is scheduled for September.

**The Glade Magazine:** Kristi DuBois would like a copy of the August issue of the magazine, for which she was interviewed. If anyone has one to give to her, please bring it to the next meeting.

**Fall Gardeners Festival:** Gregg said Fall Gardeners Festival postcards are available for distribution.

**Announcements:** Board meeting August 19, at 1 p.m. at the PDG classroom. Bear will have his Tool Time Team assembled. Next general meeting is Tuesday, September 2, at 5 p.m. at the Country Store. We've broken with tradition about doing a picnic. We didn't do one last year, and there won't be one this year.

**Upcoming Festival Week:** Sid Morgan said it's a lot of work for a few people, or not a lot of work for more people. The PDG has to be completely transitioned three times in the space of five days.

President Carroll adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

# Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.

## General Membership Meeting

October 7, 2025

President Margo Carroll called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. at the Country Store. The speaker didn't show, so the business meeting started early.

### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. She thanked Carla Lund for taking minutes last month. Minutes of the previous general meeting were distributed via email and are posted on the website. Vicki May moved to accept the September minutes as submitted. Deni Martin seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa reported. Through 8/31/25, opening bank balance was \$38,546.49; total income was \$1,042.00; total expenses were \$7,242.39 (most of that was paying for the intern, tools for the PDG and the Fall Gardeners Festival) for a net operating loss of \$6,200.39. The ending bank balance was \$32,346.10. She has tickets for the December 2, 2025, Christmas luncheon in Building 3. They're \$10 apiece or two for \$20. Rita Reali moved to receive the treasurer's report. Patti Smith seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Board Nominations/Voting:** Margo reported. She's agreed to stay on as president next year, as long as she gets an awesome president elect. Directors "attend meetings, vote and they direct," Margo explained. Ron Drechnik clarified directors ensure the board is doing its collective job correctly, "making sure you don't goof it up too badly." Vicki May and Tracy Scrimsher have agreed to be directors. Rita nominated Bear Lesko as president elect. He balked but didn't reject the premise outright. Carla is returning as vice president; Sharon McKinney will be secretary and Lisa Briggs is staying on as treasurer.

**PDG Committee Questionnaire:** Margo reported. Earlier this year, Mike Barron got from Rae Hozer the original plans for the PDG. "Accessible pathways" was one item on that list, and Margo lamented we still don't really have them. Carla passed out brief (three-question) questionnaires for members to fill out. Gregg said our responses will help with long-range strategic planning for the PDG in the next five to ten years, as well as wish-list items for further down the road. Extensive discussion ensued. Margo said the committee will be emailed with a date for the first meeting.

**Birdseed Wreaths:** Vicki May reported. The MGs will be at Mistletoe Marketplace in Fairfield Glade on November 8. October 20 and 27 will be wreath-making days out at the PDG classroom.

**Newsletter Photo Awards:** Jan Pitzer reported. She thanked everyone for submitting info/photos to *The Thymes* newsletter. Photo-contest awards will be made at the next meeting; non-Master Gardeners will be our judges. She also said to email her to vote for your favorite article and a writing prize will be awarded.

**Holiday Luncheon:** Connie Farley reported. Event starts at noon with a half-hour social period, followed by lunch. The Cumberland Cares Recreation Center is our designated charity for this year. Tickets are available now; they're \$10 each. Deadline is November 21. Bring toys – no books, "because The Book Cellar has donated many, many, many books" – to the holiday party, to be used

at the recreation center. Guests are welcome (\$10 apiece). Desserts are finger-food items donated by other MGs. Ugly sweater contest will have great prizes.

**State Extension Master Gardener Email List Regional Events:** Gregg Upchurch reported. The three regions (East, Middle and West) hold periodic horticulture conferences. Julie Lesko talked about her observations and experiences at the regional conference. Bear said the PDG grounds used to be a huge potato farm, which was used as a potato research area during WWII. “There’s a lot of information to be had if you just walk around and ask questions,” Bear said.

Gregg attempted to pass out certificates and badges. Christine Guilmain got hers, but the others weren’t in attendance.

Rita has Crossville Oktoberfest tickets.

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

CCMG Board Meeting, 1 p.m., October 21, at the Country Store. For the next general meeting, anyone A-K can bring cookies for the meeting. “A through K, including R,” Margo clarified with an impish grin, standing in front of and looking directly at Rita.

CCMG Membership Meeting, 1 p.m., November 4, at the Country Store.

CCMG Board Meeting, 1 p.m., November 18, at the Country Store.

CCMG Holiday Luncheon, TBD, December 2, in Building 3

President Carroll adjourned the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary

# **Cumberland County Master Gardeners, Inc.**

## **General Membership Meeting**

December 2, 2025

President Margo Carroll called the meeting to order at 1:41 p.m. in Building 3.

### **Officers' Reports**

**Secretary's Report:** Rita Reali reported. Minutes of the previous general meeting were distributed via email and are posted on the website. Sue Maruska moved to accept the November minutes as submitted. Vicki May seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Briggs reported. Not much has changed since her last report.. Patti Smith moved to receive the treasurer's report. Vicki May seconded. Motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

**Teas in the Gardens:** Sue Partch reported. The tea committee has a few openings.

**Bird Seed Wreaths:** Vicki May reported, addressing Shalena and her team at the office. "We really appreciate working with you..." ending with, "Go bird seed!" Shalena said the bird-seed fundraiser has been the PDG's most profitable endeavor.

**Warm Christmas Thoughts and Mushy Stuff:** Gregg Upchurch wished everyone a Merry Christmas and happy holidays, adding how much he loves and appreciates us.

**Parade of Trees:** Michelle Williams reported. The CCMG tree is up at the First National Bank of Tennessee. Apparently being a live tree, it reportedly looks and smells wonderful, with its lavender sage theme, and accompanying magnolias. Connie Farley said she's grateful not to have the CCMG tree on her plate this year for the first time, but she decorated a Women Veterans tree for the Parade of Trees.

President Carroll adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita M. Reali, Corporate Secretary