

Lake Minnetonka Garden Club May 15, 2025 Meeting Minutes

President Roberta Dressen called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM. She called on Mary Meyer for approval of the November 2024 and April 2025 meeting minutes. Kathy Jones made a motion to approve the minutes, Meredith Howell, seconded. Motion passed, minutes approved.

Meredith Howell, club historian, on behalf of the Minnetonka Historical Society asked for volunteers to sign up on the clipboard she passed around for work starting in September, Saturday mornings at the Wayzata Library.

Debbie Vorpahl reminded members of the annual fundraiser at Kelley and Kelley Nursery from 8:00AM-4:30PM, May 21 and 22, 2025. 10% of sales will come back to the LMGC.

Laura Inglis asked for changes in the Yearbook, please send to her asap, tomorrow, May 16 deadline for yearbook changes.

Bobbie read a report from Holly Adams, Conservation Chair. The 2025 National Affairs and Legislature Conference theme was *Action Now for Planet Earth*. The conference focused on what we can do to make a difference, including the need for native plants, strong conservation policies in Farm Bill. The Minnesota Wildlife Action Plan was showcased as a model. The NRDC also mentioned Minnesota efforts. Holly and other Minnesota GCA reps visited our legislators in Washington. They promoted our GCA priorities and position papers. Good reception and great support from GCA staff for the conference. GCA is well respected with legislators. Wonderful and productive conference.

Connie introduced two speakers. Jenna Duncan is one of our three 2025 scholarship winners. She is a junior at University of Minnesota Twin Cities majoring in environmental policy and management, working with Dr. Emilie Snell-Rood. Jenna reported on her honors thesis project. Elevated copper levels are an issue for soil health and for pollinators and their overall health. Jenna created different fungal biochar feedstocks and measured their effect on uptake of copper on mustard plants. Her work is ongoing. She is hopeful that biochar will tie up copper and reduce toxicity for pollinators and insects feeding on the plants. Jenna will keep us posted of her work going forward.

Connie then introduced today's program: Fungal Gardening Growing Your Own Culinary Adventure presented by Peter Martighacco, president of the Minnesota Mycological Society, second oldest mycological society in the U.S. He used the PowerPoint from Mike Kempenich, the original person scheduled to speak to us. Peter focused on how we can cultivate mushrooms in our gardens for personal use. Mushrooms feed on cellulose and

break down wood. The vast majority of plants (90-95%) have a fungal relationship which enhances their ability to uptake nutrients. Fungi are important to plants; minerals from fungi are traded for sugars from the plants, which fungi cannot create, but plants can. It is a beneficial relationship not parasitic. Shiitake mushrooms can be grown in plugs on cut logs that have begun to decompose. Leaf litter can be used to grow other types of mushrooms. Wine caps are the most fool proof mushroom, they are easily grown from spawn on wood chips, harvest when young. The Wood Blewit mushrooms easily grow on leaf litter, often found after frost, light lavender in color. Harvest when caps have turned upward. Other harvest times vary and are dictated by the kind of mushroom. Field and Forest is a reliable supplier of mushroom spawn: fieldandforest.net

Portabella mushrooms are simply an older button mushroom. Giant puffballs (look like a white volleyball) should look pure white inside, not yellow. Insects love these mushrooms as much as we do! Morel mushroom cultivation is a challenge!! Difficult to do and are a different species of mushroom. China does cultivate morel mushroom, but it is not done here in the U.S.

Porcini, chantarelles, and hedgehog mushrooms are not typically cultivated, but might work on suitable trees, with patience and the right site. Some people think this is unconventional and much more difficult. Medicinal mushrooms continue to be studied for suitable uses. Much is still to be discovered. Very few mushrooms are poisonous that grow Minnesota, only 4-5% are edible for gathering. Any wild mushroom NEEDS TO BE COOKED WELL. Even eating raw morels is an issue. Peter answered many questions from members.

Connie reminded us of the Annual Meeting at the Lafayette Club in June. RSVPs are important and required. Watch for the June Annual Meeting invitation and please promptly respond. Connie closed the meeting at 2:34 PM.

Minutes submitted by Mary Meyer, 5/16/2025