

Reps Introductory Information for Handbook

Introductory Information about OMGA and the Board of Directors

- The OMGA Board of Directors – Who’s on it?
- What makes an effective Board?
- OMGA Representatives’ Key Activities
- The Relationship between OMGA, MG Chapters and OSU
- The OMGA Handbook

Why do we need a Board of Directors?

Oregon Law requires that a Non-profit 501 c 3 have a Board of Directors.

Who should be on the OMGA Board of Directors?

Each Chapter of OMGA elects two Veteran Master Gardeners who become the OMGA Representative and Alternate Representative. They are considered members of the OMGA Board of Directors.

What is the purpose of OMGA?

OMGA began in 1987. Our restated mission is driven by the strategic plan and it states:

We are committed to sustainable gardening through:

- *Partnering with the OSU Master Gardener Program to promote sustainable gardening practices;*
- *Advocating for funding to deliver the Master Gardener Program across Oregon; and*
- *Fostering quality continuing education of all Master Gardeners*

Fun sustains our energy in carrying out these commitments

Roles and Responsibilities:

The OMGA Board of Director’s role is of stewardship of this mission. We are NOT here to create the technical content but rather to assist mechanisms of sharing it to the rest of the OMGA membership and therefore the public.

OMGA acts independently of OSU to offer services that enable Chapters to flourish while operating within the State of Oregon’s legal requirements.

Acting autonomously, OMGA is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of State Representatives from each of its OMGA County Chapters. The Executive Committee consists of the following elected officers: President, the President Elect, 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer. Legally in Oregon, a non-profit must have at least a President, Secretary and Treasurer.

MG Chapters are connected to Extension for the educational part but then have their own non-profit association with OMGA that has a compatible mission. OMGA supports the Statewide Master Gardener Program independently.

The Board of Directors is the body with ultimate decision making authority for a non-profit corporation. Board members have ultimate authority on the uses of the mon-profit’s funds; the selection of staff and determination of the strategies which OMGA will use.

Key Activities for OMGA:

- **Leadership Forum** focuses on project management and leadership skill building.
- **Gardener's Mini-College** has a legend of bringing gardeners around the state together.
- **Search for Excellence** highlights and showcases effective new noteworthy MG programs that have been accomplished and achieved at the county level. The International MG conference closed this program for their use. The OMGA history book has more details.
- **PNW:** Pacific Northwest Disease Management and Pacific Northwest Insect Management handbooks are provided to OMGA Member Extension Offices each year with their new releases.
- **Karl Carlson Grant** is available to establish new OSU MG chapters, assist new or struggling chapters become established, implementation of new programs and projects.
- **Extension Educator Grant** offers support to special needs of the Extension Agent. An OMGA member volunteers to lead this program.
- **Statewide Endowment Fund** helps support the Statewide Program Leader. Donations are determined and voted on by the OMGA Board of Directors.
- **Ray McNeilan Scholarship** works with the OSU Horticulture Department each year to select a candidate to receive a scholarship. An OSU committee reviews their background and an OMGA committee approves of the award to that recipient(s).
- **Jan McNeilan Quarterly OMGA Meeting Fund** was created to provide some financial assistance to the host Chapter of a Quarterly OMGA Board meeting to defray some costs. The Chapter can choose whether or not to request reimbursement up to the maximum by contacting the OMGA Treasurer.
- **Send-A-Friend Fund** benefits a MG who needs financial assistance to pay for the fees to attend Mini-College. All dollars are donated but OGA manages the fund and process. An OMGA member volunteers to lead this program.

Key OMGA Representative Activities:

Accountability

Accountability is helping OMGA achieve its mission according to our Bylaws and Policies and Procedures. Examples are:

- Approving the annual OMGA budget. The annual OMGA budget is set at the beginning of the year. A status report is provided by the OMGA Treasurer at each board meeting.
- Electing OMGA Executive Committee Officers
- Representing your local Master Gardener Chapter by shaping decisions made at the State of Oregon level. Act as liaison between Chapter and State Program. At time, OMGA input and volunteers. At other times, your local Chapter may be seeking information to assist with local programming.
- Participating in the implementation of the OMGA Strategic Plan.
- Authorizing key operation changes with your vote.

Commitment

Commitment is about agreeing to be responsible to foster change on the behalf of the local Chapters and for the State of Oregon as a whole.

Representatives demonstrate commitment by attending meetings, following through on tasks, getting involved and encouraging others to get involved.

Involvement

Involvement means you willingly take part in discussions and projects that benefit the OMGA. You act on suggestions made at the quarterly meetings and your chapter meetings, and recognize member's contributions. You choose members for OMGA activities who are committed to achieving goals.

Recordkeeping

At all quarterly meetings, you should bring your OMGA Representative Handbook to use as a tool to keep up-to-date. This handbook describes your role through examples and procedures as an OMGA Representative. This is a 3-ring binder of standard materials that are updated throughout your term. Though handbooks will vary to some degree from each other based on the details of the responsible party, they all will have a common Table of Contents.

- The OMGA Representative Handbook contains your job guidelines and expectations
- Keep your Handbook current and transition your role when your new chapter representative is elected
- We suggest that you maintain accurate records of OMGA Representatives activities
- You will want to keep the minutes of previous quarterly meetings
- Written Chapter reports are given to the OMGA Secretary and Statewide Program Coordinator each quarter
- If you wish to provide a two-minute oral report about the needs of your chapter, request time for the meeting through the President

Much of the information is maintained on the OMGA website which is: www.omga.org. Check there for new versions of all information. Look at the Revision date on the printed copy and compare it to the online version to make sure you have the most current one in view.

You may want to add the report on Paid membership, Mini College and Financials of OMGA. Many of these records are also found on the OMGA website. Keeping your handbook current will allow for effective OMGA Board meeting to occur.

The OMGA meeting agendas are created and distributed by the OMGA President. Minutes, once approved, will be posted to the OMGA website.

Welcome to your new position on the OMGA Board of Directors.