



Oregon Master Gardener Association
First Quarter Chapter Reports
2016

Benton County submitted by Richard Taylor

- The 2016 Master Gardener training class is underway with 25 participants from Benton County and 19 From Linn County. Each trainee has a mentor who will help them learn about the organization, understand working at the Plant Clinic Desk and meet other master gardeners in ongoing activities. A team of 16 experienced MGs runs seven Plant Problem Scenario sessions during training. This orients trainees to working at the clinic desk by learning to ask questions and use appropriate resources to find answers.
- The Gearing Up for Gardening free talk series was hosted each Tuesday in January and February in the Benton County Library. The theme this year is “The Year of the Veggie”. Each week a different topic in vegetable gardening is presented. The series has been popular, with 80 to 100 attendees every week.
- Insights Into Gardening was held on February 13 at LaSells Stewart Center on the campus of Oregon State University. Insights is one of two major fundraisers of the year for the BCMGA. 320 attendees participated in 12 different classes presented during the day and browsed through exhibitors displays in the lobby.
- Four Seed to Supper classes have started in Benton County reaching 80-90 adults in the beginning vegetable gardening class for people on a budget. Two of them (Philomath and South Corvallis) will offer a Child Grow Club at the same time the adults are attending Seeds to Supper. We are holding them in 10 locations within Benton and Linn counties. One of the classes will be in Spanish. Of note... Some of the trainees in this year’s Master Gardener class took the Seeds to Supper class last year.
- The Outreach committee has produced a short tv advertisement highlighting upcoming Master Gardener events. The ad is airing on various local cable TV channels.

Central Oregon Chapter submitted by Diana Hardin

The new year has brought much reflection and resolve to make being a Central Oregon Master Gardener a worthy and rewarding experience. With the emphasis on

recruitment and retention state wide we have implemented some of the suggestions made at the leadership forum held at mini college. Changing the format of our monthly board meetings to allow more time for membership input and having committee reports written rather than presented are two changes we have started. Having a 10 minute University given by a chapter member at each meeting is another idea we have begun. We acknowledge that we have not done the best job of recognizing and showing appreciation for jobs well done by members and are working at correcting this.

This year our new Master Gardener class is one of the largest in recent history. We are training 34 and 2 transfers which is an increase of over 10 from last year. We have included the expertise of some of our own chapter members in the training schedule. Soils, Composting, and Vegetable Gardening are some of the topics taught by COMGA members.

Two exciting educational events are happening which may interest members state wide. The first is called "Living on a Few Acres". This event is being held at the Deschutes County Fair Grounds. It is presented by the Small Farms Division of OSU Extension in Deschutes County. It will be held on Saturday, March 12th, from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm. It is a full day of classes with many choices each session offering MG advanced training hours. Covering such topics as Mixed Use Irrigation in Home Landscapes, Native Bees, Growing Tree Fruits Successfully, and Controlling Wildlife Damage. For registration and more details go to <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes/LOAFA> or call 541-548-6088.

The second educational event is put on by our Central Oregon Chapter. Our annual Spring Seminar being held at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds on April 16th. This too is an all-day affair offering 16 different classes, many of which qualify as advanced training. Always a fun get together of fellow gardeners with a lunch and an awesome silent auction included in the fee. Registration will open in March at our <http://gocomga.com> web site.

Plans are underway for community teaching of Vegetable Gardening both in English and in Spanish. Committees are hard at work planning community gardens, plant sales, demonstration gardens, and of course the upcoming Spring Seminar.

As you can see Central Oregon is hard at work in 2016!

Clatsop County submitted by Yvonne Whitney

New Clatsop County Master Gardener Association Website started in January highlighting a Membership survey. A great location for members to find current, updated information, pictures and events of what Master Gardeners are doing in Clatsop County.

New Master Gardener class of 26 is very engaged and interactive. As an association this is so exciting and critical to our future .

New date for our annual Spring into Gardening event "Feast for the Eyes" will be May 14th instead of in April . We hope the later date will provide warmer weather on the coast, more conducive to spring gardening activities. We should have more plants for the plant sale, more mature and better prepared for the garden. We also hope to have less conflict with other Spring events in our community.

New plant identification tags for our Demonstration Garden are being developed by our Master Gardeners. They will be cemented in and tamper proof to prevent removal. This is a two-year project with weather proof Laser Tags including Botanical and common name, URL university references and QR codes. When complete our Demonstration Garden will be the first Botanical Garden in Astoria, Oregon.

New Membership Committee focusing on both new and veteran membership interest, development and retention . Evaluation using a membership surveys in process.

New collaborative partnership with local schools, small farmers and foresters is moving forward faster than we could imagine.

Columbia County submitted by Pat LaPointe

- The Columbia County 2016 Master Gardener training class is underway with 27 students participating to promote better public understanding of sustainable gardening and maintaining our presence as a significant partner in Columbia County's future.
- The four Community Gardens Columbia County Master Gardeners support provided over 6414 pounds of produce for our local foodbanks. Currently, Columbia County has four gardens located in Saint Helens, Scappoose, Vernonia and Clatskanie.
- The Columbia County Chapter will provide garden seminars at The Home and Garden Show on April 2 & 3. We will be presenting 14 (11-15 minutes each)

topics this year including Beekeeping, Soils, Native Plants, and Deer Resistant Landscapes.

- Seed to Supper classes are scheduled for April in Saint Helens, Rainier, Clatskanie and Scappoose. Six week vegetable classes are held in each location with hands- on gardens. Classes are free for low income families.
- The Columbia County Spring Fair is coming up on April 30th at the Saint Helens High School. We will feature over 30 different varieties of tomatoes and numerous vendors supply various garden related items. Show starts at 9 AM and runs until 3 PM. The event includes a large raffle featuring many donated prizes.
- The New Bug Crew has a busy schedule this year. They have already visited the Columbia County Christian School where they installed a Mason Bee House. Several series of classroom visits are coming up in April and a special class is scheduled for the children at a 4H Camp in June.
- The Columbia County Master Gardeners are gearing up for the Demo Garden located at the Columbia County Fair Grounds. The fair opens on July 20.

Curry County submitted by Bobbie Gross

Spring brings out the best in gardeners! Warm sunny days with plenty of moisture, encourages new plant growth, and marks the beginning of a new gardening season in Curry County. Enthusiastic veteran MG volunteers and new students are involved in projects that benefit the community. We're off to a great start! Here are the highlights.

Master Gardener Classes and Plant Clinics

A "full house" is present at the MG classes with 16 new students and many veteran MG's sitting in on the classes. Interest is high. To help the students be more comfortable with Plant Clinics they will be helping with, part of the class lunch hour is spent "solving plant problems: under the leadership of veteran MG's Weekly Plant Clinics start in March after classes end, and are every Wednesday from 10 until 2 at the OSU Extension Office in Gold Beach. The new hours are meant to accommodate people during their lunch hours. Other Plant Clinics will be held at community events, Farmer's Markets, and at local businesses, all good opportunities for community outreach.

Spring Lecture Series at the Curry Public Library in Gold Beach

Curry Public Library and OSU Master Gardeners are presenting a series of gardening talks every Tuesday in March at 5:30 PM. The community is invited to learn about greenhouse growing, school gardens, keep bees and food as medicine. The talks are organized by OSU MG Program Assistant Scott Thiemann, with some MG's participating as presenters.

MG Plant Sale Happening May 7

Wednesday afternoons at the Gold Beach High School greenhouse, finds MG's busy transplanting, trimming, watering plants in preparation for the MG Plant Sale at the High School. About 2,000 plants have been started from cuttings, and there are almost 1,000 succulents according to MG Carol. It's the biggest fund raiser of the year for CCMGA, and also a great learning experience for the MG's participating. The Plant Sale provides opportunities to educate the public as well. As our Plant Sale flyer says, there will be: "Experts on hand to answer questions on bee keeping and pollination, butterfly protection, raised bed gardening, and plant disease resolution." We look forward to a great event!

School Gardens in Gold Beach and Brookings

MG's Mary, Pam, and Lynette, attended the School Garden and Farm To School Summit 2016 and came back with great ideas. Both Riley Creek School Garden in Gold Beach, and Little Bear Patch Garden in Brookings are thriving thanks to the work of Mary, Pam, Lynette, many other MG's and others. Vegetable seeds will be started soon at the Riley Creek School Garden greenhouse, for the MG Plant Sale. Little Bear Patch Garden is now more handicap accessible thanks to work done this winter. The Youth In Transition (YTP) Program from Brookings-Harbor High School, under the leadership of instructor Michelle Pruden and help from MG's, is actively involved in the garden.

Richey Memorial Garden Next to the OSU Extension Office in Gold Beach

Thanks to MG Carol, the Richey Memorial Garden is being rejuvenated. It's an opportunity for other MG's and trainees to get involved as well.

Informing Members and Others Interested

CCMGA has a Facebook page. Check it out at: www.facebook.com/OSUExtCurryMG
The Brambles, our CCMGA monthly newsletter, informs out members. It can be read by anyone on the CCMGA website: Extension.oregonstate.edu/curry/mg.

Jackson County submitted by Barbara Davidson

Winter Dreams/Summer Gardens is a 1-day gardening symposium sponsored by JCMGA the first Saturday in November. We have been reviewing and analyzing how things worked and what we can do to improve overall. Also, our 2-day Spring Garden Fair is Apr 30-May 1 and requires all hands on board to make it run smoothly.

JCMGA veterans who provide the instruction in seeds and propagation for the incoming MG class each year have been asking for a new, more efficient green house for several years.

After obstacles with the County over flood plain issues, we thought we were all set, only to discover that the County now requires a structurally sound stamp and the greenhouse

we ordered does not have that stamp. Our Practicum group working with the 75 new MG class members will face challenges as they prepare for this year's Spring Garden Fair.

A Head Gardener elected from our 23 gardens will serve as a representative on our JCMGA Board. We are presently doing a 2-day training for Plant Clinic Mentors. Our Horticulture Agent is involving veteran Master Gardeners with the new class in regular hands-on activities.

Josephine County submitted by Linda Dean

We have a full class for the 2016 year. This class is eager to learn as much as they can and working in the greenhouses and helping in the preparation for the perennials sale in March. The plants grown in the greenhouses are sold at our Spring Garden Fair held this year in April. We always have a great turn out from the community.

On March 5th our yearly community classes called "Seeds of Spring" will have four sessions and 38 classes to choose from. This is already sold out. It is held at the Rogue Community College.

Our Elementary Schools gardening classes and Young Master Gardeners have started and they always have a great turn out. We get a lot of good comments from the teachers and parents. The kids love getting their hands dirty. Worms are one of their favorite things.

We have a member who is an Entomologist and is doing a Bumble Bee Survey. She wants to know when the first Bumble Bees come out here in the Rogue Valley. She calls it Citizen Science Project. In our Plant Clinic she had developed a Bug display of many of our valley bugs and has identified them all. How great is that.

The Master Gardeners of Josephine County has really grown over the years. We get a lot of retired people relocating here and they are hungry to learn how to garden and grow their own healthy food. It is so fun.

Lincoln County submitted by Heather Fortner

The 2016 Lincoln County Master Gardener training class is well underway with a full house of 26 students. Team projects are a large part of the training this year, and soon the students will be choosing their demonstration projects and gardens. Veteran Help Desk members are running training sessions in Help Desk procedures for other veterans to refresh procedures and to facilitate the training of the apprentices.

With the addition in late 2015 of an adaptive garden demonstration site at Oceanview Assisted Living Facility, the LCMGA now has five active demonstration gardens: the Yachats Demonstration and Community Garden, the Yaquina Bay Lighthouse Demonstration Garden, and the Oregon Coast Community College Demonstration Gardens in both Newport and Lincoln City. A project is underway to create a brochure describing these gardens for the public to facilitate garden tours. The information gathered from the brochure research will be used to submit the gardens to Oregon Coast Quest Handbook.

The LCMGA monthly newsletter *Coastal Currents* is again available after a hiatus of a year when the long serving editors retired. It is available both online and in hard copy.

The Lincoln County Master Gardener Association Directory will have a few additions this year: a photo of members and a sentence about their gardening specialty. This is for apprentices to learn about the interests/skills of MG veterans and it will help to connect a name to a face.

The Oregon Coast Community College held a PowerPoint class in February for the LCMGA in order to help members better prepare their public presentations

Thirty LCMGA members volunteered in a booth at the Newport Seafood and Wine Festival held Feb 25-28 in South Beach and recorded over \$7,000 in sales. This event is one of our major fundraisers for the year.

Notice of the inaugural Lincoln County Master Gardener™ Scholarship has been issued to all High Schools in Lincoln County and applications for the four-year scholarship are due by April 1.

The venue for our annual plant sale (May 21) has changed this year to the Lincoln County Fairgrounds in Newport. This gives us almost twice the area that we formerly had, and this year LCMGA is sponsoring educational and informational booths in addition to the expanded plant sections. We look forward to an active growing season and a bountiful plant sale in May.

The very popular Round Table teaching and sharing informational two-hour public sessions continue with two per month, held in both Lincoln City and in Newport. Subjects covered through March are The Dirt on Dirt, Bees and Beekeeping, Best Vegetables for the Coast, Using Fertilizers and Growing Potatoes and Alliums on the Coast, and Coastal Perennials.

Linn County by Randy Peckman and Rane Webb

- The Linn/Benton 2016 Master Gardener training class is underway with 25 participants from Benton County and 19 From Linn County. Each trainee has a mentor who will help them learn about the organization, understand working at the Plant Clinic Desk and meet other master gardeners in ongoing activities. A team of 16 experienced MGs runs seven Plant Problem Scenario sessions during training. This orients trainees to working at the clinic desk by learning to ask questions and use appropriate resources to find answers.
- Preparation for the Second Annual Beevent Pollinator Conference is underway. The conference will be held on March 12th in Albany at the Holiday Inn Express conference rooms. Speakers will share information on Bumble Bees, Mason Bees and Planting to Help Pollinators.
- Seed to Supper classes have started in Linn County teaching beginning vegetable gardening class for people on a budget. Of note... Some of the trainees in this year's Master Gardener class took the Seeds to Supper class last year.
- A "Spotlight" article on one or two Master Gardeners who contribute to the success of our Chapter is being shared each month through our Weekly e-mail. We feel this is an important way to recognize their contributions and to let others know about their skills.

Marion County submitted by Peter Dane

There has been a lot of enthusiasm and participation, for a wide range of our events.

On December 2 there was a large audience at the graduation ceremony, for the new Master Gardener, Class of 2015. The ceremony was held at the modern "Center 50+," near the State Fair Grounds, in Salem. About 31, of the original 43 trainees, completed the program, 4 more than last year. About 43 persons are signed up for the 2016 program. Classes started January 11, in the large meeting room, at the Marion County, Public Works Department.

The new VRS system is popular, for logging in volunteer hours. This year, to be "Certified" to work at the "Help Desk," one needs 10 hours, of approved education classes, and 20 hours of volunteer work.

New MCMGA officers were elected for 2016, with Bill Sutkus, as President.

The first week in January the new "Trainee Guide, 2016" was distributed to better orient the new Master Gardener trainees to all the programs and activities.

A weekly course in gardening, for the general public, was given by some of our members at "Center 50+." Among the weekly speakers was Harry Olson, on "Greenhouses," and Maynard Hammer, on "Oregon Native Plants."

To help Committee persons to be "on the same page," Jim Lisky has us now using the program from: www.dropboxmail.com It makes for quick referencing of documents.

In mid-January, several Master Gardeners followed up on our leader, Neil Bell's request, to plant the 100 small, native shrubs around the "Gordon House," designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. It's near the entrance to the "Oregon Garden," in Silverton.

January 26, Sean Hogan's presentation at the monthly, association meeting, at the Salem Public Library, was titled "All Season Performance in the Garden."

February 15, there was a promotional tour, for the new Trainees, of the 23 specialty garden plots and work areas, at the Marion Demonstration Garden.

February 18, at a special MCMGA Directors meeting, three guests encouraged our participation and sponsoring of an OSU affiliated "Youth City Farm," on a six acre site, at Chemeketa City College, in Salem. It's to mentor "at risk youths,"

February 20, there was an "Apple, Pear & Grape Pruning" workshop at our garden.

February 23, at our monthly meeting, Leonard Foltz, of "Dancing Oaks Nursery," gave a picture show on "gardening at the edge of the oak savanna, with four seasons of plants." Close to 70 persons attended. Paper bookmarks were distributed, listing the dates and speakers, for our meetings in 2016

February 27, there was a Rose Pruning Workshop, at the Marion Demonstration Garden.

The Plant Sale Committee is meeting to prepare for the big, Annual Plant Sale, April 30

A few of our Master Gardeners participate in a weekly garden radio program, each Thursday, at 8:45 am, KBZY, 1490 AM.

Polk County submitted by Marsha Graciosa

News from the Inspiration Garden

A grant from Oregon Community Trees, an Arbor Day Foundation, was granted. West Coast Metal Buildings donated and erected a 12 x16 metal building. Master Gardeners built a ramp into the building and will store potting soil and decorative bark for future use.

Three metal garden sculptures were donated and placed in the garden, set in concrete. Work continues with mulching, mounting a birdhouse and two mason bee houses along with building six boxes for the small fruit tree orchard.

Education Program

Linda Hardison, Oregon Flora Project Director and Linda Boyer, Restoration Biologist, Native Plant manager of Heritage Seeds presented a short program Feb 11th on the Oregon Flora Project, "The One and Only Resource for all Oregon Plants" www.oregonflora.org

Fundraising and Clinics

The plant sale committee is moving forward with plans for our annual fundraiser May 6-7 2016. An article appeared in the Independence Itemizer Feb 9th highlighting Master Gardeners as they prepare perennials for the sale.

A clinic is set for Feb 27-28 at the Polk County Home and Garden Show.

Other projects

Plans are set for MG trainees to be able to payback some hours at the Dallas Youth Garden as mentors to high-school aged youth throughout the summer.

Brunk House Gardeners in conjunction with the Polk Co Historical Society are busy pruning roses and preparation for the Blossom Drive event in April.

Gental House in Monmouth and the fairgrounds in Rickreal have been given up as projects as our chapter's focus has been on our Inspiration Garden in Independence.

Tillamook County submitted by Jerri Sly

This new year we have had a good start for the Tillamook Master Gardeners with our classes beginning and moving forward. I am really pleased to say that this year we have 28 apprentices. One of the exciting things is that 9 of these are men. It is really inspiring to see the interest and concerns that brought them to the classes. The attendance for the hardy perennials is also very, very good.

There has been a tremendous amount of energy being created with our Plant Sale coming up on the 1st. week-end in May. We had a pot-cleaning workday in February in the Livestock Barn at our fairgrounds. We have Apprentices growing vegetables. Signs being created and we have a local business in town that has a greenhouse and has offered to let us use it to get our tomato seeds other veggie seeds and plants started. We are even working on a plan for what we might have to do with any plants that might be left over.

Our Learning Garden is off and running and prioritize projects for the 2016 year. They are starting to discuss propagation in the hoop house for the 2016 season. There are projects like moving our shade garden, re-siding the shed, propane tank cover and water feature.

Our Farmers Market is starting to put signup sheets up at our weekly classes and they is filling up fast. We have three markets in our county so it can get a little hectic getting them all organized, but so much fun when the season starts.

Our new extension office building is coming right along. At our last board meeting we had a plan to look at that has the grounds all laid out and ideas for plantings and walkways. Do I have to say there was a lot of interest in what the finished spaces will

look like? At this point we are looking at the building being ready for the November Board meeting that will be here in Tillamook.

Umatilla County Submitted by Sue Stefancik

Our December meeting had the following new officers sworn in: Carol Mills, President; Richard Bertram, Vice President, Judy Witte, Secretary Deborah Fritts, Treasurer and Fred Basquez, as State Representative.

A new budget was in approved in February.

Our booth at the local Altrusa Bazaar was a success and we will continue to have a booth selling plants in 2016.

Five graduates received their certificates and name badges and recertification certificates went to over 17 members.

Upcoming projects for 2016 are as follows:

- Review of the three gardens that we have. One in Hermiston and two in Pendleton. A new direction will be taken with the River Walk Garden with a partnership with CAPECO and a new manager, Taylor Smith from Americorp. More volunteers and funding will be available.
- New Master Gardener training class started in February, taking place in Milton-Freewater.
- Seeds to Supper class to be scheduled in March for the county.
- Our plant sale will be May 7th in Hermiston. The Arts Festival is taking place that weekend and they had over 1,000 folks attend.
- We will have a question and answer table at our local D&B store, on Saturdays throughout the summer.
- In February we'll take an educational field trip to the Sage Center in Boardman.

Yamhill County submitted by Apryl Garmon

The year starts busy with **new MG training classes** with 21 trainees for 2016. The mentor program has been well developed over the past few years and six senior mentors and four mentors from last year's class give the trainees individual and small

group assistance. We have found that not only does this program provide better education, the class completion rate is 99% for the past few years. Most classes average 50+ attendees with other Master Gardeners adding to their education hours. And of course there is the food, there is always great food. Classes will run through mid March ending in the final class and potluck for the full membership.

The **Greenhouse** is now in full swing seeding the last three weeks in February, and 4,000 plugs to be planted in March for the annual Plant Sale event. Many perennials that hide from the cold winter temperatures have been transfer to the outside beds and they are being divided and groomed for the sale.

The **Plant Sale** project is in full swing with this being our only major, annual fund raiser. The sale, always held the last Saturday in April, will be at the Yamhill County Fair Grounds April 30th. This year we are trying something new with an additional half-day sale on Sunday May first. The prices are always “more than reasonable” and it is always a big event for Yamhill and surrounding counties gardeners.

The **Community Garden** opens in March with several new raised beds for public and Master Gardener use. This is the third year in our new location on Burnett and we expect even larger public participation than our successful 2015. The location has a large covered area with picnic tables, a large open grass area and is next to a walking labyrinth by the McMinnville Cooperative Ministries. The community garden donated over 1300 pounds of fresh vegetables and the Food Pantry Garden, with the great assistance of many YCMGA members, donated over 10,000 pounds to YCAP food bank.

In addition to starting spring work at the Community Garden, raising plants and organizing the Plant Sale, the Yamhill Master Gardeners are preparing for their annual public education seminar **Spring Into Gardening**, March 12, held at the McMinnville Community Center. This year’s theme is “Home Landscaping... Small Changes – Big Impact”, and includes eight classes focused on everything from Restoring Established Home Landscapes to Designing an Irrigation System. The group has worked hard this year to get the admittance price down and provides the event for \$20 to the pre-registered public, which includes a box lunch and snacks.

Mini College will be held at Linfield College in McMinnville again this coming year. All are invited to the Thursday evening (Aug. 4) Cook-Out at the Yamhill County Fair Grounds Demo garden. Please plan on joining us if you are attending Mini College August 5th & 6th.

Three New Things we are starting this year:

A new project for YCMGA this year is a **member’s database**. This allows members to find contact information easily and quickly. Although this is in its initial stages we are also able to list committee members, approximate time frames for the specific events, projects, and/or committee activity, and member’s special interest and skills. This has

become a valuable tool for members and will be expanded to hold additional information as needed.

The YCMGA has started its first **Seed to Supper** class. The Newberg Head Start is the host agency. We have 24 in the class. The Head Start family and children garden is being incorporated into the course to provide hands-on activities. Concurrently, we have gardening activities for 25 children of class members. We are also working with potential host agencies for 2 additional class sites.

Also new this year, we will start **regular monthly social meetings** (some with an educational presentation) to increase participation and membership retention. Although the Board Meeting are always open to the full membership, this will allow the entire group, (not just committees) to meet on a regular basis, increase the opportunity for educational hours, and of course – there will be FOOD.