



3rd Quarter OMGA Executive Committee Meeting August 5, 4:00 pm via zoom

The Meeting was called to order by President Chris Rusch at 4 pm. Attending were President, Chris Rusch; Past Presidents, Sue Nesbitt and Eric Bosler; Secretary, Sharon Bordeaux; Historian, Linda Coakley; Data Base/List Serve, Seamus Ramirez; and OSU Extension Program Coordinator, Gail Langellotto, Leslie Ray, Ann Kinkley, Richard Taylor, Linda Coakley, and Karen Harte.

Welcome – Chris

Chris called the meeting to order at 4 PM. Chris thanked everyone for helping bring the Joy of Gardening Conference to our membership and beyond. She also thanked all the speakers for their participation. What a great conference.

Agenda – Chris

There is no official agenda. The first part of the executive committee meeting will be devoted to a critique of our Joy of Gardening event. Chris invited all the members of the planning committee as well as the executive board to join in.

Time permitting, we can cover how to address the concerns of our membership regarding MG training, lack of OSU Extension support in filling vacancies for Master Gardener Coordinators, By-Laws revision, and come up with an agenda for our OMGA Board meeting scheduled for September 9, 2022.

REPORTS:

Mini-College:

Chris thanked everyone for helping bring the Joy of Gardening conference to our membership and beyond. She thanked all the speakers for their participation. “What a great conference!” She asked for comments from the executive board and invited Mini-college planning committee members.

Richard Taylor: Facility very responsive; catering excellent; registration questions – where to eat, where are the dorms located – include a map next time; lunches – people did not realize they had to pay for their lunch, know where to eat or what to do about lunch - have a section on where to eat and who pays; received text from an attendee who wanted to know if anyone became ill (was not covid). Question about banquet: Should we have invited the band to dinner? The band has not been included in dinner in past years.

Sue Nesbitt: Facility very responsive to needs; lunch an issue and suggest incorporate a catered lunch; banquet very nice.

Leslie Ray: Delighted with conference. OSU restaurant hours not clear; not clear that dorm key needed to use elevator; could not change rooms; took about 20-25 minutes to figure out parking permit needed and where parking located; would be nice to have recommendations for restaurants from former attendees. This was by far the best conference site she has attended.

Ann Kinkley: Impressed with preparations, speakers; heat was a problem in dorms; parking a challenge; consider catered or box lunch.

Seamus Ramirez: Dinner was bland and there was no dessert; liked the way the awards were given; liked classes in one place; If there is excessive heat again, have more housing options; baseball game was an excellent idea.

Karen Harte: Thought it was great and had a good time; book exchange went well (\$152.00) and people were generous; key note speakers and presenters good; tech guy (Steve) was very efficient.

Gail Langellotto: Fantastic conference; kudos to all; parking is a problem; next time have a local host table with information on restaurants and places to visit; Olive Oil presentation was wonderful and very technical but another speaker gave information that was potentially dangerous; received an email from a disgruntled attendee – wanted to hear about climate change, ash borer, shorten conference to one day, and was the keynote speaker relevant?

Eric Bosler: Liked meals at dining hall - were excellent with great choices and reasonably priced; dorms as expected; Chris did a super job.

Linda Coakley: Description print on the silent auction very small!

Chris Rusch: Dorms would not share who did not show up and did not want to give refunds for people who moved to a hotel. Will have people make their own dorm reservations in the future. Parking was an issue. Caterers did not keep water/tea available to the end and the speaker coffee set up in the wrong room.

Silent Auction – Sue Nesbitt

Michael and Evy were wonderful to work with. Gross proceeds were \$5,142.35. Participation by 16 counties. 3 counties gave \$250.00. Another county brought items and gave money as well. 172 items submitted. Auction expenses were \$255.36 (included \$101.00 for credit card fees, \$94 to print posters). Sales vs Retail value: The items sold for 60% of retail value. Chris thanked Sue for her hard work on the Silent Auction.

Send a Friend Raffle – Eric Bosler

Proceeds for the Send a Friend raffle were \$395.

Other general discussion on conference:

Seamus Ramirez asked why the attendance is down from the past years when over 300 attended. One possible reason is people using other sources for continuing education. Gail noted that coordinators from counties did not attend the conference.

Discussed option of a winter conference. There might be an issue finding a facility with classrooms, and housing/hotels. Travel and weather may be a problem.

Should we have a conference next year or wait a year? The consensus seems to be favorable to build on our momentum and have another conference in 2023.

The next conference should include more hands-on classes and a larger variety of classes.

OMGA Sharing Sessions – Chris

Chapters are having issues with training systems – some chapters are meeting in person and others on zoom. Retention of new Master Gardeners is a problem. There is a disparity in what chapters charge for classes and types of training. Need to have further discussions on these issues.

Chris commented that OMGA needs to do more. Is there a disconnect between OSU/OMGA?

Gail commented on the discussion: “The newly-hired coordinators last 2-3 years before moving on to another position. This high level of turnover is often related to high expectations for folks hired into coordinator positions, and lack of resources/support to do the job (i.e. lack of payed hours, lack of support staff or office staff). One reason for the move towards hybrid training is the high turnover in coordinators, as well as many vacancies in coordinator positions. Hybrid trainings make it easier for newer folks to deliver a full training, that is standardized against national and state Extension Master Gardener standards. Another reason for the hybrid training is that it allows a broader section of the general public to participate in Master Gardener trainings, and to become Master Gardener volunteers.

The vacancies in Master Gardener coordinator positions is a huge issue, that impacts current Master Gardener programming, but will also have longer-term consequences (in terms of program quality and stability). OSU is working on the budget that they will advance to the Oregon Legislature for the next biennium of funding. Gail

suggested that the OMGA can play an active part in making sure that decision makers understand the value and importance of the Master Gardener Program, while the budget planning process is going on. Gail said that the OMGA can reach out and ask for a meeting with OSU administrators. The sooner that administrators know that Master Gardeners want support for the program, the better.

It is important to understand that Master Gardener program funding comes from two streams: county-based funding (determined by county commissioner allocations, which are then invested according to OSU Extension Director and Regional Directors' decisions) and state-based funding (determined by the legislature allocations, which are then invested according to OSU College of Ag Extension Program Leader and OSU Extension Director decisions). These decision makers need to understand that the Master Gardener is an important priority. Without money to fund positions at levels that provide opportunities for long-term careers, we will continue to be in a cycle of instability, reactive short-term planning to fill gaps. It limits long term strategic planning and programming. How many state and local government people know a master gardener? How do we formulate the arguments to have more funds designated for the Master Gardener program?

Chris noted Sherry Sheng is our contact to help us move forward with formulating a formal ASK for funding. The list of persons to contact would include Staci Siminich, Dean of Agriculture, Extension Regional Leadership, Kris Elliot, and Ivory Lyles as well as the Oregon Legislators, county and city commissioners."

Good of the Order - Richard Taylor

1. What are the guidelines for mandatory reporting of abuse? Gail indicated there is training on line. The training is short and outlines obligations and who to report to.
2. Why are only 50% of MG's being recertified? It was closer to 70%. This item will be on the agenda for the board meeting September 9th.

Meeting adjourned at 5:54.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon J Bordeaux, OMGA Secretary

Oregon Master Gardener Association Meeting Schedule 2022		
Executive Committee	Educational Forum	Board of Directors
Friday, February 4	TBD	Friday, March 4
Friday, May 13	TBD	Friday, June 3
Friday, August 5	TBD	Friday, September 9
Friday, October 7	TBD	Friday, November 4
Annual OMGA Retreat December 2, 2022		

OMGA Mission

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;
- Fostering quality continuing education of all Master Gardeners.