



Oregon Master Gardener Association

Chapter Representative Handbook

This handbook provides information intended for use by individual members of the OMGA Board of Directors, all OMGA chapter representatives and members of the OMGA Executive Board. This can be used as an orientation manual for new representatives.

Other important information to include in your files is a current roster of OMGA and chapter officers, the OMGA Bylaws, the OMGA Policies, the current budget, and recent meeting agendas and minutes.

Each Board member should keep his or her handbook up to date and pass it on to a successor when they finish their term of office.

Meeting Dates can be found on our website: www.omga.org

What is the purpose, mission and vision of OMGA?

Purpose

- Provide education and information on horticulture to Oregon Master Gardeners.
- Provide funding for the Extension Educator Grant, Karl Carlson Grant, and Search for Excellence Grant.
- Share information between chapters with quarterly chapter reports, meetings, and annual education event.
- Support and assist chapters as needed.
- OMGA commits to advocating for the OSU Extension Master Gardener™ Program.

Mission

Cultivating resilient and healthy communities throughout Oregon through sustainable horticulture education and gardening projects that are rooted in science and that are supported by OSU Extension volunteers.

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.

Vision

Enable OSU Extension Service Master Gardeners to act as the premier source of information on sustainable gardening.

What are the Roles and Responsibilities of an OMGA Representative?

The OMGA Board of Director's role is to support this purpose, mission and vision. We are NOT here to create the technical content but rather to assist with the mechanisms of sharing it to the rest of the OMGA membership and therefore the public.

OMGA acts cooperatively with OSU to offer services that enable Chapters to flourish while operating within the State of Oregon's legal requirements. OMGA is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of Representatives from each of its OMGA County Chapters, and members of the Executive Board. The Executive Board consists of the following elected officers: the President, the President- elect, Vice president, Secretary and Treasurer.

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

Key Activities for OMGA:

- OMGA's annual education event has the intention of bringing gardeners around the state together.
- Search for Excellence highlights and showcases new, noteworthy MG programs that have been shown to be effective at the county level.
- The Karl Carlson Grant is available to Chapters to assist in the 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.
- The Jan McNeilan Quarterly OMGA Meeting Fund was created to provide 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 the OMGA annual educational event. OMGA member volunteers to lead this program.
- OMGA commits to advocating for the OSU Extension Master Gardener™ Program.

OMGA Board of Directors duties:

- Approving the annual OMGA budget. The annual OMGA budget is set at the beginning of the year.
- Approving a status report that 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.
- Participating in the implementation of the OMGA yearly goals.
- Authorizing key operation changes with your vote.
- Demonstrate commitment by attending meetings, following through on tasks, getting involved on committees, and encouraging others to get involved.
- Present a written Quarterly Report prior to all board meetings. Your quarterly report allows members of the OMGA a chance to read and hear what is happening in the Master Gardener program in your chapter and around the state of Oregon. Please share your stories of successful events as well as challenges and potential solutions that your chapter has experienced. (See attached guidelines).
- Report to your chapter as soon as possible about events, meetings, policy updates and other information that affects your chapter and important items that will be placed on the OMGA website.
- Have fun and meet other county representatives from around the state of Oregon.

Much of OMGA information is maintained on the OMGA website (www.omga.org). This includes meeting minutes, quarterly reports, financial reports, bylaws, OMGA policies, and more.

Guidelines and Expectations of an OMGA Representative and Alternate

It is the hope of the Oregon Master Gardener Association that each chapter will select a representative to attend the scheduled OMGA Board of Directors (BOD) meetings and represent their chapter by participating in discussions and voting on issues brought to the floor at such meetings. You, as your chapter's representative or alternate representative, are the critical link in conveying relevant information between OMGA, your chapter and other chapters.