

Central Oregon Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025



Membership: The Central Oregon Master Gardener Program is in its 44th consecutive year of training in Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson Counties. The trainees join 82 recertifying members. MG training began in late January of 2025 and will finish up next. This year's class includes 32 trainees.

Project Fair: This gathering includes garden coordinators, educators and committee members who assemble to meet the trainees. The Fair is held on a day of training near the end of the MG course and invites the trainees to explore volunteer opportunities within the organization. The trainees can sign up to be on a committee, help at a community garden, help at the High Desert Garden Tour, the Home and Garden Conference, to name a few.

HoeDown Newsletter: Our Central Oregon monthly newsletter is sent to our members and trainees. The newsletter includes the link to the OMGA website. In February, the newsletter also included a link to the Gardener's Pen.

Community Education: We have completed 8 of 13 scheduled classes for the first half of the year. We have served 401 students in these classes so far. Three of the four March classes are already full with waitlists. Next up is the Spring Seminar Webinar Series of 8 Classes, and that experienced team is ready to roll thanks to Janet, Debra, and Vickie. Jan has staged various media ads to introduce the whole Series as well as each Saturday's set of two different classes sequentially. There's still time to sign up. www.gocomga.com

In preparation for the April classes the Education Team members are working on the handout templates for the new "Saturdays in the Garden" Series with our Garden Project Coordinators. Team members will also be working on the June Garden Fair with Tim and the Home and Garden Show with Vickie and Lizzy, as those events also have community education components. Registration for these events can be found on our website: www.gocomga.com

Historian: Our talented historian Debra has updated our various social media and Flickr accounts. She sent out a survey for input on its presentation and content. The survey was well received.

While the growing season for Central Oregon is about 100 days, many gardeners plan to use season extenders, like cold frames, cloches and row covers to start or transplant seeds outdoors in the Spring. Publication EC 1627 "How to Build Your Own Raised-Bed Cloche" can be found on the OSU Extension website. www.extension.oregonstate.edu.

Happy Reading from COMGA!

Coos County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

We are planning both our 1 day educational seminar, Fertilize Your Mind, which will be held on April 5, at the Coquille Tribe's Mill Casino in Coos Bay upstairs in the conference rooms, and our annual Plant Sale which will be held on May 10 at Coos County Extension in Myrtle Point. Our group grows all our starts, and people are already planting. We're done with hibernation!

Our classes are finished and as of March 3, our Plant Clinic is open, with almost all slots filled for March and April. In May, our Farmers' Market booth will open in Coos Bay.

We are getting requests for MG speakers around the county, and also having 'pop-up' booths at garden or food related events. Our first was just at the Seed Exchange that happened in Coquille on March 2.

Gardening is Good!

Mary Dixon, Coos County OMGA Rep.



Curry County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

Curry County Master Gardeners have been very active in January and February.

Greenhouse Grand Opening and Open House



On February 28, 2025, the Curry County Master Gardener Association held the Grand Opening and Open House for our demonstration greenhouse and learning garden! More than 150 people attended. There was music, delicious food, educational stations, spring bulb planters available for a donation, great conversations, and were able to dedicate a birdhouse to a Master Gardener volunteer who suddenly passed away during the effort to realize our dream. The bird house was built by another volunteer out of reclaimed materials

using a design from a book that was in Kelly's amazing collection of books.



Other activities include:

- Supporting the 2025 Training class
- Seeds Distributions and Plant Clinics across the county
- Seed to Supper Program in Port Orford
- Presentations at local library and community college
- School garden programs in all 3 county school districts

*Submitted 3/9/25 Julia Bott, OMGA Representative
Curry County Master Gardener Association*

Douglas County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

With this cold weather one would think not much is happening in our gardens, well not so in Douglas County. We have new and informative articles that come out in the News Review every Friday. We have our own space in the paper called 'Ask a Master Gardener. These recent articles cover a variety of subjects, from using Wood ash, Winter tasks, to Snowberries, etc. They are on our website should you choose to read them.

We are gearing up for our annual Spring Into gardening. It will be this coming March, It is open to the public for a full Saturday learning gardening tips and best practices and connecting with fellow gardeners in our area. This convention is over and above the regular classes we give out at our Discovery Garden. Please see the Douglas county Master Gardener website for the full rundown.

Geoff Puryear, who works for OSU in the extension office, has set up to be able to update out volunteer hours. Along with this and his other duties Geoff has revamped our Web-page not to mention he is in charge of the Herb Garden in the Discovery Garden.

I have listed below three of our ongoing weekly functions in Douglas County. These are very well received and have helped to grow our membership over the years.

Education & Outreach

Our Plant Clinic and dedicated outreach volunteers educate the public through direct one-on-one consultation, group presentations, and weekly publications.

Specimen Identification

Our volunteers help to identify plants, insects, pests, and diseases for the home gardeners of Douglas County.

Food Security

Our Victory Garden program donates hundreds of pounds of food annually to the local Feeding Umpqua program enhancing our local food systems.

Now with climate change and what just happened in Southern California we remain ever vigilant. We must bring the word out to all gardeners on how just a simple garden in our yard can impact an entire town.

Thank you,
Patrice Sipos, Douglas County Master Gardener

JCMGA Chapter 1st Quarter 2025 Report for OMGA

Introduction

JCMGA started 2025 with strategic plans for another year of progress and moving forward. There are many projects that are on our agenda this year. JCMGA collaborates with and is located at the Southern OR Research and Extension Center (SOREC) in Central Point. SOREC has many campus changes in the planning stage which will affect the Master Gardener programs. At present these changes point to a bright future but will take time and effort to realize. The leadership of the different departments and programs are collaborating and working together to ensure a good outcome for all stakeholders.

2025 New Master Gardener's Class

The 2025 Master Gardener education class started with a welcome luncheon put together by the very talented and helpful hands of the JCMGA Master Gardeners which included baked sweet potatoes and potatoes with every imaginable topping including two chilies, one meat and the other vegetarian, a huge mixed green and vegetable salad. The highlight was the 3 cobblers mixed berry, apple and peach, made and donated by 3 of our very own Master Gardeners. After this filling lunch Grace Florigenic, our very capable OSU Master Gardener Coordinator launched the beginning of the next 3-month education course.

Grace, working with the Garden Buds (Master Gardener mentors in the classroom) and Practicum Mentors (Master Gardeners who teach our practicum, hands-on sessions) put together an outstanding program for the new students of 2025. We started with fewer than last year but still have an adequate number of 37 and as life happens, have lost a couple by the time of the writing of this report.

We have picked up some much-needed talent and skills as some of the new class members have already joined committees and are working on the Joy of Garden with OMGA. Some of the skill sets are: IT, webmasters, social media, graphic designers, editors and getting our video education lectures on YouTube. We also have some farmers and long-term gardeners in the mix.

Spring is budding out and soon we will all be out in our Demonstration Gardens getting hands-on in the soil to augment the classwork, online instruction, classroom presentations, and the intensive Practicum sessions.

Grace has designed an activity to help new members create and present a PowerPoint program regarding their assigned Plant Family (assigned to their team of 4 to 5 people). This activity includes all of the needed elements to create lectures and presentations. As the Speakers Bureau Coordinator, I love watching these presentations. Here is where I hope to gain some additions for the Speakers Bureau come graduation time in November. Jackson County communities would be the recipients of some very informative and good presentations.

In late January we had our first Board of Directors retreat. After welcoming the new board of directors, we reviewed our accomplishments and goals from 2024. After experimenting with a data matrix collection tool in 2024, we decided to continue use of the tool in 2025 that will collect data for all events and accomplishments throughout the year. We hope this will provide us with comprehensive feedback data for planning next year goals and objectives.

Summary of JCMGA accomplishments for 2024

- JCMGA Strategic Plan for 2024 – developed and revised during the year
- Created the Master Gardener Education Scholarship policy
- Friends of the Gardens project started in April
- Donation of Cosmic Coir to given to gardeners at community gardens
- Member Services survey conducted to help guide the Board and Working Groups
- Special Events
 - Spring Garden Fair
 - Fall Festival
 - Demonstration Garden Tours: Invitations went to Garden Clubs and community at large
 - JCMGA Annual Picnic – presenter from Southern Oregon Monarch Association
 - Held "Art in the Garden and Public Tour"
 - Conducted 3 demonstration garden tours for the public
 - Lavender Garden - open 3 days for the Lavender Trail event - for education and appreciation.
- Educational Opportunities
 - Monthly Community Education Program classes
 - Master Gardener Classes
 - Practicum Classes
 - Garden Buds
 - Winter Dreams Summer Gardens 2024 Symposium
 - OSU Level-Up Series – Barbara Low one of panelists on Plant A Row Project
 - Speaker's Bureau classes
- JCMGA Website
 - Added Native Plant Nursery Page and created a new logo for it
 - Updated pages to present clear information to the public and members
- Monthly Meetings with OSU Master Gardener Coordinator to maintain good communication between JCMGA and SOREC/OSU
- Had a JCMGA informational booth/table along with knowledgeable volunteers at
 - Josephine County Home Show – February
 - Blue Heron Park Event – April
 - Medford Open Streets Event – May
 - Honey & Meade Festival – September
 - Sanctuary One Event – October
- Cultivating Companions Grant
 - Educational program for rural seniors
 - Implemented at five locations
 - Each location met for a total of 7 weeks
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for events
- Awards Committee to recognize JCMGA members for their accomplishments at state and county levels
- JCMGA Board Minutes are included in the monthly newsletter, *The Garden Beet*
- Donations Made to:
 - Rogue River Watershed silent auction – to enhance resilience in Rogue River Watersheds through ecological restoration and engagement with community partners
 - OMGA Joy of Gardening silent auction

- o Native Nursery donated natives to various organizations
- Special Opportunities
 - o Plant A Row produce donations to Access
 - o Troon Vineyard Tour
- Gave out 5 Community Garden grants
- Obtained an ADA grant to build concrete pathways in the Lavender Garden
- Provided volunteers and mentors to work in the OSU Plant Clinic
- Created a new garden clothing design for “Friends of Master Gardeners”
- Created the Practicum Design Ad Hoc Committee to develop plans and seek funding for new building structures to support JCMGA activities.

This list was accomplished with approximately 200 members, the New Master Gardener Class of 2024 and a few dedicated family members and friends.

Spring Garden Fair

Due to changes at SOREC, we decided to return to the Jackson County Expo for the Spring Garden Fair the first weekend in May. It is a huge undertaking and will require all volunteers working together to move all the plants that the new class in practicum have planted, nurtured, and will have to transport to the Mace Building Pavilion (2,940 sq ft) at EXPO for the day and a half plant sale. The inside of the Mace building (3,255 sq ft) will house indoor vendors as will the lawn area (25,610 Sq ft) north of the building. We are charging \$5 entry fee for adults and children age 12 and under will be admitted free. There will be a large selection of native plants from JCMGA's Certified Native Plant Nursery, as well as vegetable and flower starts.

Large Construction Project from 2024

Due to the County demolishing (due to asbestos) the building that housed our practicum activities, JCMGA has a large construction project on their Horizon. The Practicum Design Ad Hoc Committee started a planning process in 2024 to see if JCMGA could feasibly build a new classroom, a lathe house, a tool shed, and a new greenhouse. To date, the functionality of the structures has been identified and hand drawings have been created to help define what is needed when seeking Engineering Drawings. Once the Engineering Drawings are completed then we can get estimates from Contractors and understand what our cost will be. The cost to construct will drive the fundraising efforts.

This will require Capital above what JCMGA currently has. The Fundraising Committee has worked closely with the Practicum Design Ad Hoc Committee. Andrew Norwood of the OSU Foundation came and spent several hours educating us on methods that we can employ to start raising the funds needed.

Andrew's time with members of the board and committees were eye openers and helped to reset the expectations of where and how to raise the kind of capital needed to build new structures. He also suggested trying to get the engineering drawings done by an OSU student as a project. Our OSU Coordinator is looking for the correct OSU department to discuss a potential project of this kind. Andrew also mentioned seeking in-kind donations as well.

The Fundraising Committee and Practicum Design Ad Hoc Committee are building a fundraising campaign plan and doing some preliminary work so they can move forward with raising the capital once the estimated cost to construct is known.

The Winter JCMGA Retreat Minutes

In January, our President Barbara Low facilitated a retreat to cover several topics listed below.

1. Dropbox is our electronic storage and file sharing method. The Board reviewed access and use of Dropbox along with the legal retention requirements for nonprofit organizations.
2. The Board discussed the vision for the future as related to buildings needed by the association. A possible vision was to “Establish a learning facility dedicated to sustainable horticultural education for Master Gardeners and the community”. Board Member comments during discussion included:
 - Don’t limit the vision. Think out of the box.
 - Conduct grant research now in preparation for fundraising.
 - Utilize the Oregon Construction Contractors Board for resources.
 - Get answers to all legal questions.
 - Dream big, make a wish list for buildings, include IT, kitchen, bathroom.
 - Have a community garden on SOREC property.
3. The Board reviewed its accomplishments in 2024. The Board brainstormed various ways our accomplishments can be made known to the public. Ideas included:
 - Publishing on the JCMGA website and Facebook.
 - Article in the Garden Beet.
 - Send to OMGA.
 - Make the list of accomplishments colorful and fun; put it every place we are.
 - Highlight the number of volunteer hours.
 - Send to local mayors and share with community garden groups and schools.
 - Include in all JCMGA presentations.
 - Share with the new Master Gardener class.
 - Add visuals specific to accomplishments and charts.
4. The Board brainstormed goals and objectives for a draft strategic plan for 2025 including JCMGA vision for the next 3-5 years. New needs identified included once-a-month presence at the local grower’s market, the need for more volunteers, leadership training, and increasing the number of students for the annual Master Gardener class.

2025 Winter Dreams Summer Gardens Symposium (WDSG)

In February the WDSG team had our first meeting and decided on the subjects and presenters that we would seek for this year’s symposium. Most presenters have been confirmed and a marketing plan has been discussed with our Marketing and Technology Committee.

One big accomplishment from 2024 was finding a successful way to connect with Landscapers who are seeking Continuing Education Hours (CEH) required for licensure. We have worked closely with the Oregon Landscapers Contracts Board (LCB) to get WDSG approved for Landscapers CEH. We went from having 4 CEH seekers in 2022 and 2023 to 30+ in 2024.

Hiring an Individual to Help with Maintaining our Native Plant Nursery & Demonstration Gardens

The Native Plant Nursery and our demonstration gardens are in need of care beyond the available volunteer resources at this time. One avenue that we are exploring is hiring a part time employee or independent contractor. We have the blessing of the SOREC leadership and OSU to pursue this avenue. Seeking grants will be explored to fund this idea. The Board considers this important especially as the Native Plant Nursery not only sells native plants but at the same time educates the public on the importance of native plants.

Submitted by Colet Allen OMGA Rep for JCMGA



Lincoln County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

Spring Conference Update

This winter the Lincoln County Master™ Gardener Association (LCMGA) has been preparing for the LCMGA Spring into Sustainable Gardening conference on April 12th, 2025. The conference will contribute to our organization's mission to serve our community through education about sustainable horticultural principles and practices that are grounded by research or recognized as best practices. The conference is free.

LCMGA has been awarded a Community & Economic Development Grant for the conference through the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners. The grant for \$1,000.00 will help us pay for facility rental, materials, printing, etc. The LCMGA Grant committee (Herb Fredricksen and Tom Green) did an excellent job of guiding us through the Grant application process.

Conference details:

Spring into Sustainable Gardening

- April 12, 2025
- 9:30AM – 12:30PM
- Samaritan Center for Health Education (740 SW 9th St., Newport, OR 97365)

Agenda

- **9:30 – 10:30: Overview of Sustainable Gardening Practices** (Presented by Ann Geyer)
- **10:30 – 10:40: BREAK**
- **10:40 – 11:40: Ecolawns and Options for Lawn Replacement** (Dr. Alec Kowalewski)
- **11:40 – 12:30: Tabling by LCMGA**
 - o Gardening with PNW Native Plants
 - o Invasive Plant Management
 - o Pollinator Gardening
 - o Soil Health and Testing
 - o Sustainable Landscape Design
 - o Water Management/Conservation
 - o Integrated Pest Management (OSU IPM Department)
 - o Garden Future
 - o Seed Saving

Pre-registration is required due to limited seating. Register at <https://Sustainable-Gardening2025.eventbrite.com> Hope to see you there!

LCMGA Veterans Refresher Series

This year's classes will be held on Thursdays from 10:30-12:00 starting 1/30 and continuing until 3/27. This year's classes will include a Growing and Belonging class (formerly known as Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion). The class schedule follows:

- Feb 20 Healthy Soil Management
- Feb 27 Pollinator friendly gardening techniques
- Mar 6 Insect and pest management
- Mar 13 Planting for Seed Collection
- Mar 20 Plant identification—more on plant families
- Mar 27 Plant propagation techniques—layering and grafting

Class locations may vary between the Extension office and the Samaritan Center for Health Education. Exact locations will be provided once the reservations have been confirmed.

Council of Presidents (CoPs)

In December all LCMGA certified Master Gardeners were asked to vote on approving the election of a Council of Presidents. The motion passed and LCMGA now has CoPs serving in the role of President for the LCMGA Board.

You might be wondering how CoP came to be, and to that end, here are the facts: LCMGA cannot function without the President role being filled. We were forced to think outside the box to fill that position and keep the Association running after our nominating committee approached every eligible person, some of them twice, to find someone or even two people who wanted to take on the President role and they came up empty. Ann Geyer set the bar high over the last couple of years and taking on the role of President likely just seemed too daunting. So, a group of six past presidents met and formulated a plan and the name of the plan ended up being 'Council of Presidents'. The six members of the council are Cathi Block, Mary Jane Bonelitz, Sharon Busby, Ann Geyer, Kristi Kind and Marlene Shapiro. There would have been seven but Emilia Lacy is already serving as Secretary.

Each member of the Council will take on some specific tasks and then will meet as a group once a month to make sure things are on track and nothing gets overlooked. The Council will also be meeting with Evie Smith (Lincoln County Coordinator) every month. CoPs have set up a special email account to ensure that anyone who has a question or concern has a centralized place to contact them and get a timely response. (Calling the CoPs, as it were...) That email is CoP.LCMGA@gmail.com

2025 Training Program

The 2025 Training Program has sixteen awesome and eager Apprentices. Educational classes kicked off on January 29 and will run through April 16. There is an in-person discussion session each week – the first consistent live component since Covid! Each Apprentice will complete 45 Volunteer Service hours by October 31 in order to graduate: 20 hours in the Master Gardener™ Plant Clinic, 20 hours working on an approved project in one of the Demonstration Gardens and 5 hours taking part in an LCMGA activity/Committee.

Bylaws Update

LCMGA is in the process of reviewing, revising, and updating our Bylaws. Our Bylaws require us to complete this process every five years. The Board will be voting on the draft Bylaws in March. That approved draft will then be voted upon at a general membership meeting.

2025 Goals for LCMGA

On February 10th LCMGA held a planning meeting wherein the 2025 Goals for LCMGA were established. They are: 1. Prioritize the Demonstration Gardens; 2. Expand the Seed Library; 3. Emphasize Sustainable Gardening Practices; and 4. Review and revise the LCMGA website <https://www.orcoastmga.org/>.

Demonstration Garden Updates

Lincoln City Demonstration Garden

- The rain and lack of light has really slowed down activity at the garden. We have beets, turnips, chard and broccoli all growing at a relaxed pace. Our radishes have been happier, and we've been able to make a donation to the Lincoln City Food Pantry from their harvest. The peas that were planted this fall are just as delicious for the deer as the ones planted in the spring. Sadly, we will not be harvesting many of them.
- There has been a bit of damage to our cloches from the strong winds and a small amount of vandalism as well. The repair of the cloches is on the To-Do list for our next work party, as is the assembly of our donated cold frame. Perhaps by the time you read this, these tasks will be completed.
- In other news, active members are planning for upcoming projects which will be submitted to the Board and possibly the Grant Committee. We are also soliciting input from members on what types of crops they would like to try growing this year.

Waldport Demonstration Garden

LCMGA member Tom Green recently built a new trellis at the Waldport Demonstration Garden which will provide a welcoming entrance to the space. Given the slope of the garden and the width of the front gate, a commercially available trellis was not a viable option, so building from scratch was the way to go. The plan is to plant clematis on both sides which in the coming years will form a lovely and inviting entry to the garden. In addition, Tom repaired the front gate which was recently destroyed by last month's windstorms. He used much stronger hinges for the repair. There are always challenges gardening at the coast!

Marion County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

1. Marion County membership for 2025 is 181 this year. We had 23 trainees graduate in 2024 and have 35 new trainees for 2025.
2. MCMGA members volunteered 17,093 hours in 2024.
3. Our plant sale set a record for fundraising at \$66,000 gross. A large majority of our plants are grown by our fantastic propagation team.
4. MCMGA members volunteer at the Marion Polk Food Share monthly. They assist in sorting produce, checking expiration dates, and many other duties the food share needs assistance with.
5. Our demonstration garden was visited by many and was the site for many workshops open to the public. Signage has been updated with full color, pictures, and QR codes. Workshops that were offered:
 - a. Blueberry care
 - b. Composting
 - c. Pruning fruit trees
 - d. Pruning and maintenance of berries
 - e. Asparagus planting and care
 - f. Grape care and maintenance
 - g. Grafting and propagation
 - h. We have a new workshop this year for 2025: Growing Gourmet Mushrooms.
6. Multiple classes taught by MCMGA volunteers:
 - a. Mason bee care
 - b. 6-week series at the 50-plus center
 - c. Seed to Supper had several successful six-week trainings
 - d. Junior master gardener had a successful summer camp and numerous educational events for the youth.
 - i. JMG partnered with 6 different schools/school districts.
 - ii. 16 different outreach events.
 - e. MCMGA has a weekly gardening tip 20-minute spot on KBZ Y.
 - f. Bug group meets monthly at our extension office.

Future events are published on our website at marioncomga.com or follow us on Facebook at extension.oregonstate.edu/marion

7. State Fair coordination, one of our Master Gardeners, Susan Nelson, coordinated the floral and garden-building volunteers and was able to provide education with the entries. Several volunteers from the public are now enrolled in the MCMGA trainee class. Stephanie Hazen assisted with putting together an educational video that many visitors to the fair enjoyed. Many MGs contributed to the video that Stephanie coordinated

8. MCMGA has a new president for 2025. Her goals begin with our mission statement of MCMGA which is to educate and serve the community by supporting and enhancing the sustainable gardening work
9. of Oregon State University. President's goals are:
 - a. Website enhancement
 - b. Expand educational outreach to serve further out of Salem and surrounding areas.
 - c. Board and committee support
 - d. Engage current master gardener members, and reinstate our quarterly all-member meetings currently we have only one all-member meeting.

Polk County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

Membership:

PCMGA is very excited to welcome 21 bright and enthusiastic gardeners to our association! Classes began Wednesday, February 19th. We had the opportunity to come together, both veterans and trainees for a potluck and there was an hour+ filled with a room full of conversation and mingling happening. We are continuing to fill mentorship positions to ensure the Trainees have a dedicated contact as they work through the rigorous Master Gardener program, and hopefully feel supported throughout their journeys.

Education & Outreach:

Our Education & Outreach Director has been busy planning 8 month's worth of activities, field trips and opportunities to connect with the towns in our county! We are rounding out a Winter Library Series with Monmouth Public Library that included 4 Saturday sessions on soil, seed starting + community seed swap, propagation + community plant swap, and our last one will take place March 29th for year-round blooms! We appreciate our relationship with the local library and have seen a strong turnout for our sessions. Looking ahead, some of our monthly chapter meeting topics include Ergonomic Gardening hosted by a Physical Therapist, History of our Demonstration Garden led by those who poured all of their efforts into building it 12+ years ago and wool pellets in gardening among many other fantastic topics and speakers! Below are some pictures from a community seed swap at our demonstration garden:



Demonstration Garden (Inspiration Garden):

We had the opportunity to get a new drainage system installed at the Inspiration Garden. Rain would flood the areas near the Rose and Medicinal Gardens, and now the areas are staying dry and healthy! Check out the difference it makes (before and after):



We have unfortunately faced some theft and public safety matters in the Inspiration Garden. We do share a large portion of a county park that is managed by the city. We are extremely grateful to the City of Independence for their willingness to partner with us to host a public safety class so everyone can continue to enjoy the park and the garden. Looking ahead we will begin working with the City of Independence Library system to start planning our three children-oriented programs scheduled in the Garden, as well as a book walk! Lastly, we are excited as the garden begins to transition from winter into spring:



Plant Sale Update:

We are in full swing of preparing for our plant sale, occurring May 10th – 11th. All areas have leads and we are currently building a binder of position descriptions and responsibilities to lay the groundwork for the coming years. Next week we will have a ‘plant stake party’ where we will need ‘all hands-on deck’ to help label around 8,000 plant stakes in preparation for the sale. That will be followed by a planting party during the 1st week of April in preparation for the sale!



Umatilla County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

- The Farm City Ag and Home Expo was held March 7-8 and several UCMGA members volunteered to answer questions and lead activities. A few taught mini workshops.
- A new hybrid Master Gardener class has begun in Hermiston. The MG trainee program rotates each year to a different town in the county. Last year it was held in Milton-Freewater and this year in Hermiston. Next year, it will return to Pendleton.
- Seed to Supper classes will be held in March in Hermiston with MGs teaching many of the modules. It is always held in conjunction with the Hermiston Community Garden.
- The Umatilla County Health Department has met with UCMGA members with the hope to create a community garden in Pendleton once again. It is all in the very beginning stages but we are hopeful to have finally found a community partner that can get this going.

Wasco County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

2025 Master Gardener Classes Started, 16 New MGs in the Making

We're excited about all the new energy that comes with 16 new master gardeners this year, and 32 returning members. The continuation of work-friendly class times of 5:30 pm on weekdays and some Saturdays helps, with doors open at 5:00, announcements at 5:30 and class content at 6. The annual Master Gardener program kicked off February 2nd and the final exam is April 8th. Given the scarcity of qualified speakers in or willing to travel to our region, Hood River and Wasco are joining forces one time at each at each other's site this year to share speakers.



March 1, 2025 fruit tree pruning class photo courtesy Hilary Jensen.

Directing New Member Volunteer Hours

In 2025 we are requiring new members to volunteer with multiple activities with minimum hours/activity: 8 hours of plant clinics, 6 hours of rose garden, 6 hours at The DIG ([The] Dalles Imagination Garden), and 2 hours at one of the community educational activities (lectures, seed exchanges, school groups).

Gaming Engagement

This year "Game of Gardeners" kicks off with a monthly raffle and graduation grand prize with raffle tickets based on specific actions, for example: 10 tickets for logging hours on time, 8 tickets for attending a board meeting, 6 tickets for attending a social committee, 10 tickets for joining a committee and 5 tickets for attending a committee meeting. Will a little fun, some friendly competition and prizes increase engagement? We'll see; the finale is graduation.

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Socials (More socials are planned for upcoming months)

- February—Newbie welcome: long-time master gardener and Past President Ronnie Smith welcomed new master gardeners outside our crammed class schedule by opening her home for three consecutive Saturdays for morning drop-ins. Returning master gardeners were also welcome to drop in.
- More socials are planned.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS & OUTREACH

No More Greenhouse. New Project Prioritization

This marks the first time in 12 years we're not accessing the local greenhouse we used in to grow the plants for our annual plant sale—by far our biggest annual volunteer project. We're still working on what we'll do instead, including a more decentralized growing from seed approach for our needs and working with the community for their own DIY gardening efforts. More soon.

Maupin Seed Exchange Returns: 1st Outreach of the Year

March 7 th marks the 3rd annual early spring event in Maupin. Master Gardeners are there to give out free seeds and offer plant advice. Last it the event was our biggest community interaction.

Plant Advice Clinics: Extension Office, Farmers Markets & Home Depot

Our plant clinics start in April, at the extension office, then expand to include farmer's markets, alternating between The Dalles, Tygh Valley and Sherman County and on Saturdays at Home Depot.

The DIG Educational Garden

The DIG is still mostly in hibernation, with beds yet to be assigned for the year. The 1st DIG clean-up date is TBD (but soon). However, thanks to a local arborist who donated their labor to remove a dead tree, we already got a head start.

Sorosis Rose Gardens Blossom

The Sorosis Park Veteran Memorial Rose Garden, a Master Gardener project managed in partnership with Parks and Recreation continues to blossom. Thirty roses from the first section that died or reverted to root stock were flagged and removed by Parks and Rec. It's the first of 5 sections slated for rejuvenation. An unsolicited \$500 donation from a community member helped fund part of the rose replacement. Parks and Rec is picking half of the remainder of that cost and our chapter will cover the rest. Parks and Rec will dig the holes for the new roses, which are currently in our care until the irrigation system is turned on in April.

We plan to identify the roses and then mark them with their proper names. Parks and Rec provided an older legend for many of the roses, which will be checked against what is still there. We will still need to identify the existing unidentified roses, which will be tackled when there are blooms to help in identification.

2025 OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

2025 officers: President Hilary Jensen, Past President Ronnie Smith, Present Elect Chrissy Zaugg, Secretary Robin Ross, Treasurer Jean Zylka, Historian Cyndi Reitz, OMGA Rep Dana Greyson, Alt. OMGA Rep Paulann Knight.

Check our website for issues of [our newsletter, The Dirt](#) or follow our [Facebook page](#).

Washington County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

Our Washington County Master Gardeners are out getting their feet and hands muddy, and planning for the sunny weather ahead! During the cooler “down time” there was time to look at some membership numbers from last year. We had:

- 131 Dues paying members
- 42 Master Gardener Interns working with us
- 75% of Membership worked in one of our volunteer activities

Educational/Outreach contacts:

- Interaction with Nature Kids Preschool at Jenkins Estate (31)
- National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) tabling event (48)
- Hortlandia tabling event (103)
- Hillsboro Pride Party tabling event (260)
- Fall Social event; Awards Recognition for MGs and Community Volunteers (47)
- Ten Monthly WCMGA Guest Speaker Presentations (via Zoom) (887)
- Ten Monthly WCMGA Chapter Business Meetings (via Zoom) (419)

To fight the winter gloom, we have held about a dozen educational opportunities for Master Gardeners and the public both in person and by Zoom this year. A few of the topics have included:

Care of Blueberries
Pruning Perennials
Mason Bees
Soil, What it is and How it Works



Projects are starting up! Our Grow 1 Give 1 activity is a distribution of tomato and pepper starts that our Master Gardeners grow. 879 tomato and pepper plants were donated at 7 locations in 2024. There were 915 contacts, 1712 seed packets distributed, 420 grow bags and 299 fertilizer packets donated. We are hoping to increase those numbers this year, seeds are already planted!

We have Master Gardeners that will be working with local Soil and Conservation Districts for their annual Soil School. We will provide a breakout session during the April workshop. More about that next report!

Our Demonstration gardens are waking up. New amenities completed by year end, but not yet reported on include:

- Added and planted a waist-high sensory garden bed with signage and step stools next to the Natives.
- Constructed a fourth bin for compost ready for spreading!
- Assembled two accessible raised table beds at which a person using a wheelchair, walker or outdoor chair can vegetable garden with their knees under the table.

We had a great year for growing and gardening with friends! We look forward to the same this year!

Debra Hansen, Washington County Representative

Yamhill County Master Gardeners - Q1 Report 2025

The 2025 Master Gardener class of Yamhill County has 23 trainee students and classes are underway. There will be a job fair March 20th for committees to present different options/areas for the students to gain volunteer hours.

Our “Garden to Table” classes started March 1st. There are 4 classes, 2 in English and 2 in Spanish and they will run 6 weeks. They currently have 50 students in the 4 classes and may add a few more by the 2nd class. The class is offered to a low income/food insecure audience to equip participants with the knowledge and resources to grow their own vegetable garden. The project received a grant from the Siletz Tribal Contribution Fund in the amount of \$8,164.00. The grant will provide for class supplies including raised beds or pots, soil, plants/seeds and class notebook for students.

We will host a “Spring into Gardening” seminar on March 29th at Linfield University Keck Science Center. Registration is open. The program has 12 speakers and 3 tracks including flowers, healthy gardens and climate resilience. Specific class topics include: Lilies, Science of drought, Leafy greens, Peonies, Resilient gardens, Insects, Roses, Plant hardiness zones, Drip irrigation, Native bees, Biodiversity loss and Soil microbes. There will also be a basket raffle fund raiser at the seminar.

The McMinnville Community Garden has completed rebuilding 30-40 new beds. Major clean-up efforts have also been completed, which included removing eleven trees around the garden to eliminate impeding tree roots and shade. Wheelbarrows and carts have been repaired, and tools have been inventoried and sharpened. The McMinnville Community Garden received an anonymous grant in the amount of \$1,000.00 to use for additional lumber and hardware.

An educational steering committee is developing a new class option for beginner gardeners in the community. The class is different than “Garden to Table” in that the target audience is open to all, not necessarily food-insecure. It also is a shortened class structure which includes more hands-on demonstrations. Workshop 1 will include garden planning, soil, seeding and transplanting. Workshop 2 will include watering, fertilizer, weeds and pest control. Tentative dates are set in May at 2 different community garden locations. Registration will begin in April.

Cindy Kinnaman, Yamhill Co OMGA Rep
Lydia Cook, Yamhill Co OMGA Rep Alternate