Oregon Master Gardener™ Association Summer 2026

The Gardener's Pen

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News for Oregon's Master Gardener Volunteers

GET YOUR GEAR!

You can now order Master Gardener-themed clothes!
See page 3

TELLING OUR STORIES

50 years of fascinating stories—what's yours?
See page 4

MG OF THE YEAR

New schedule for statewide awards begins this year.
See page 3.

Your Joy of Gardening classes:

- Tour—Legacy in the Landscape: The Story of the OSU Campus Arboretum
- Tour—Horticulture Science Lab
- From Gardeners to Guardians: Becoming a Certified Bee Steward
- Researching Effectively with AI
- Plant This, Not That: Exploring Landscaping Plants That Protect Biodiversity
- Drip Irrigation 101
- Planting in a Changing Climate: Adaptation, Assisted Migration, and Hands-On Solutions
- Success with Small Orchards
- Regenerate Your Garden
- From Gardens to Funding: How Master Gardener Volunteers Can Advocate for the Program Year-Round
- Art About Agriculture
- The Natural History of Unrecognized and Little-Known Pollinators who are in our Yards and Gardens
- Pruning Solutions for Trees and Shrubs
- Garden Future Initiative
- Right Plant, Right Place: Drought Resilient Garden Design
- Five Scientific Studies that Changed the Way We Think About Gardens
- Small-Scale Permaculture: Creating a Sustainable Cottage Garden
- Upping Your Compost Game/Interpreting Your Soil Test Results
- Raised Bed Gardening: The Latest Research and Inspiration
- Growing a Cut Flower Garden
- Growing Onions, Leeks, and Shallots from Seed in the Home Garden
- Veggies From the "Other Side": Adapting to Gardening Challenges East of the Cascades
- Panel for Master Gardeners: Growing and Belonging
- Growing Herbs in the Home Garden
- Legumes for Life
- Secrets of Growing Beautiful Lilies Anywhere
- Amazing Ants: But Are They Indispensable?
- Science Behind the Scenes
- GARDEN TRIVIA GAME: LIVE!

EARLY REGISTRATION IS $50!

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DETAILS.

OMGA
OREGON MASTER GARDENER™ ASSOCIATION

the JOY of Gardening

2026

Open to everyone!

Public welcome!

FRIDAY & SATURDAY
JULY 10 – 11

Keynote Speakers:
Dr. Leslie Madsen
& Andrew Millison

Join us for two days of research-based classes, tours, & panels on all things gardening.
For new and experienced gardeners!

BOOKSTORE • SILENT AUCTION

formerly MINI-COLLEGE

SPECIAL TICKET PRICING FOR THE MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY!

$50 until June 20 then $100

QUESTIONS?
omga.joyofgardening@gmail.com
omga.org/joy-of-gardening-2026

CH2M Hill Alumni Center
OSU Campus, Corvallis

1976 2026 50 YEARS OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICE MASTER GARDENER™

In collaboration with and support of Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener™

OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities and materials. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by July 1, 2026 to Chris Rusch, 541-817 4071, omga.joyofgardening@gmail.com

OSU Extension Master Gardener gear and fun gardening-inspired finds

Order your gear while supporting the OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program. It's a simple way to celebrate gardening, wear your connection with pride and help grow the program's impact across the state. Check it out!

Nominating excellent MGs

As we mentioned in the last issue of *The Gardener's Pen*, **county-level** recognition remains local and flexible, allowing counties to celebrate volunteers in ways that fit their communities. **Statewide awards** are now fully administered by the OSU Master Gardener Program, with shared criteria and a streamlined nomination process open to all certified Master Gardener volunteers, regardless of OMGA affiliation. The new statewide OSU Master Gardener Volunteer Awards are:

- **Master Gardener Volunteer of the Year**
- **Program Champion Award**
- **Growing and Belonging Community Award**
- **Distinguished Educator Award**

Nominations are open until October 31.

Let's celebrate our 50th year by boosting our food donations to 50 tons! Make sure you keep track and that your amounts are reported through VRS or your program office.

10 ways chapters can support the program through the new merchandise store:

- **Include the store in your next newsletter**

Add a short blurb and link encouraging volunteers to shop and support the program.

- **Share on social media**

Post a favorite item and remind followers that purchases support the Master Gardener program.

- **Add a QR code at events**

Display a sign at plant sales or workshops: "Support the Master Gardener program—shop here."

- **Feature a "product of the month"**

Highlight one item in your communications to keep the store top of mind.

- **Encourage volunteers to wear merch at events**

Visibility builds interest—and often leads to more purchases.

- **Include in new members orientation**

Let trainees know this is one way to support the program from the start.

- **Recognize volunteers with fun merch**

Instead of (or alongside) traditional gifts, encourage purchases that support the program.

- **Pair with existing fundraising efforts**

Promote the store as an additional way to give—especially for those who prefer a tangible item.

- **Share photos of volunteers wearing merch**

Create a "Master Gardeners in the wild" moment and build excitement.

- **Mention it in meetings and announcements**

A quick reminder goes a long way in building awareness and participation.

HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY MASTER GARDENERS!

OSU Extension budget protected

The Oregon Legislature's 2026 short session began with the potential for up to a 7.1% reduction to the current biennium budget for the OSU Statewides: Extension, Agricultural Experiment Station and Forestry Research Lab. However, a positive revenue forecast in February coupled with strong statewide advocacy led to the legislature not making any cuts to the OSU Statewides budget.

Master Gardeners across Oregon played a significant role in this advocacy work. You submitted letters of support, attended town halls, met with your local legislators and shared the impact of the important work you do every day in your communities.

Your efforts ensured that lawmakers heard clearly and consistently that the OSU Statewides are an essential part of Oregon's economic and educational ecosystems, and vital to the success of Oregon's agriculture, natural resources, youth and families.

We are deeply grateful to the OMGA for this partnership, and we look forward to collaborating with you to keep the OSU Statewides' impact top of mind for decision-makers as we moved toward the 2027 legislative session.

- *Heidi Luquette, Director Extension External Relations*

From chance to legacy: original Master Gardener marks 50 years

When the Master Gardener program launched in 1976, Pat Patterson wasn't the one in her family who planned to sign up.

Her husband, Robert, was.

"He was going to take the course," Patterson said. "We were both graduate assistants at University of Oregon and his classes conflicted, and so I just walked in and took his place. Talk about fate."

That moment set Patterson on a path that has spanned five decades. Now 87, she remains the program's longest-serving volunteer — still answering gardening questions from her home on a 10-acre farm near Noti.

…Read the rest of Pat Patterson's story here and ***share YOUR story at: Beav.es/mgstory***

Important to remember: Make every Master Gardener event more welcoming and accessible

From plant sales and workshops to conferences and community gatherings, thoughtful planning helps ensure everyone can participate. The statewide office has created an in-person event accessibility checklist to support MG faculty, staff, associations, and volunteers in creating inclusive, welcoming, and safe events. This tool covers everything from site access and communication to volunteer support and safety considerations like heat and air quality. We encourage anyone planning or managing an event to use this resource to strengthen your event.

UPCOMING EVENTS

More events at the OSU Extension calendar

Continuing Ed credit? See event in calendar.

May 27 Slug Chat! (online)
May 30 Central Oregon Spring Garden Fair
June 4 Planting your Garden-Lincoln City
June 5 OMGA board meeting on Zoom
June 9 Creating beautiful landscapes that support beneficials (online)
June 13 Inspiration Garden tour- Independence
June 16 Fragrance in the Garden- Central Point
June 18 Nature's Best Hope (online)
June 30 Broccoli in the Bank: Planning for Fall
July 9 OMGA board meeting at Joy of Gardening
July 14 Chard Catalog: Sharing through Seed Libraries

Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener™

OMGA OREGON MASTER GARDENER™ ASSOCIATION

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