



Oregon State University
Extension Service
Master Gardener™



CENTRAL GORGE MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2024
CGMGA & OMGA

Notes from the President

It's January, and that means it's time for an exciting new Master Gardener year of possibilities. As your new president I am thrilled to be leading a part of this amazing organization. I am also honored to be working with an excellent executive team with years of experience and leadership in CGMGA. Together we are here to support our members, our current projects and develop innovative new opportunities to reach the public. Our plant sale is more popular than ever and our plant sale team continues to bring the best every year. Our dedicated garden leaders are a wonderful resource and bring dedicated leadership to our organization. We are working to capitalize the educational benefits of these gardens to the public in new ways this year. We have established an educational outreach team made up of dedicated volunteers who are ready to take gardening outreach to new levels. Our publicity and social media teams of journalists and influencers are ready to share our events and continue their excellent educational articles through media. Thank you to those who filled out the survey this past year. We read every comment and we hear you! We need more fun things to do and community outreach in new ways. You can look forward to hearing about new ways to volunteer, interesting field trips and educational workshops this year. Later in this newsletter you will

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Month at a Glance

Jan 9: Tuesday: 3pm: Plant sale meeting (details below)

Jan 10: Wednesday: 10-12 pm: CGMGA Executive Committee meeting at Extension meeting room and via zoom (contact Megan Wickersham for link)

Jan 19: Friday: Deadline for submissions to the February CGMGA newsletter

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CGMGA & OMGA

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read a spotlight on me. I just want you to know that even though I have been a Master Gardener for many years I still learn new ways to garden every year. That is what its all about for me. I like to learn and I like to share what I have learned with others and I hope you do to! I welcome your comments, suggestions and ideas anytime and if something is not working for you please let us know. We cannot solve problems that we do not know about. Please feel free to contact me at jenniferh@centralgorgemga.org

Kindly,
Jennifer Harty 2024 President

OMGA

On December 1st the Oregon Master Gardener Association held, via Zoom, it's annual retreat. This event, attended by OMGA officers, chapter leaders, and any interested individuals from around the state, is an opportunity to recap the activities of the statewide Association and evaluate its goals of the past year. It is also a time to solicit input as to OMGA's operation, successes, and any issues which may remain unresolved. Probably the most important activity at the retreat is to set goals for OMGA's upcoming year with special attention to the main functions of support for local Chapters and advancement of OMGA's educational outreach mandate. Without getting into too much detail, here are the highlights from this year's retreat.

The effort spearheaded by Sherry Sheng (Clackamas Co. MG) to advocate at the state legislature and at OSU for higher financial support of Extension has been very successful. Sherry will be moving on to advocate for the new Garden Ecology Lab but has recruited a strong replacement in the person of Laura Strom (Lincoln Co. MG). <https://gardenecology.oregonstate.edu/>

The Joy of Gardening (JOG) conference (formerly Mini College) was held in July on campus at OSU. While attendance was lower than in some previous years, the event successfully presented an outstanding array of speakers, classes, and activities to educate and reconnect Master Gardeners from around the state.

OMGA continues to strive for better lines of communication between Chapters, OMGA, and OSU. Missy Bright (MG Clackamas Co.) will assume the reins of Database Manager from Seamus Rameriz.

Along with over \$4000 in grants and awards made to Chapters and individuals this year, OMGA presented the first "Growing and Belonging" award to Dennis Brown (Multnomah Co. MG) for his outstanding work in expanding the educational and outreach efforts of his Chapter.

The goal-setting portion of the retreat resulted in re-emphasis on past goals still in progress and on new efforts that OMGA will focus on as it pursues its mission of service to the chapters and of supporting the outreach efforts of OSU Extension.

OMGA will again produce the Joy of Gardening Conference which is scheduled for July 12-13th at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center on campus at OSU. There was a lengthy discussion about past conferences, attendance, alternatives to location/dates/format, and changes that might be made to the mandated educational program. The goals being; better attendance, stronger networking, sharing knowledge and experiences, and topics and activities to attract a broader audience.

More effective use of technology, both old and new, to improve meetings, communications,

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CGMGA & OMGA

Welcome to the 2024 Central Gorge Master Gardener program!

As I write this letter, we are still at the tail-end of 2023 with this year's memories fresh in my mind. The Master Gardener wheel will continue to turn, so I want to pause for one final celebration of our 2023 accomplishments:

Newly certified Master Gardeners: 17

Recertified MGs: 45

Volunteer Hours: 4803 (another record!)

Continuing Education Hours: 2034 (also a record!)

Community Questions Answered: 168 in plant clinic, over 700 contacts at Saturday events

Pounds of Produce Donated: 1134.5 pounds

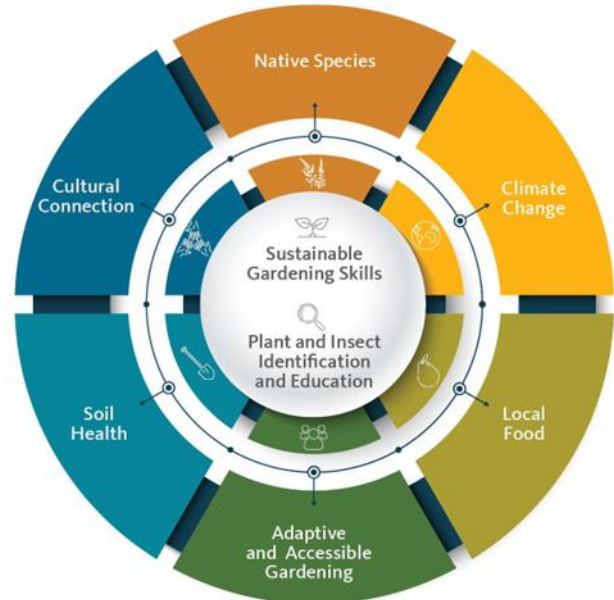
These are just the numbers. I hope you will also take the time to reflect on 2023's classes, all of the changes to our project gardens, a productive plant sale and new Kids' Corner event, Garden Gathering, Tomato Tasting, monthly articles in the Columbia Gorge News, a fun Greenery Event....and for the many things I've missed, a monthly newsletter that captures it all.

At the risk of repeating myself one too many times, I truly am grateful to work alongside this amazing group of volunteers. Each year brings new opportunities, so let's get started!

Classes

We have a full class of thirty trainees joining us this year, grouped into a "pod" with two other trainees and two mentors. We will have a trainee orientation on Monday, February 5th, with our first official class kicking off on Wednesday, February 7th. The full class schedule is below.

To prioritize their learning and connection, I encourage these trainees to sit up front with their mentors during classes, ask lots of questions and take time for hands-on learning. Returning Master Gardeners are always welcome at classes as well, especially for any topics you haven't taken in the past



Master Gardener Program Priorities, graphic courtesy of LeAnn Locher

few years or feel that you need a refresher! We will once again have the option to join on Zoom and to access the online modules, including a few new modules for 2024.

Projects and Volunteer Opportunities

We had so many great things to highlight in our program last year, and I look forward to sharing all of the data with you in our 2023 impact report. You can find all of the past statewide reports on our [OSU Extension MG website](#), as well as details for each of our program priorities.

As you think about how you'd like to volunteer your time this year, I encourage you to consider some of these opportunities:

*Educational Outreach Team- This new team is focused on strengthening and expanding our community education in a variety of ways. Areas you

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CGMGA & OMGA

Central Gorge Master Gardeners**2024 Master Gardener Training Schedule**

*All in-person classes: Hood River Valley Christian Church, 975 Indian Creek Road, Hood River
Online modules will be completed independently during the week.

Date/Time	Class	In-person*/online
Weds. 2/7 6:00-8:30 PM	Intro to Master Gardener Program	*HRVCC
Week of 2/12	Entomology (online module)	Online module--no in person class
Sat. 2/17 9:00AM-Noon	Integrated Pest Management	*HRVCC
Sat. 2/24 9:00AM-Noon	Soils	*HRVCC
Weds. 2/28 6:00-8:30 PM	Botany	*HRVCC
Sat. 3/2 9:00AM-Noon	Firewise Landscaping (Zoom webinar)	On Zoom
Weds. 3/6 6:00-8:30 PM	Home Orchards	*HRVCC
Weds. 3/13 6:00-8:30 PM	Pesticides	*HRVCC
Sat. 3/16 9:00 AM-Noon	Plant Pathology	*HRVCC
Sat. 3/23 9:00 AM-Noon	Pollinators	*HRVCC
Weds. 3/27 6:00-8:30 PM	Plant Clinic	*HRVCC
Weds. 4/3 6:00-8:30 PM	Community Education	*HRVCC
Weds. 4/10 6:00-8:30 PM	CGMGA Meeting, Final Exam	*HRVCC
Sat. 4/13 9:00 AM-Noon	<i>Garden Visits</i>	*MG Gardens

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may be interested in contributing: creating educational displays and activities, tables at community events, planning a community class, writing an educational article, or any new ideas you'd like to share.

***Project Gardens-** Consider joining one of our four gardens you haven't attended in the past. Think about a special interest you'd like to focus on in that space (a specific vegetable, a gardening technique, a unique feature, or a fun event idea). Volunteer passions and

new ideas are what continue to grow these gardens and expand our outreach: The Learning Garden hügelkultur raised beds and the FISH Tomato Tasting event are two great examples.

I hope you are feeling inspired for the year ahead. If you haven't yet registered, here is the [2024 application](#).

See you all in February!

Megan

EDUCATIONAL TIDBITS

Garden Ecology Lab Socio-ecological research in urban and suburban garden systems

Studying the plants, insects, microbes, and decisions that improve or degrade a garden's ability to promote environmental and human health.

Who's at work in the lab



Standing (L-R): Gwynne Mhuireach, Signe Danler, Nicole Bell, Jen Hayes, LeAnn Locher, Mykl Nelson.

Kneeling (L-R): Gail Langellotto, Svea Bruslind, Kailey Legier

Veteran Master Gardeners will recognize most of these smiling faces as we've enjoyed educational presentations, the science, and friendship of many of them. Of special note is Nicole Bell who is carrying on the tradition of her dad Neil and legacy of her mom Bernadine Strik.



Lab Blog

A comprehensive collection of the work of the lab is located at their blog. <https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/gardenecologylab/>

There is a link that will allow you to subscribe and receive notification of new posts.

Lab Website

To learn more about the work currently be done at the lab visit: <https://gardenecology.oregonstate.edu/>

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EDUCATIONAL TIDBITS



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I would suggest that the Garden Ecology Lab is destined to become a preeminent source for current science and education centered around gardening and the impact, challenges, condition, and overall joy that gardening brings to those who spend time with their hands in the soil, producing its bounty of sustenance and beauty.

In the November issue of this newsletter there was a brief piece on the Garden Ecology League. Clackamas Master Gardener Sherry Sheng has taken the lead in advocacy for the League and its support of the OSU Garden Ecology Lab. Donations to support the lab can be made at:

[https://
gardenecology.oregonstate.edu/
gardenecology/donate](https://gardenecology.oregonstate.edu/gardenecology/donate)

Eric Bosler

Festive plants: Which are safe to give as gifts?

Q: I love gifting poinsettia flowers to my friends and family during the holiday time, but it has come to my attention that they may be toxic. Could you let me know which plants are unsafe for gifting to homes with pets?

A: During the holiday season, plants are given to friends and neighbors. Most of these decorative plants are harmless, but some can be dangerous if ingested. Poinsettias were thought to have been poisonous, but this is false. The milky sap can cause skin and eye irritation, and if eaten, one might develop a rash in the mouth or suffer from stomach aches and vomiting.

HARMFUL PLANTS

These names are listed along with which parts are hazardous to pets and small children:

- Amaryllis: the entire plant
- Bracken fern: leaves
- Christmas rose: foliage, roots and sap
- Christmas pepper: the small peppers
- Dieffenbachia: stem and leaves
- English ivy: leaves and fruit
- Euonymus: fruit, foliage and bark
- Ficus: milky sap causes skin irritation
- Holly: leaves and berries
- Horse chestnut: nuts, leaves and flowers
- Hyacinth: bulb
- Mistletoe: foliage and fruit

- Narcissus/Daffodil: bulbs
- Philodendron: leaves and stem
- Rhododendron: leaves
- Tulips: bulbs

These plants are festive and attractive, but it is important to be aware of which plants you are gifting and advise recipients to keep them out of reach of small children and animals or to consider alternative gifts.

The following resources have tips for transporting and caring for gifted plants.



In order to allow time for formatting the CGMGA Newsletter, please submit articles or calendar items by **the 3rd Friday**. Send newsletter information to

Shari Bosler at sharibosler@hotmail.com.
Thanks!

EDUCATIONAL TIDBITS

Five things to watch to keep your houseplants happy

Houseplants are easy to grow but they can fall victim to common problems, especially during the winter when light fades and temperatures drop. Here's a look at five things to watch to keep houseplants healthy year-round.

Nicole Sanchez | Nov 2019 | ARTICLE

Greg Aronoff, Oregon State University



Photo: Jeannette E. Spaghetti / CC BY-NC (Cropped from original)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

May 2024 Plant Sale Update

The planning committee for the plant sale had a successful first meeting. The seed/plant selection committee has also met and made all of the decisions needed to order seeds. We are currently working on writing the descriptions for the new plants and varieties we have added for 2024. We are planning to again have an online and in person sale and plan to add some educational vignettes on the day of sale on topics like how to plant some of our vegetables and annuals. I appreciate the enthusiasm and dedication of this committee as we work toward another successful sale. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 9th at 3 pm via zoom. Contact Sandi for the link and if you have any questions or ideas to make our sale even more fun.

Sandi
swim@gorge.net
503-806-7020



Waterwise Garden

The Waterwise Garden at the Hood River Library is sleeping soundly and resting up for a fabulous 2024. Make plans to join us when we start up again in April. We don't have to be limited to Fridays. Let us know your preferences for work sessions, and we'll add some dates in the spring. Contact Norma Benson by texting to 509-969-2187.

Holiday Greenery Event 2023

A good time was had by those who attended the 2023 Holiday Greenery Event on Saturday, Dec 2. In advance of it, there were 2 bow-making "parties" where MGs gathered and created nearly 50 bows for the wreaths and swags that were crafted at our event. With a dozen Master Gardeners, including 1 guest, we made a variety of personal wreaths and swags, including 42 items to donate to the FISH Food Bank and WAGAP.

Leslie Naramore, Exec Director of WAGAP, shared very positive thanks for the donation: "All donations

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

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were very well received and I'm sure they flew out of both facilities immediately. We didn't capture any specific client feedback but the wreaths and swags flew out the door and everyone who received one was delighted."

Jacqueline Carey, Executive Director of FISH shared her gratitude: "I spoke with the 2 volunteers who gave out most of the holiday greenery. They both said the clients were surprised and

delighted that the Master Gardeners made these available to them, free of charge. They enjoyed being able to choose their own holiday decor, matching their specific personalities. The wreaths were the first to get scooped up, but the swags were a big hit, as well! When times are tough for people, the gesture of someone they don't know making and giving them a gift lifts their spirits and gives them hope. This is a wonderful tradition, and on behalf of FISH and our clients, we truly appreciate all of the time and effort put into this project by the Master Gardeners. We hope it continues to grow so that many more lives can be touched by this act of kindness."

Please join us next year as we hope to repeat and hopefully expand this event. Feeling empowered to create a wide variety of bows, we will continue to have our bow-making events in advance of our greenery event. Thank you to those who participated and also donated a wide variety of greens and ribbon. Donations are always appreciated.

Shari



SPOTLIGHT ON A MASTER GARDENER

Jennifer Harty

As our chapter begins a new year, it seems like an appropriate time to get to know our new president, Jennifer Harty. Jennifer has been involved in CGMGA since 2006, and she values the connections she's made as a Master Gardener. CGMGA is the perfect place for a person who describes herself as a lifelong learner.

Jennifer is a lifelong gardener as well. Her parents had two acres of fruit trees and vegetables in rural Wisconsin, and she and her brother were expected to help with garden chores. Her mother instilled a strong

work ethic in her offspring, insisting that they weed a row before she would drive them to the local swimming pool on summer afternoons. Jennifer carried her love of gardening to Florida where she had her first home as an adult. The warmer climate presented a challenge, so she set out researching what to plant and when. Success in the garden led to the desire to learn more and plant more.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

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When Jennifer and her husband moved to the Pacific Northwest, she had to learn how to garden in yet another new climate, so she decided to join the Master Gardener program. In its early days as a chapter, CGMGA was focused primarily on logistics and how to best support the needs and interests of the Hood River community. Jennifer quickly became involved in several large projects: a community garden at the Hood River Care Center, the building of the bioswale on the Extension grounds, the establishment of the Native Garden, and the gradual development of the Learning Garden. She also served as co-leader of the first garden tour which featured gardens on both sides of the river. Today, in addition to serving as our chapter president, she is heading up the Educational Outreach Committee and is an active participant in the development of the newly-planted pollinator garden.

Although she was an active member from the start, it was several years before Jennifer made the connection that the Master Gardener program is an “extension of the OSU extension” program. Today she recognizes that Master Gardeners are the fortunate recipients of training opportunities offered by OSU experts and educators.

Jennifer describes her own garden as being neither messy nor immaculate and formal. Some areas are neatly weeded, while others are left deliberately woody and natural to help the pollinators. A beekeeper and member of the Bumblebee Watch Program, she enjoys experimenting with plants to determine which will be most visited by bees and

other pollinators. She has a “massive” vegetable garden with 10 raised beds, berries, fruit trees, and lots of native shrubs.

When she’s not beekeeping, photographing bees, or gardening, Jennifer teaches preschool music classes and piano and ukulele lessons, and she substitutes in the local public schools. She earned a BA in classical voice and performed professionally for 15 years and today still finds time to perform in local community theater productions. She also co-chairs ArtSmart, an

organization that fosters arts education in the Trout Lake area. In her free time, Jennifer enjoys xc skiing and spending time in Long Beach with her husband and two (almost) grown children.

Jennifer describes herself as a good listener and a diplomatic person who, as president, will listen to others’ points of

view and suggestions and will try to figure out how all the different pieces can come together. Her advice to new Master Gardeners and trainees is not to get too bogged down by all the information that comes that first year. “No one expects miracles. It’s okay to learn things in small bites.” Wise words from a lifetime Master Gardener.

By Anne Gehrig



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and awareness of OMGA and Chapter activities.

Continued focus on the OMGA DEI efforts and on advocacy of MG programs statewide.

Continued recruitment of individuals to fill vacant OMGA positions and facilitate better succession at the state level.

The retreat was very productive and filled with more substance and nuance than I can cover in a short report. OMGA's goals for 2024 can be found at <https://>

omga.org/minutes-and-reports/. Our website offers a wide selection of information and documentation regarding OMGA, it's functions and efforts on behalf of the Master Gardener Chapters and the program in general.

As always, if you have questions, suggestions, or advice please reach out to me or our Alternate Rep, Mary Corl.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Bosler, OMGA Rep.

Central Gorge Master Gardener Association

Gardening Resources

◇ [Hood River County Master Gardeners](#)

[Area](#)

◇ blogs.oregonstate.edu/cgmga/

◇ [GardenSmart: A Guide to Non-Invasive Plants](#)

◇ [Growing Your Own](#)

◇ [Where to Pickup a free copy of GardenSmart](#)

◇ [OSU Publications](#)

◇ [Oregon Flora](#)

◇ [Monthly Gardening Calendars](#)

◇ <https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/mgcoordinators/>

◇ [PNW Handbooks](#)

◇ [Transplanting Established Trees & Shrubs](#)

◇ [HortSense](#)

◇ [UC IPM](#)

◇ [OSU Gardening](#)

◇ [WSU Gardening](#)

◇ [Weed Identification](#)

◇ [Columbia Gorge Cooperative Weed Management](#)



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