

Benton County Master Gardener™ Association

The Benton County Master Gardener™ Association (BCMGA) is a chapter of the Oregon Master Gardener Association (OMGA). Like the OMGA, the BCMGA is a non-profit organization that was established in 1983 and is affiliated with the Master Gardener program in Benton County. The function of the association is to support, promote, and enhance the Master Gardener program and gardening in the community and is organized exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes. To fulfill this goal, the association conducts ongoing educational opportunities and fundraising events for both master gardeners and the public. Educational events include the annual *Insights Into Gardening* seminar in February, *Gearing Up for Gardening* lecture series, clinic tables at various events like the Farmers' Market, and the association's monthly meetings. Trainees and experienced master gardeners also staff the Master Gardener Desk at the Benton County Extension Office. An extensive library at this location has been purchased and is maintained by the association to assist master gardeners in finding research based and objective information for the home gardener. Two annual fundraising events (*Insights Into Gardening* and Plant Sale) support the many activities that are administered by the association.

Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener™ Program

Oregon State University Extension Service-Benton County offers educational programs, activities and materials—without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, disability and disabled Veteran or Vietnam era veteran status—as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1965. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Oregon State University Extension Services is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

The Oregon Program

The Oregon Master Gardener™ Program is one of the oldest in the nation. Duane Hatch, Lane County Extension agent, and Gray Thompson, Clackamas County Extension agent, started it in 1976. These two agents “Oregonized” the program to fit the needs of Oregon’s home gardeners. Training began in these two counties with 36 people. In 1977, the Oregon Master Gardener Program became part of Oregon State University’s Extension Services to extend more effectively the university’s horticultural education to the citizens of Oregon.

Presently, the Master Gardener Program has participants in 27 of Oregon’s 36 counties, with about 3,000 active volunteers each year. The program is managed in each county by the Extension agent responsible for horticulture education programs or by a designated program assistant. In Benton County, the program assistant has been Marie Madison until her retirement in 2008.

The thrust of Oregon’s program still is to help local Extension offices serve their clientele, but county program managers continue to find new roles for master gardeners. New programs include youth seminars, civic functions to make communities more livable and enjoyable, and finding ways to use our environmental resources in a sustainable way. Master gardeners design and present proactive educational programs that address critical issues such as safe pest management practices, water quality protection, yard waste management practices, water quality protection, yard waste management and composting gardening instruction for youth, gardening techniques for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, and others.



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The Marie Madison Horticulture Scholarship



The Benton County Master Gardener™ Association has established a scholarship to honor Marie Madison. Marie served as the Benton County Extension Services Program Assistant for the Master Gardener and Master Woodland programs for 19 years from 1989 to her retirement in 2008. Marie was always available to help, guide, instruct, encourage, and support the Master Gardeners of this county and always provided assistance with a gracious smile, a generous heart, and a gentle spirit.

Benton County Master Gardeners would like to celebrate the contributions of Marie Madison by providing a scholarship that encourages community service and promotes the academic study of horticulture, botany, and plant science.

What is the Master Gardener™ Program?

The Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener™ Program is a voluntary, educational program designed to meet the community's gardening needs. Its purpose is to teach people more about growing plants. Specifically, it aims to provide information and technical assistance about gardening and horticulture through qualified, certified volunteers. Trainees receive formal education from professionals, primarily associated with land grant universities, in plant science, horticulture, botany, entomology, pest control, plant pathology, and gardening. To become an OSU Master Gardener, trainees must complete the training program, pass an examination, and volunteer a specific number of hours of public service through their local master gardener program.

Purpose of the Master Gardener Program

The focus of volunteer training is to teach horticulture, and in particular home gardening, in a holistic manner. Training emphasizes sound gardening practices that minimize negative effects on the environment. This is also called sustainable gardening practices.

History of the Master Gardener Program

Dr. David Gibby, a Cooperative Extension horticulture agent in Washington State, established the Master Gardener Program in 1972. He was completely overwhelmed by the increased number of requests by home gardeners for horticultural information. To solve the problem, he proposed finding gardeners who, in exchange for specialized training in horticulture, would volunteer to answer questions for the public. The program was an immediate success with the newly trained "master gardeners" putting in far more hours answering other gardeners' question than anyone could have anticipated.

Today, there are extension master gardener programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and four Canadian provinces.

About the Scholarship

The Scholarship

A \$1000 non-renewable scholarship will be awarded.

Eligibility

The scholarship is open to any graduating senior who:

- is a resident of Benton County and attends school in Benton County
- OR, is a resident of Benton County and attends school in a school district adjacent to Benton County
- OR, is a student who resides within the boundaries of a Benton County school district and attends school in that district
- plans to attend an accredited 2 year or 4 year college within the United States
- plans to major in or pursue a career in botany, horticulture, and/or plant science

Application

The eligible senior shall complete/provide:

- scholarship application
- written statement
- official high school transcript
- two (2) letters of recommendation

The **written statement** should describe an academic project or a community service activity that demonstrates the student's interest in the fields of horticulture, botany, and/or plant science. The relevance of this project/activity to the student's future plans should also be included.

Submission of Documents

All submissions should be sent to:
MMH Scholarship Committee
BCMGA
1849 NW 9th Street
Corvallis, OR 97330-2144

Submission Deadline

All documents must be mailed and be received by 5:00 p.m. on the **first Monday in April**.

Postmarks are not acceptable

Scholarship applications are available at:

Benton County Extension Office
1849 NW 9th St., Corvallis
541-766-6750

or online at

Benton County Extension Service website
extension.oregonstate.edu/benton

Determination of the Award

Selection of the scholarship recipient will be based on the *application, written statement, community involvement, transcripts, letters of recommendation, and future plans*.

Eligibility is not based on need.

Determination of this scholarship shall be made without discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, disability and disabled Veteran or Vietnam era veteran status.