

Central Gorge Master Gardener Volunteer Opportunities

New and recertifying Master Gardeners must complete a minimum number of volunteer service hours in approved activities to complete their certification. It will be important to track your volunteer hours and you can find a recording time sheet on the Master Gardener website. The Master Gardener projects provide educational opportunities beyond the end of classroom training. It is recommended to participate in 3-5 different projects your first year. By participating in these projects with other Master Gardeners, you will continue to learn, make new friends, and help OSU Extension meet the information and education needs of gardeners in our community.

DIRECT EDUCATION

Plant Clinics: All new Master Gardeners are required to complete 18 hours of volunteer service in plant clinics and recertifying Master Gardeners are required to complete 12 hours of volunteer service in plant clinics. You earn volunteer hours at all of the plant clinics. Clinics take place at the Hood River Extension Office, Gorge Grown Farmers' Markets as well as at other locations during the year. You will research and answer gardening problems and questions from people in the community. When you look up information for someone else, you are learning too.

- **Hood River Extension Office Plant Clinics:** First year Master Gardeners are encouraged to work with their mentor at the first clinic and an experienced Master Gardener at all other clinics. At your first clinic, you learn how to answer phones, use the computer to access gardening information and how to fill out plant clinic forms correctly. Plant clinics are at Hood River Extension Office on Mondays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Thursdays 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **Gorge Grown Farmers Market, Weekend Markets and Festivals:** Volunteering at these markets as an OSU Master Gardener give you the opportunity to interact with visitors and community members to answer many different types of gardening questions. Hood River Farmers' Market, Mercado del Valle in Odell, Spring Fest in White Salmon, Huckleberry Festival in Bingrn plus other locations may all be opportunities for plant clinics in 2016.

Hood River County Fair Display: Master Gardeners design and provide an educational display in the Floral Building at Hood River County Fairgrounds in Odell.

Hood River Library Waterwise Garden: Garden plots at the entryway of the Hood River County Library were designed and are maintained by Master Gardeners as an educational project for the community highlighting drought tolerant plants.

The Learning Garden: Several garden features make up this demonstration garden around the OSU Extension office at the Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Hood River. The Learning Garden currently consists of these projects: Compost Demonstration Area, Herb Garden, Fountain Garden, Hellstrip or Curbside Garden, Native Plant Garden, Bioswales, EcoLawn, Japanese Heritage Garden, Ornamental Grasses and Raised Beds.

Central Gorge Community Garden Network: This project provides a networking platform for community garden leaders in the Central Gorge region to share information and learn from each other. This is a new project in 2017.

The Next Door Inc. Gardens: The Klahre House gardens consist of raised beds and a kitchen garden at the Extension grounds. The Klahre House students learn gardening skills by doing most of the work at these gardens. Raices Cooperative Farm is a community garden and education cooperative for Latino families who grow vegetables on an acre of leased land on Barker Road.

Wreath Project: Scheduled on the 1st Saturday in December, Master Gardeners, friends and family gather to create swags and wreaths primarily as a service project for the FISH Food Bank and some for personal use..

Mount Hood Parkdale Bi-Centennial Memorial Garden: The Mt. Hood – Parkdale Bi-Centennial Memorial Garden started in 1976. It was cleared to remove site obstructions for drivers coming to the Parkdale triangle. It is a large garden in Parkdale that unfortunately had become wild. Master Gardeners, The Parkdale Garden club, Grange, Lion’s Club and many other community members and organizations are restoring the garden to its former beauty.

Seed to Supper: A comprehensive, 6-week beginning gardening course that offers novice, adult gardeners the basic gardening knowledge they need to successfully grow a portion of their own food on a limited budget. It originally developed as a joint effort of Oregon Food Bank (OFB) and the Oregon State University Extension Service, Seed to Supper is offered in collaboration with host agencies around the state.

FISH Food Bank Garden: A community garden located on the Spirit of Grace Church grounds next to the FISH Food Bank. The community garden is designed to produce highly nutritious and staple vegetables that go directly into the food bank distribution. The garden also provides educational opportunities for both food bank clients and community members interested in learning more about vegetable gardening.

INDIRECT EDUCATION

Central Gorge Master Gardener Association Mentor Program: The mentor program provides a welcoming atmosphere for new Master Gardeners from the time they sign up for the Master Gardener classes until they become well established in the program. Veteran Master Gardeners volunteer as mentors and are committed to assisting new members.

Garden Visits: Visits to the gardens of fellow Master Gardeners occur 3-4 times per year. These informal events allow us to enjoy new gardens, get ideas (and sometimes plants), eat good food, and have fun socializing with our friends.

SUPPORT

Spring Plant Sale: The annual plant sale is in May on the Saturday before Mother's Day. It is a fundraising event for the CGMGA and community projects. All Master Gardeners are asked to participate by providing plants, helping to pot plants or volunteering during the sale.



Garden Tour: This tour of private and public gardens in the community is open to the public and conducted as both an educational event and fundraiser for the program. All Master Gardeners are asked to volunteer during the garden tour. Each garden on the tour has Master Gardeners working to guide folks through the gardens and answer questions. Each garden displays an educational theme and provides refreshments. The next tour happens during summer 2017.

Graduation Banquet: The Graduation Banquet held in October or November is a time to recognize our new Master Gardeners that have completed their first year of training/volunteer hours and to honor the years of service and achievements of all Central Gorge Master Gardeners. There are opportunities to assist with organizing the banquet as part of your service hours

Hospitality Co-chairs: Facilitate coffee and tea, room arrangements for Master Gardener classes in the winter, and organize volunteers to assist with hospitality.

Other Projects — Projects may vary from year to year and other opportunities to earn volunteer service hours may be announced during class, via e-mail, in the e-newsletter, or at association meetings. If you have ideas for projects in the Central Gorge area, contact Rachel Suits 541- 386-3343 ext. 38257, rachel.suits@oregonstate.edu.