

Master Gardeners of Cuyahoga County

2025 Programs, Events, and Committees as of **February 2025**

Our Mission Statement: Master Gardeners of Cuyahoga County are The Ohio State University Extension-trained volunteers empowered to educate residents of Cuyahoga County with timely, environmentally sound, research-based gardening information. We are affiliated with Ohio State University Extension, part of the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Science.

Committees in **RED** are seeking leadership.

ADVISORY COUNCIL (Members are elected)

The Advisory Council oversees the Master Gardener program and advises and assists the OSU Extension Agent and the Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator (ANR) as appropriate. Members serve three-year terms and meet five times a year, and as needed. Meetings are open to all Master Gardener Volunteers of Cuyahoga County.

Executive Committee of the Advisory Council

- **Advisory Council Chair:** Ellen Comeau (wallpaperhanger@att.net; 216-536-5381)
- **Secretary:** Deborah Osgood (Deborahandroger@yahoo.com; 216-246-7409)
- **Treasurer:** Cheryl Dever (Cheryl.monty.dever@gmail.com; 440-829-5606)
- **Fundraising Chair:** Dave Appel (appeldb@gmail.com; 216-973-6618)
- **Chair Liaison:** Melanie Biché (beeshay18@gmail.com; 216-544-9033)

ANNUAL MEETING

- **Deb Dougherty** (deb dougherty2771@yahoo.com; 440-506-0237)
- **Melissa Supler** (melissasupler@gmail.com; 216-310-5003)

This is an annual event where Master Gardeners meet as a group to recap the year and plan for the upcoming year. There is also an educational component to the event.

ASK A MASTER GARDENER (AAMG)

- **Carolyn Hufford** (chufford@gmail.com; 216-235-8871)

Master Gardener Volunteers on this committee receive and reply to email questions about gardening. It is a work-at-home volunteer position with prerequisites to participate that are determined by the director of the State MG program. AAMG is administered by the program manager of the State Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

BASIC TRAINING

- **Kim Hawkins** (hawkinsek@gmail.com; 917-453-2593)

The Basic Training Committee helps the ANR select the new class and plan the curriculum, provides support to the instructors and students during the class, and matches interns with mentors once they've graduated.

BEN FRANKLIN CHILDREN'S CLASSROOM AND HORTICULTURE PROGRAM

- **Geoffrey Black** (jazzygeebie@gmail.com; 315-247-9842)

Volunteers are welcome for this all-year program, 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., at the Ben Franklin School, including indoor classroom sessions with all fourth graders and outdoor sessions working with students, as well as summer maintenance of the garden.

BEN FRANKLIN PERENNIAL, PERENNIAL, VEGETABLE AND HERB DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

The Ben Franklin School Demonstration Gardens are always in need of volunteers for seasonal work preparing and maintaining the gardens. Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. – noon, some Saturday mornings.

PERENNIAL AND HERB GARDEN

- **Hedy Westra** (hedywestra@ameritech.net; 216-464-1113)
- **Kim Hawkins** (hawkinsek@gmail.com; 917-453-2593)
- **Allen Maragliano** (allen.maragliano@icloud.com; 216-534-9222)
- **Susan Pandoli** (susanpandoli@yahoo.com; 440-666-4549)

VEGETABLE GARDEN

- **Gretchen Mettler** (ggm@case.edu; 216-798-1255)
- **Allen Maragliano** (allen.maragliano@icloud.com; 216-534-9222)

CLEVELAND CLINIC ADHD PROGRAM

- **Claudia Gordon** (cpg5turkeys@gmail.com; 216-392-4502)

This is a 6-week course in cooperation with the Cleveland Clinic's summer ADHD program at John Carroll University in University Heights. Master Gardener Volunteers teach a weekly class on gardening. There are raised beds where the children plant veggies and a few flowers to attract pollinators, leading up to salsa feast day. The children voted gardening class their favorite class.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

This committee trains MG Volunteers as mentors to help community members in Cleveland's Summer Sprout program start and grow vegetable gardens. The mentors extend the reach of the OSU Extension staff by providing support, answering questions, demonstrating gardening techniques and working on-on-one with garden leaders.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

- **Rita Politzer** (psychorita2@aol.com; 216-321-7961)

This committee develops and presents continuing education programs for Master Gardener Volunteers' continuing education requirements. The committee meets in fall to plan the following year.

FAIRHILL ORCHARD

- **Ellen Comeau** (wallpaperhanger@att.net; 216-536-5381)
- **Lois Rose** (dlroses@roadrunner.com; 216-401-7614)

The Fairhill Orchard is a small area of fruiting plants surrounded on 3 sides by the Fairhill office building. Volunteers prune, plant, weed, harvest and teach at this hands-on garden.

FALL SEMINAR

- **Amy Shaper** (amylarledge@hotmail.com; 216-513-7277)
- **Barb Wingenfeld** (wingbcd@aol.com; 216-650-2511)
- **Sandy Welches** (sandygorbywelches@gmail.com 216-401-1313)

This is an annual one-day seminar on horticultural topics of interest to gardeners, homeowners and Master Gardener Volunteers. Volunteers plan and implement all aspects of the seminar, including budgeting, facilities, speakers, publicity, and registration.

FUNDRAISING

- **Dave Appel** (appeldb@gmail.com; 216-973-6618)

The Fundraising Committee is responsible for supporting all major internal and external fundraising activities of our Master Gardener organization such as our annual plant sale (Plants in the Park) and our yearly fundraising campaign. The committee also actively works to pursue outside grant opportunities, develop new revenue generating programs/events and to establish and manage an annual fundraising revenue and expense budget.

HOTLINE

- **Lois Rose** (dlroses@roadrunner.com; 216-401-7614)

Volunteers staff the telephone Horticulture Hotline from April – August to answer gardening questions from the public. Currently, Hotline volunteers pick up questions from our answering machine, research the answers, and call the questioner back.

HOTLINE ON THE ROAD/FARMERS' MARKETS

CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDEN

- **Sandy Welches** (sandygorbywelches@gmail.com; 216-401-1313)

Volunteers staff the Ask a Master Gardener table and answer questions from the public.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY FAIR

- **Gail Holzman** (hikoryhill@roadrunner.com; 440-237-7609)

This committee plans and implements Master Gardener Volunteer participation in the Cuyahoga County Fair annually. Responsibilities include organizing, setup, staffing and teardown.

HOME AND GARDEN SHOW

- **Beth Conroy** (beth2335@yahoo.com; 440-821-4427)

This committee plans and implements Master Gardener Volunteer time at the Great Big Home and Garden Show at the IX Center every February. Responsibilities include organizing, setup, answering questions from the public, and teardown.

FARMERS' MARKETS

CROCKER PARK

- **Kris Brown** (krislbrown0422@att.net; 440-871-5335)

Volunteers staff a Master Gardener Volunteer booth, answering questions and sometimes making presentations. Dates are: May through September, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

SHAKER SQUARE

- **Ellen Comeau** (wallpaperhanger@att.net; 216-536-5381)

Volunteers staff a Master Gardener Volunteer booth, answering questions and sometimes making presentations. Dates are: May through September, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon.

INTERN GRADUATION

This committee plans the Intern Graduation event and invites other MGs to attend and celebrate their achievements.

LIBRARY TALKS

- **Susan Hildebrandt** (gongci@aol.com; 440-409-1958)
- **Rosie Daniels** (rosiejimdaniels@oh.rr.com; 440-835-0426)

This committee creates a new educational program each year which members present at libraries throughout Cuyahoga County. The Library Talks are open to the public. Master Gardeners choosing to attend earn one hour of CEU credit.

NATURE IN MY BACKYARD

- **Jane Ellison** (natureinmybackyard@clevelandaudubon.org)

MGCC partners with the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland to deliver the Nature in My Backyard (NMB) program. The program is designed to address the global biodiversity crisis by bringing research-based information to homeowners for improving habitat on their property. A pair of trained volunteers will visit clients' yards and identify the non-native invasive plants to be removed, suggest removal techniques and discuss native flowers, trees, and shrubs appropriate to the site that provide food and shelter for birds and pollinators. This is a step-by-step process over time, and it is not necessary for homeowners to remove beloved non-native plants that are not invasive, nor take out all of the lawn. NMB offers well curated resource lists, and the first step is always "Plant a Native Tree."

PLANTS IN THE PARK

- **Dave Appel** (appeldb@gmail.com; 216-973-6618)

Plants in the Park: A Garden Day plant sale is held annually the first Saturday in June. In addition to time spent preparing and setting up for the sale, Master Gardener Volunteers and others contribute a wide variety of plants for this fundraiser. Volunteers are needed prior to and on the day of the event.

PUBLICITY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

This committee develops and implements a publicity strategy to promote the Master Gardeners of Cuyahoga County and its programs.

PROPAGATION TEAM

- **Melissa Supler** (melissasupler@gmail.com; 216-310-5003)
- **Don Landek** (donlandek@gmail.com; 440-823-1816)

This team is a collaboration of MGVs with expertise in various categories of plants and their cultivation. The team utilizes multiple ways of propagation to grow unique, rare and highly sought after perennials, annuals, houseplants, shrubs and trees for fundraising and educational purposes for the Master Gardener of Cuyahoga County. Utilizing greenhouse technology, efforts are focused on producing plants that are nursery quality economically. Live, hands-on seminars are in development to further education for MGVs and the public.

RESOURCES

- **Kris Brown** (krislbrown0422@att.net; 440-871-5335)

This committee reviews needs and procures and maintains resources for the Master Gardener Program, including books, web site, and computers, projectors and portable public address systems.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

- **Barb Franzen** (bjfranz201@aol.com; 216-905-9212)
- **Cat Miller** (sunnywindkitty@gmail.com; 440-226-9860)

This committee coordinates and implements Master Gardener social events such as plant exchanges and tours.

SPEAKERS BUREAU

- **Donna Schneider** (dmeaschneider@gmail.com; 440-384-9714)

Master Gardener Volunteers present educational programs to many organizations throughout the county as well as prepare new programs for presentation. For a description of the present offerings, see website. To be a presenter or to suggest new programs for development, contact Donna.

TECHNOLOGY/ WEBSITE

- **Shoshana Wodzisz** (slwodzisz@yahoo.com; 330-730-7507)
- **Melissa Supler** (melissasupler@gmail.com; 216-310-5003)
- **Gretchen Faro** (gfaro712@gmail.com; 440-263-7322)
- **Anya Milgrom** (anya_milgrom@hotmail.com; 646-270-5891)
- **Melanie Biché** (beeshay18@gmail.com; 216-544-9033)
- **Leeann Sepsi** (sepsi1@ameritech.net; 216-642-0987)

The website, cuyahogamg.org, is maintained to provide the public an overview of the Master Gardener program and its educational programs and events available to the public, and to provide Master Gardener Volunteers with timely information and news pertaining to the MG Program and advanced training, volunteering and social opportunities and events. This committee also provides email and invitations for all Master Gardener events through Constant Contact.

THERAPEUTIC HORTICULTURE

- **CCF Children's Hospital – Hedy Westra** (hedywestra@ameritech.net; 216-464-1113) and **Connie Rebich** (rebichc@yahoo.com; 330-405-1354)
- **Judson - Jeanne Menger** (jrmenger@sbcglobal.net; 440-248-1996)
- **MacGregor PACE – Katie Swanson-Harbage** (katieharbage@gmail.com; 440-666-3327)
- **Menorah Park – Jeanne Menger** (jrmenger@sbcglobal.net; 440-248-1996)

- **Montefiore** – (katiesharbage@gmail.com; 440-666-3327)

Volunteers are always needed for the on-going horticultural therapy program. Assist a Horticultural Therapist with programs for patients in nursing homes and rehabilitation centers in Cuyahoga County, and work directly with patients on a regular basis. Various times available.

TRI-C ENCORE PROGRAM (EAST & WEST)

- **Marilyn Hallenburg**, Co-Chair; (mahallenburg@gmail.com; 216-225-3050)
- **Susan Pandoli**, Co-Chair (susanpandoli@yahoo.com; 216-272-4101)
- **Rita Politzer**, Eastern Campus (psychorita2@aol.com; 216-321-7961)

Gardening programs are provided by Master Gardeners to the Tri-C Encore Program which provides different educational programs to adults 55 and over. This committee decides the programs to be provided based on student interests and based on current research in the field. Members of the committee facilitate the program currently at the Eastern and Western Campus of Tri-C.

VOLUNTEER FAIR

- **Anya Milgrom** (anya milgrom@hotmail.com; 646-270-5891)
- **Barb Franzen** (bjfranz201@aol.com; 216-905-9212)
- **Cat Miller** (sunnywindkitty@gmail.com; 440-226-9860)

The annual Volunteer Fair is held to familiarize interns and MGVs with the various volunteer opportunities and committees and committee chairs.

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER

- **Mary Jo Rawlins** (darbyo317@aol.com; 216-410-6273)
- **Assistant Chair: Linda McConaughy** (lindymcconaughy@gmail.com; 410-790-4050)

MGVs present basic plant, tree and seed classes combined with fun hands-on learning activities to the fourth-grade scholars. Two-hour sessions occur once a month during the school year.