OSU Extension Greene County MGV Handbook

Revised September 2024

The Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program is part of the OSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Program. MGVs help further the mission of engagement and outreach. Volunteers are trained in horticulture and are leaders and educators in the community tasked with sharing their knowledge and gardening experience with the community via approved projects. Always providing research-based, unbiased reliable information.

Mission

- The mission of the OSU Extension Greene County Master Gardener Volunteers is to educate the Greene County community with timely research-based gardening information under the guidance of the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Program

Member Status

- Applicant - Individuals enrolled in the training course
- Intern - Applicants who are in the process of completing the requirements to become a certified MGV and have completed the first day of the training course
- Active - Individuals who are in good standing by meeting the minimum required 20 hours of volunteer time, 10 hours of continuing education, certified, and current on dues, currently $30 yearly ($10 state support fee and $20 MGV program collection)
- Inactive - Certified MGV who cannot complete annual requirements due to personal reasons
    - Communicate with ANR educator and program assistant to change status
    - Required to complete 10 hours of continuing education yearly while inactive
    - Allowed to remain inactive for up to 3 years, after that, considered resigned
- Resigned - A volunteer who has left the program due to termination, resignation, death, or other reasons will be considered resigned, and are no longer a certified volunteer for the OSU Extension MGV program
- Emeritus - An honorary status granted in cases of exceptional service. Emeritus status may be awarded by the recommendation of the ANR educator and program assistant to the advisory board. These are individuals who have been active MGVs for at least 10 years and over 500 hours
    - An MGV Emeritus may function in either of the following status categories:
        - Semi-Active Emeritus Status: This status allows the Emeritus MGV to volunteer and participate in activities. Recertification and entry of volunteer and education hours are required for Semi-Active Emeritus members. They are required to pay dues. If the MGV was inactive for three or more years before becoming Semi-Active Emeritus, a background check is required

- Inactive Emeritus Status: In this Emeritus status volunteers can no longer participate in volunteer activities, but may attend meetings, continuing education programs, and other activities. Yearly recertification is not required

Transfers

- An MGV certified in another county or state may transfer into the Greene County program if they are an active volunteer in good standing. ANR educator and program assistant should be contacted for instructions. Training or examinations are not required, but to help in the transition, the transfer will be asked to complete an interview/orientation in person at the extension office and attend some classes and/or meetings to settle into the program

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board serves as a committee to help the ANR educator and program assistant keep the MGV program on the mission. Responsibilities include:

- Policy and Decision Making: Participate in discussions and decision-making processes regarding program policies, procedures, projects, and resource allocation
- Mentorship and Support: Serve as mentors and resource for other MGVs, offering support and listening to their needs
- Advocacy and Networking: Advocate for the MGV members and projects and seek opportunities to collaborate with local organizations, businesses, and stakeholders
- Evaluation and Feedback: Identify the program's strengths, threats, challenges, and opportunities. Provide feedback on program effectiveness, community impact, and areas for improvement

To accomplish this, the advisory board will:

- Meet monthly as needed with ANR educator and/or ANR program assistant
- Understand the MGV program mission, be aware of the active MGV projects in Greene County, read and understand the operations manual, and read the biweekly updates
- Consist of senior advisor, assistant advisor, secretary, treasurer, two members at large, and the past senior advisor

Board members will be elected by MGV membership (Voting Members – Interns, Active and Emeritus Master Gardener Volunteers)

- Elections will be held at the last business meeting of the year
- Elections of assistant advisor, treasurer, and 1 member at large are in even number years
- Elections of senior advisor, secretary, and 1 member at large are in odd number years
- The term of each advisory board member shall be at least two years, but they may run again
- If there is only one nominee, voting will be a show of hands. If there is more than one nominee, voting will be by ballot

Board members will commit to:

- Senior advisor
    - Leads advisory board meetings and business meetings
    - Coordinates with the ANR educator and program assistant to set meeting agendas
    - Communicates yearly with all MGV project leaders to understand project challenges and needs and meets with ANR program assistant to prepare committee updates for the advisory board
    - Gets familiar with financial procedures and provides financial reports when the treasurer is not able to attend meetings
    - Initiates processes and discussions with the advisory board to find members for upcoming elections each year in the middle of June
- Assistant advisor
    - Performs the duties of the senior advisor in his/her absence
    - Joins program committee and award committee meetings and meets with ANR program assistant to prepare committee updates for the advisory board
    - Assumes the senior advisor's position for the remainder of the term if the senior advisor's position is vacated, attend and participate in advisory board and business meetings
- Secretary
    - Takes and reports minutes of all advisory board and business meetings
    - Sends a draft of the business meeting minutes to the advisory board for approval and corrections before sending them to the members
    - Provides the minutes of the meetings to the advisory board and MGV members before the next meeting occurs
    - Attend and participate in advisory board and business meetings. Maintain a hard drive with all minutes from the advisory board and business meetings to be passed on to the future secretary
- Treasurer
    - Keeps detailed records of all MGV funds, working in coordination with the senior advisor, ANR educator, and program assistant to ensure records are up to date
    - Assists ANR educator and program assistant with reimbursement processes and makes sure members are following guidelines
    - Provide a summary financial report at each advisory board and business meeting
    - Presents the finance committee budget recommendation to the advisory board
    - Attend and participate in advisory board and business meetings. Maintain a hard dive with all treasurer reports and financial information on budget, purchases, and incoming funds to be passed on to future treasurer
- Members at large
    - Provides general input and assists with tasks as needed
    - Responsible for providing locations and continuing education suggestions for the business meeting for the advisory board to discuss

    - Provides support to the ANR educator and program assistant for the MGV annual banquet and interns' graduation event
    - Attend and participate in advisory board and business meetings
- Past Senior Advisor
    - Provides guidance and expertise based on their knowledge and experience to the current senior advisor and advisory board when requested
    - Advisory and business meeting attendance is optional

OSU Extension Greene County MGV Advisory Board Meetings	
Month	**Meeting Topic Discussions**
Every Meeting	• Financial reports (presented by the treasurer, or in her/his absence, by the senior advisor) As needed: • Revise new budget solicitations (presented by the treasurer, or in her/his absence, by the senior advisor) • Revise new project applications (everyone) • Discuss weaknesses and challenges when identified (everyone)
January	
February	• MGV program review (presented by ANR educator and program assistant) • Define dates and locations for interns' graduation event (September)
March	
April	
May	• Committee updates (presented by the assistant advisor and ANR program assistant)
June	
July	• Annual MGV project updates and review (presented by the senior advisor and ANR program assistant) • Define dates and locations for the MGV annual banquet (January)
August	• Revise the first draft budget for the next year and give recommendations (presented by the treasurer)
September	• Approval of budget for the next year (everyone)
October	• Committee updates and review (presented by the assistant advisor and ANR program assistant) • Discuss MGV annual survey results (presented by ANR educator and program assistant) and identify the program's strengths, threats, challenges, and opportunities (everyone)
November	• Revise and discuss the operation manual (everyone) and make adjustments if needed for the next year • Define dates, locations, and continuing education for the following year's business meetings (present by members at large)
December	• End of the year confraternization

Committees

- Committees are established to help with the yearly tasks of the program. The ANR program assistant and assistant advisor will evaluate the committees yearly to assess the committee needs (members and description)
- Active Committees
    - Awards Committee
        - Selects nominees for state awards in the current year for next year's state conference nominees and prepares applications
        - Provides information and nominations for county awards
    - Finance Committee
        - The finance committee chairman sends out annual budget requests to all projects and committees in June and collects the inputs
        - Works with the treasurer to create a yearly budget based on the budget requests and come up with a recommendation to the advisory board
    - Meeting Support Committee
        - Sets up and cleans up the Buckeye room or other business meeting location
    - Program Committee
        - Plans and organizes educational programs to offer to the community

Business Meetings

- The business meetings will be held bi-monthly at a place and time designated at the beginning of the year. Meetings will be organized in the following manner:
    - Business Meeting – 30 minutes used as volunteer time
    - Continuing Education – 30 minutes
    - Social time – 30 minutes, optional and not an official OSU function
- Cancellation - Notification of meeting cancellations due to emergencies and hazardous weather conditions will be accomplished via email at least 1 hour before the meeting time

OSU Extension Greene County MGV Business Meetings and Annual Social Events		
Month	**Meeting details**	**Meeting Topic Discussions**
Every Meeting	• Financial reports • General MGV updates	
January	In-person, TBD	Annual Banquet
February	On Zoom	• MGV program review • Operations Manual review • MGV general processes and HOC review
March		
April	In-person, TBD	• Continuing Education, TBD
May		
June	In-person, TBD	• Continuing Education, TBD
July		
August	In-person, TBD	• Continuing Education, TBD
September	In-person, TBD	Graduation Party Potluck
October	In person at the Extension Office	• Advisory board members election • Budget approval for the following year • MGV Annual survey results and feedback
November		
December		

Approved Projects

County Wide

- Educational Presentations
    - The educational project offers MGV speakers on diverse horticultural topics to the local community when requested by outside organizations such as libraries, community centers, parks, and garden clubs

- Greeneline Horticultural Helpline
    - The educational project provides support to the Greene County ANR educator and program assistant. Volunteers assist with horticultural issues diagnosis, scouting, and generating information to publish in the local newspaper and social media, increasing non-biased information outreach

- Fund Raising Activities

  The fundraiser project refers to the annual plant sale offered to the local community, with plants donated by MGV personal gardens or project gardens

- Greene County Extension Support
    - The support project provides support to the ongoing OSU Extension programs and events, including ANR, 4-H, and FCS programs

- Community events and programs
    - The outreach project offers horticultural-related events, programs, and activities for the local community tailored to needs

Xenia

- OSU Extension Office Landscape
    - The demonstration garden beautifies the MGV program headquarters, pleasing OSU Extension's daily customers. This shows the importance of cultivating a garden by setting an example and also provides information by plant identification labels

- Xenia Pre-School (425 Edison Blvd, Xenia, OH 45385)
    - The educational project results from a partnership between OSU Extension and Xenia Preschool. Educational and interactive programs are provided for the Xenia Preschool students, who will learn a science-based introduction to plants and gardening

- Bloom Xenia -Adopt a Spot (Downtown Xenia Business District)

    - The outreach project provides horticulture information to individuals, governmental offices, and local business owners, who adopt a plant pot at downtown corners area. This program incentivizes plant cultivation and encourages citizens to shop at local businesses that advertise themselves in their containers

- James Ranch Demonstration Garden (177 Fairground Rd, Xenia, OH 45385)
    - The demonstration garden results from a partnership between OSU Extension and Greene County Parks & Trails. Both organizations have volunteers who work together to maintain the 25+ garden areas and host educational activities

- CORS Head Start (1369 Colorado Dr, Xenia, OH 45385)
    - The educational project runs once a year in conjunction with SNAP-Ed. It consists of classes that will provide kids with information on how the food we eat is grown

- Phenology Garden (Across Xenia Bike Station, 150 S Miami Ave, Xenia, OH 45385)
    - The study garden has trees and shrubs planted to monitor for the first and full bloom, which assists with identifying insect activity. Phenology is the study of recurring biological phenomena and their relationship to weather, which can be used to predict insect emergence

<u>Bellbrook</u>

- Petrikis Butterfly Garden (3771 W Franklin St, Bellbrook, OH 45305)
    - The demonstration garden results from a partnership between OSU Extension and Bellbrook Sugarcreek Parks. It focuses on pollinator observation and attractor plants. The garden also carries horticultural information for the community

<u>Beavercreek</u>

- Owen's Place Children's Caterpillar Garden (Rotary Park, 2260 Dayton Xenia Rd, Dayton, OH 45434)
    - The demonstration garden has Monarch caterpillars host plants and educational signages. It encourages children to find caterpillars and learn about their life cycle through posted information and interactive games

- Owen's Place Shade Garden (Rotary Park, 2260 Dayton Xenia Rd, Dayton, OH 45434)
    - The demonstration garden offers a place to relax out of the sun and learn about plants that thrive in semi to full shade. In addition, there is an area located in the sun used as a sensory garden and as a drought plant garden

- Wartinger Park (3080 Kemp Rd, Dayton, OH 45431)
    - The demonstration garden has maintenance provided in the flower beds at the log cabins Ankeney House and Harshman House. All plants grown resemble the 1800's and are labeled. In addition, educational programs are hosted in this historical park

Fairborn

- Wright-Patterson Medical Center Garden Clinic (Wright-Paterson Air Force Base)
    - The production garden provides a restful place for base patients, personnel, and visitors to enjoy and produce food. The food produced is either donated to the Fairborn FISH Pantry, used by base families, or by the medical center chef

- Fairborn Digital Academy (57 E Dayton Yellow Springs Rd, Fairborn, OH 45324)
    - The educational project results from a partnership between OSU Extension and Fairborn Digital Academy. A garden class is offered to high-school students in a combination of online educational modules and hands-on instructions in the school's raised beds

- Mary Help of Christians Community Garden (954 N Maple Ave, Fairborn, OH 45324)
    - The organic production garden grows flowers and vegetable crops to donate to the local Fairborn FISH Pantry which serves the low-income population. Techniques such as row covers, and crop rotation are used to keep the garden productive

State Wide

- Grow Ohio
    - MGVs across Ohio are joining together by donating food to food banks and food pantries in their communities

- Ask a MGV
    - MGVs across Ohio support the ANR programs by responding to online state-wide horticultural-related questions from the community

Project Reviews

- ANR educator, ANR program assistant, and senior advisor will conduct an annual project review to make sure all projects are sustainable and meet the program's mission. They will present an update to the advisory board for the annual review

New Project Requests

- A new project can be requested with a form to the ANR educator and program assistant. The form needs to contain
    - Title
    - Project leader
    - Purpose (educational programs, beautification, food production)
    - Location (s)
    - Description
    - Tasked organizations and responsibilities
    - Outside organizations involved and agreements
    - Requested budget
    - Projected revenue
    - Participants and recruitment
    - Project life plan (include an exit strategy and whether the project will be sustainable without MGV involvement)

- ANR educator and program assistant will present the requests to the advisory board. The advisory board will come to a positive or negative recommendation together, or if needed, ask for more details and suggest changes

Project Closure

- Projects will be closed when they do not meet the program's mission or are no longer sustainable (lack of volunteers or resources). This may be identified by any MGV member, ANR educator, or program assistant
- The project closure recommendation will be discussed with the members of the project and advisory board for conclusion

Purchases and Reimbursement Procedures

- When items need to be purchased for a project or committee and it is not previously approved in the budget, a request is made to the advisory board. The board will discuss approval in the following advisory board meeting
- When previously approved items need to be purchased for a project or committee, the order request form is submitted to the ANR program assistant (copy treasurer)
    - If the item is available online, the program assistant will place the order and notify the requester when it is ready to pick up at the extension office
    - If the item needs to be ordered in person, the ANR program assistant will schedule a time to shop with the requester
- When previously approved items need to be purchased the second option is to place the order and request a reimbursement, following these steps:

- A reimbursement form may be given to the treasurer before the 15th of the month with a signature from the project or committee leader (form available at the OSU Extension Greene County MGV website). A receipt must be provided. The receipt must contain the order description. The receipt must contain items purchased for the project only. Receipts must be turned in no later than three months from the date of purchase
- The treasurer will review the request, keep a copy, and forward it to the ANR program assistant
- The ANR program assistant will review requests on every penultimate week of the month and notify the requestor of the reimbursement status by email. Receipts will be forwarded to the office associate
- The office associate will process receipts the last week of the month. Once approved by OSU, the office associate will notify the requestor by email to look for the check

- The James Ranch project is funded by Greene County Parks and Trails. They follow a different process and budget. Volunteers requesting reimbursement can turn the request directly to the ANR program assistant, and the process is the same from there

- Order request and reimbursement forms are available on the OSU Extension Greene County Website

Volunteer opportunities and continuing education

- A biweekly update from the ANR educator and program assistant will be sent with approved continuing education and volunteer opportunities
- A calendar will be available at the OSU Extension Greene County MGV website
- If there are questions or an opportunity is not listed, contact the ANR educator and program assistant to review the opportunity for inclusion in the next update

Volunteer opportunities and continuing education entering hours

- Volunteer hours and continuing education hours should be recorded by each individual and entered monthly into the Hands On Connect platform. Instructions are available at the OSU Extension Greene County MGV website. Any questions or concerns in the hour entry process should be communicated to the ANR educator and program assistant