The requirements can also be found online at: muskingum.osu.edu
December, 2016

Dear Potential Master Gardener Volunteer:

I’m pleased that you’re interested in applying to be a Master Gardener Volunteer with Ohio State University (OSU) Extension. I’m glad that you are interested in learning more about horticulture and serving the community. This letter provides some important information about OSU Extension’s volunteer process.

The basic premise of the Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program is to provide 50 hours of training in horticulture to interested volunteers in exchange for 50 hours of horticulture service back to the community. The volunteer hours are generally performed in conjunction with activities of the county Master Gardener group. Our current Muskingum County Master Gardeners are looking forward to a new member like yourself. We have about 60 active members in the county organization.

As a result of state legislation, effective November 1, 2002, OSU Extension implemented a new volunteer selection policy and procedures. All individuals who are interested in volunteering with OSU Extension must adhere to these new selection procedures.

This booklet contains several items. The first step in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer is to complete the enclosed application (pages 9-12) and return it to: OSU Extension, 225 Underwood St., Zanesville, OH 43701 by January 1, 2017. You will need to include the names and addresses of three individuals who could provide a reference. Please read, sign and return the volunteer standards of behavior form (page 9) along with your application. A job description of the position along with some MG policy information is also enclosed. Feel free to contact me with any questions you might have about the Master Gardener program or the application process.

The next step in the process is to schedule a short interview with me. We will review your application, discuss your interest with the Master Gardeners and answer any questions you might have.

The final step in the process is for you to complete an online criminal history background check. This is a state requirement for all OSU Extension volunteers that is done to screen out any potential volunteers with past criminal records. I will give you specific information on how to conduct a background check at the interview.

Once you have completed all of these requirements, you will be notified of your acceptance into the program with more specific details. The training sessions will begin on Thursday, March 2, 2017, at the OSU Extension office meeting room, 225 Underwood Street in Zanesville. The training program will be held on Thursday evenings through May 25. The times will be from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. Cost of the program will be $100 which includes all handouts and the Master Gardener manual. Do not send money along with your application. We will collect money at the first class. Volunteers are responsible for costs associated with the background check.

Don’t be intimidated by the application process. All new OSU Extension volunteers including Master Gardeners and 4-H advisors across the state must follow similar procedures. Please be aware that class space is limited and I anticipate high interest this year due to the length of time that has elapsed since the last class. It is possible we will have to cut off the number of applicants we accept by the order in which applications are received.

I’m looking forward to your participation in the Master Gardener Volunteer program. Feel free to contact me at 454-0144 or martin.2422@osu.edu if you have any questions about completing the application or any of the requirements. If you are aware of others who might be interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer, have them contact me for an application. Thanks for your interest.

Sincerely,

Clifton Martin
Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources
Muskingum County
PURPOSE

The Ohio State University Extension (OSUE) Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) Program is an educational program designed to meet the consumer horticulture needs of Ohio citizens. Its purpose is to train volunteers and utilize their expertise to teach people more about plants and pests, their culture, and their importance to the environment and to our quality of life. MGVs provide technical assistance to their county Extension office in order that consumer horticulture activities and programs can be more effectively and efficiently delivered to Ohio's gardening public.

MGV trainees receive formal training from their county Extension office covering a wide range of pertinent horticultural topics. To become a MGV, the trainee must complete the training program, pass the required exams, and volunteer a specified number of hours to OSU Extension.

The volunteer commitment may be fulfilled in a number of different ways depending on the determined needs of the county residents. After the completion of the initial required training and volunteer hours, one becomes a certified OSUE MGV. Volunteers are encouraged to continue with the program by recertifying and assisting with the horticulture program as a certified OSUE Master Gardener Volunteer.

The Ohio MGV Program is supported on the state level by the OSU Extension Agricultural and Natural Resources Program Area and the Department of Horticulture & Crop Science. The State MGV Coordinator along with the guidance of a State MGV Advisory Committee develops policies and guidelines for the operation of the program; develops and implements the state support budget; provides some training and recognition materials; in-service opportunities; and other resources for counties conducting the program. On the county level, the program is coordinated by an Extension professional who manages the program directly or supervises a MGV program coordinator.

TRAINING

The formal training program is the responsibility of the county Extension professional managing the program. Instructors are Ohio State University faculty, Extension Specialists, Extension Associates, experienced Master Gardeners, and other experts.

The training program is to provide a balanced, integrated practical course in plant science. Core topics that are to be part of the training in every county are Orientation to Extension and the Master Gardener Volunteer Program; Basic Botany and Plant Physiology; Soils and Fertilizers; Basic Entomology; Basic Plant Pathology and Plant Disease Diagnostics; Integrated Pest Management and Pesticide Use and Safety; Home Lawn Care; Annuals, Perennials and Bulbs; Trees and Shrubs; Home Vegetable Production; Home Fruit Production; Houseplants; and Backyard Wildlife Management. Special topics, based on local needs, may also be part of the curriculum.

The principle resource for the training will be the Ohio MGV Training Manual that includes the core topics and material appropriate to Ohio. Core training is held during a 2-3 month period, with continuing education or in-service training provided during the year in accordance with county and regional needs and resources. An annual statewide conference is offered to assist in fulfilling continuing education requirements, give program updates and present awards.

ATTENDANCE

Each MGV trainee is expected to attend every class session. The trainee is responsible for initiating provisions to make up any missed sessions. A limit on the number of allowable absences may be made by the county MGV coordinator.
EXAMINATIONS & QUIZZES
Each trainee must pass all quizzes and examinations with a cumulative average of 70% or better. There will be quizzes that test the trainees’ knowledge of broad plant science principles, as well as a final open-book or take-home exam to test the trainees’ abilities to retrieve information from reference materials.

CERTIFICATION
Upon entering the training program, each trainee becomes a MGV intern. Upon fulfillment of the training classes and the 50 hour volunteer commitment, the participant will then receive an official MGV certificate, an official OSUE MGV name tag, and a 50 hour OSUE MGV logo pin.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT
The MGV training course consists of a minimum of 50 hours of instruction. A volunteer then completes 50 hours of service to OSUE to become a certified OSUE MGV. Only unpaid public service in Ohio State University Extension-sponsored activities counts toward the requirement. Other volunteer activities may be counted after receiving prior approval by the local coordinator. The required volunteer hours should be completed within one year of completion of the training course or other time period designated by the county MGV program coordinator.

Each MGV will have a criminal history fingerprint record check, a completed Application, a signed OSU Extension Standards of Behavior, a signed Pest Management Information Policy (see below), and a service record on file at the local Extension office. This information is treated confidentially. Volunteers’ records are kept in separate files in a secured place and are accessible only by trained Extension staff. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to make sure that the information on their application (i.e. address, phone, email) and their service record is kept current and accurate. This is necessary for liability reasons and for the protection of the volunteer as well as program clientele.

USE OF THE TITLE
The title “Ohio Master Gardener Volunteer” is to be used only and exclusively in the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Ohio MGVs are expected to identify themselves as such only when doing unpaid public service work under the auspices of the Ohio State University Extension. MGVs are advised not to advertise their place of business during extension-sponsored activities, and are not to be listed as MGVs on the advertisements of businesses that they own or where they are employed. Since Ohio State University Extension is a source of unbiased, research-based information, appearing as a commercial activity, having association with commercial products, or giving implied University endorsement of any product or place of business is inappropriate.

PESTICIDE RECOMMENDATIONS
Ohio MGVs, when performing MGV activities, are considered unpaid staff of Ohio State University Extension. MGVs are trained by Extension personnel and other experts and are provided with Extension publications. In addition to their training, MGVs receive diagnostic support from the C. Wayne Ellet Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic at OSU, and from various Extension Specialists. When it is necessary to make recommendations that include the use of pesticides, MGVs must follow product labels or OSU Extension recommendations. They are not to rely on their own personal experience, that of others, or common garden folklore.

RECERTIFICATION
Once an individual has completed the necessary requirements and is certified as an Ohio MGV, he or she is not automatically a MGV for life. MGVs must be recertified each year to remain on the “active” list and maintain the MGV title. MGV Recertification is achieved by fulfilling the following requirements:

1) Completing a minimum of twenty (20) hours of volunteer service each year, and
2) Completing a minimum of ten (10) hours continuing education by any of the following options:
   * participation in State, Regional, National or International MGV Conferences.
   * participation in county or district-sponsored continuing education sessions.
   * participation in any other programs approved by the local MGV Coordinator for recertification.
3) Paying $10.00 per year State Support fee.
4) If involved with projects with care, custody, and control of minors or completing a fingerprint background check every 4 years.

Each county MGV program may set its own recertification standards above and beyond these minimum requirements.

**INACTIVE STATUS**

An inactive MGV is one who is unable to commit to the annual recertification requirements listed above at some point in time, but would like the opportunity to remain in the program and recertify in the future. The following policy applies:

1) To request Inactive Status the MGV must be in good standing, having completed the original commitment of training, exam, and volunteer service.
2) The inactive MGV must obtain ten (10) hours of acceptable Continuing Education Credits during the total inactive period of time. (See Recertification #2)
3) An inactive MGV may recertify within three (3) years as long as the above criteria are met. Individuals on inactive status for more than three years must, in addition to meeting the above continuing education requirements, also retake and pass the final exam.

**RESIGNED**

A volunteer who has left the program due to termination, resignation, death, or other reason will be considered RESIGNED. They are no longer a volunteer for the OSUE MGV program.

**EMERITUS**

This status and associated criteria are left up to each individual County Coordinator to determine. However, if the county allows Emeriti to volunteer for any activities, Emeriti must pay the state support fees, be included in the County's volunteer liability insurance payment each year, and report all volunteer hours and activities to the county Coordinator who then reports this to the state.

**OUT-OF-STATE TRANSFERS**

A MGV who was certified in another state may be admitted into the Ohio MGV Program by meeting the following criteria:

1) obtain fingerprint and a background check;
2) show that he/she is a MGV in good-standing in the other state;
3) complete the Volunteer Involvement packet for his/her file;
4) acquire a current Ohio MGV training manual;
5) pay the $10.00 State Support fee;
6) acquire an Ohio State University Extension MGV name badge;
7) score a minimum of 70% on a final exam administered by the county MGV coordinator;
8) meet the recertification requirements listed above.

**IN-STATE TRANSFERS**

Ohio MGVs transferring from one county to another must also be in good standing and have their file transferred to the new county.

**DISMISAL OF A MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER**

Disregard for the policies and guidelines established by the Ohio State University Extension, the Ohio Master Gardener Volunteer Program, and the OSUE County Program are grounds for dismissal as a MGV. When the county MGV coordinator finds it necessary to dismiss a volunteer, the volunteer must be informed in writing of the termination of his/her volunteer status. This notice of dismissal will become part of the volunteer.
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

General Description
The Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) role is to support OSU Extension, Muskingum County in meeting the needs of our citizens in the area of consumer horticulture by assisting with educational programs, diagnosing plant problems, making cultural and pest management recommendations, and other various opportunities.

Specific Responsibilities:
• Answer consumer’s telephone inquiries and assist office visitors with plant/insect samples for identification or diagnosis.
• Assist with establishing and maintaining demonstration gardens at the Extension facility.
• Assist teachers, 4-H volunteers, and/or children with gardening education projects in school or club settings.
• Interpret information from Extension bulletins and fact sheets for the general public.
• Distribute Extension information to the public at such events as garden center plant clinics, county fair, Home and Garden Shows, etc.
• Assist with Extension educational programming, such as talks for garden clubs, Extension sponsored workshops, etc.
• Keep records of consumer contacts and volunteer activities.

Time Required
Volunteer hours may vary from week to week, will generally be needed during regular work hours, although some evening and weekend opportunities exist. A total of 50 hours must be donated during the intern year.

Qualifications
The MGV must show an interest in, enthusiasm for, and some knowledge of gardening. He/she must be able to communicate with the public by phone and deal courteously with visiting public and Extension program participants. He/she must be able to read, write and comprehend the information presented in the training sessions, and be able to communicate that information to the gardening public. He/she must provide his/her transportation to training and volunteer activities.

Location: County office and various locations around the county.

Support Provided
In addition to the Ohio MGV Manual, MGVs have at their disposal office reference materials and Internet resources to assist in answering questions and requests for information. If the MGV is unable to assist a consumer, questions and requests are referred to the Extension Educator or other appropriate staff.

Mentor
Clifton Martin, Extension Educator, will provide coordination, supervision and support to the MGVs. He will assign, review and evaluate volunteer activities.
OSU Extension Office – Muskingum County
225 Underwood Street
Zanesville, OH 43701
740-454-0144

From I 70 West: Exit 7th St in Zanesville (exit 155); turn left onto Shinnick St. (at traffic light) continue to Underwood St, parking lot is on left

From I 70 East: Exit Underwood Street in Zanesville (exit 155); at the light turn left, go under I 70, continue past the Rural Services Building, turn right onto Shinnick St., parking lot on right (across the street from Wendy’s and Exxon Station)

MASTER GARDNER VOLUNTEER APPLICATION CHECK LIST

_____ Mail or drop off MGV application and signed Standards of Behavior by January 1, 2017 to: OSU Extension Muskingum County, 225 Underwood St, Zanesville, OH 43701
_____ Schedule and conduct a short interview with Clifton Martin, Extension Educator, about MGV program
_____ Complete online criminal history background check. Details provided at interview
_____ Confirm with Extension Office that background check and reference letters have been accepted
_____ Receive acceptance letter into the MGV program from Extension Office
_____ Participate in first training class on March 2
Volunteer Standards of Behavior: Master Gardener Volunteers

These Standards of Behavior are accepted by volunteers who commit to an Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program as a condition of their volunteer status. The Standards of Behavior shall guide volunteer’s behavior during their involvement with the Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Just as it is a privilege for Ohio State University to work with individuals who volunteer their time and energies to the organization, a volunteer’s involvement with OSUE is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right.

The OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program provides unbiased, research-based educational programs accessible to all Ohio residents. The primary purpose of this Standards of Behavior is to ensure the safety and well-being of all Master Gardener Volunteer Program participants (i.e., target audiences, professionals and volunteers.) Master Gardener Volunteers are expected to function within the guidelines of Ohio State University Extension and the OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteers will:

• Uphold volunteerism as an effective way to meet the needs of youth and adults.
• Uphold each individual’s right to dignity, self-development, and self-direction.
• Accept supervision and support from professional Extension staff while involved in the program.
• Accept the responsibility to represent their individual county Master Gardener Volunteer Program and The Ohio State University.
• Conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner, with fairness, honesty, dignity and integrity, and provide positive role models for all with whom they work.
• Respect, adhere to, and enforce the rules, policies, and guidelines established by their individual county Master Gardener Volunteer Program, the State Master Gardener Volunteer Program and OSUE.
• Not engage in abusive behaviors that physically or verbally threaten or harm any Extension program participant, including youth.
• Not engage in any act prohibited by law.
• Comply with all civil rights laws and policies, including but not limited to OSUE equal opportunity, anti-discrimination laws, and program participant policy.
• Perform duties in a responsible and timely manner as outlined in the position description.
• Immediately report any threats to the volunteer’s emotional or physical well-being to the county Extension professional coordinating the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.
• Accept the responsibility to promote and support Master Gardener Volunteer activities in order to develop an effective county, state, and national program.
• Handle animals and operate machinery, vehicles, and other equipment in a responsible manner.
Volunteer Standards of Behavior: Master Gardener Volunteers continued

I understand and agree that as a volunteer:

- In accordance with The Ohio State University policy, Self-Disclosure of Criminal Convictions Policy 4.17,
- I am required to self-disclose criminal convictions within three business days of the conviction.
- I will uphold and support the responsible and lawful use of social media. In so doing, I will not create or post social media content that is abusive, threatening, defamatory, obscene, harassing, or creates a hostile environment.
- I will report any child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect in accordance with university policy.
- I will not intentionally or purposely place myself in a position alone with a member of a vulnerable population in a one-on-one situation, including, but not limited to sleeping quarters with minors.
- I will not, under any circumstances, physically, verbally, or emotionally abuse or fail to provide the basic necessities of care, such as food or shelter to participants.
- I will endeavor to provide a safe and healthy program/camp experience for all participants.
- My volunteer status is subject to immediate suspension or termination based on any act or omission that Extension determines to be contrary to any portion of these standards or otherwise in conflict with the goals of OSUE.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER TITLE USE AGREEMENT

The title OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER is to be used only and exclusively in conjunction with activities associated with the Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

- I will identify myself as a “Master Gardener Volunteer” only when engaged in unpaid public service in an Ohio State University Extension sponsored program.
- I will not appear as part of a commercial activity, have association with commercial products, or give implied Ohio State University or Ohio State University Extension endorsement of any product or place of business while serving as a Master Gardener Volunteer.
- In such service, I will use only labeled or Ohio State University and Ohio State University Extension approved recommendations.

I have read, understand, and agree to be bound by the Standards of Behavior and the Master Gardener Volunteer Title Use Agreement outlined above.

- I agree to give the Ohio State University Extension the specified number of hours of volunteer service in approved programs as specified by my county MGV program.
- I understand and agree that any act or omission on my part that contradicts any portion of these standards is grounds for immediate suspension and/or termination of my volunteer status with the Ohio State University Extension program.

______________________________          ________________
Printed Name                                                               Signature                                                            Date
# OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

## MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

(All sections must be completed for consideration as a Master Gardener Volunteer)

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Name:**

___________________________________________________ ______________________________

(first)    (middle)     (last)

**Address:**

_____________________________ City: __________________________ State: __________ Zip: ________

**Phone:**

Day: ( ) ______________________  Best Time to Call: __________________________

Eve: ( ) ______________________  Best Time to Call: __________________________

**Email:**

___________________________________________________

**Length of time at this address (years):**

___________________________________________________

**Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):**

___________________________________________________ _________

Please check the appropriate box (this is for tracking demographic information only). Highest degree completed:

_____ High School  
_____ Technical School  
_____ Undergraduate Degree  
_____ Graduate Degree  
_____ Professional Degree

---

Have you participated in Ohio State University Extension activities or programs previously? (list most recent involvement)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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If you have been a Master Gardener Volunteer in another state, please list the state, county, year of training and program supervisor’s name.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
II. VOLUNTEER INTEREST

Why are you interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What is your gardening philosophy?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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Previous work experience (list current or most recent experiences first):

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Previous volunteer experience (list current or most recent experience first):

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Other special skills, training, interests (i.e. bird watching, crafts, desktop publishing, etc.):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________


Type of activities in which you are interested:

_____ Resource Hotline       _____ Public Presentations       _____ Community Gardens

_____ Demonstration Gardens   _____ Working with Children    _____ Working with Adults

_____ Beautification Projects _____ Earth to Art              _____ Farmers Market Booth

_____ Other interests

List any additional information that you believe would be useful or pertinent for the selection process:

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
III. PERSONAL REFERENCES

Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony?

_____ Yes  _____ No

If yes, please give date, nature, and disposition of offense:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please note: A criminal record will be considered as it relates to specifics of the volunteer position for which you are applying. A criminal record may prevent an individual from volunteering, depending on the nature of the offense.

References

List non-family members who have knowledge of your skills, abilities and qualifications. Individuals should have worked with you on projects and activities and/or have direct experience with or knowledge of your qualifications. Please provide complete addresses and phone numbers.

| Name: _____________________________ | Relationship: ____________________________ |
| Address: ___________________________ | City: ___________________________ | State: ___________ | Zip: ___________ |
| Home Phone: ________________________ | Work Phone: ________________________ |

| Name: _____________________________ | Relationship: ____________________________ |
| Address: ___________________________ | City: ___________________________ | State: ___________ | Zip: ___________ |
| Home Phone: ________________________ | Work Phone: ________________________ |

| Name: _____________________________ | Relationship: ____________________________ |
| Address: ___________________________ | City: ___________________________ | State: ___________ | Zip: ___________ |
| Home Phone: ________________________ | Work Phone: ________________________ |

I authorize the contact of listed references and understand that I am required to submit to a fingerprint criminal background check prior to final consideration of my application to volunteer. I understand that misrepresentation or omission of required information is just cause for non-appointment as a volunteer with Ohio State University Extension. I understand that I serve at the pleasure of the Ohio State University Extension and agree to abide by the policies of the Ohio State University Extension and individual program areas and to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities to the best of my ability.

Applicant Signature: ____________________________  Date: ____________

Please return the application by the date requested. Contact us if you have any questions or wish further information (740-454-0144 or martin.2422@osu.edu). Thank you.

OSU Extension, Muskingum County
225 Underwood St.
Zanesville, OH 43701