

**YELLOWSTONE COUNTY
MASTER GARDENER
ASSOCIATION APPLICATION**

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail Address

Phone

General Associate

\$15 per calendar year

Signature of Applicant/Date

Application acceptance is contingent upon verification of Master Gardener status with the Yellowstone County Urban Horticulture Assistant

To join: complete this application and either mail the application with your donation to the address below or give to one of the following officers or board members.

Yellowstone County Master Gardener Association

C/O Yellowstone County Extension

PO Box 35021

Billings MT 59107-5021

OR

Give to one of the following members:

Officers

President: Bob Wicks
bobwix@hotmail.com

Vice President: Sharon Wetsch
sharonwetsch@yahoo.com

Secretary: Elaine Allard
elaineswatergardens@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Chris Smith
smithirc@msn.com

Board Members

Murry Lyda
mrbjlyda@bresnan.net

Mordeaux, Corry
cmordeaux@gmail.com

Teresa Bessette
tetontess@hotmail.com

Merita Murdock
jeffandmert@bresnan.net

Anne Marie Linneweber
theyardner@yahoo.com



Yellowstone County Master Gardener Association



Making a difference in Yellowstone County through education of horticulture, environmental stewardship and community service.

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Master Gardener Associations

The idea of a Master Gardener Association may confuse some Master Gardeners. Some feel that since they are working for the Extension, it is Extension's role to provide the Association. Others feel that an Association would separate them from the Extension. County Master Gardener Programs can be managed without a Master Gardener Association.

However, once a Master Gardener graduates and is certified, a strong desire exists among them to meet on a regular basis for purposes of:

- A) Further, extend, and enhance Master Gardener's knowledge of, education, experience, and interests in horticulture and related activities
- B) Fellowship, communication, networking, and support
- C) Service to the community

Master Gardeners are the ideal group to coordinate these regular meetings, and an "association" is often a natural organizational result of these meetings. Just as some join a professional society associated with a career field, Master Gardeners join the Master Gardener's Association.

Another primary reason for a Master Gardener Association is financial independence. A Master Gardener Program through the county Extension does not need a large amount to be effective. Generally, county Extensions are able to fund basic program needs, such as office space, telephone, copying, etc... However, county Extensions often do not have the available funds needed for specific Master Gardener activities and support. In addition, county Extensions often have specific policies regarding Extension agents soliciting and handling monies from community organizations, foundations, or corporations.

Associations have more freedom to raise money needed through several means such as plant sales, donating unsolicited money from speaking engagements, or soliciting grant funds or sponsorships for projects. Funds generated or received by Master Gardener Associations can provide support for educational projects, computer and office equipment for Master Gardeners, horticultural libraries and other resources, website administration, scholarships, and educational and recreational activities for the Master Gardeners.

Master Gardener Associations are typically recognized by the state in which they operate, with the following guidelines:

- * The Association consists of certified Master Gardeners who serve as representatives of University Extension, thus affiliating closely with the local county Extension office
- * A staff member of the local county extension office serves as an Advisor to the Association leadership

Let's explain some of the things the Yellowstone County Master Gardener Association will be doing.

A) Further, extend, and enhance Master Gardener's knowledge of, education, experience, and interests in horticulture and related activities. Some examples:

- * Encourage continuing education and recertification of Master Gardeners
- * Encourage attendance at advanced training sessions
- * Provide quality educational speakers at association meetings
- * Educate association members and our local community about plant selection, culture & care
- * Quality education/training at a reasonable price on timely and varied topics that members want to hear
- * Project development and management
- * Attend annual conferences
- * Discussions about ----- (we are folks who love plants and love to talk to people about plants, teach & share)
- * Training and certification programs in areas of interest to members (landscape design, etc.)

B) Fellowship, Communication, Networking, & Support

- * Foster communication, education, and esprit de corps among Master Gardeners
- * Engage in activities that further the purposes of the Yellowstone County Master Gardener Association
- * Publish a newsletter
- * Develop & maintain a website
- * Send email alerts
- * Centralized information exchange among members (message boards, association meeting minutes, membership information, certification or training opportunities, etc..)
- * Maintain a membership directory
- * Recognition banquets, volunteer recognitions, outstanding accomplishments

- * Board meetings where issues concerning the Master Gardener volunteer are discussed
- * Provide opportunities for fellowship, to meet and associate with others who have similar horticultural interests
- * Potlucks, picnics, social events
- * Talent inventory
- * Liaisons with commercial establishments
- * Group purchasing plans, special discounts at local businesses, wholesale shopping opportunities
- * Scholarships for research, Master Gardener certifications, etc.
- * Grant money for community projects, equipment, & supplies
- * Seed or plant exchanges
- * Forums for members to exchange ideas, address concerns, identify needs, or request support

C) Service to the Community

- * Assist the Yellowstone County Extension in its basic mission to disseminate research based information to general public (free or highly affordable educational opportunities offered at accessible times and locations, increasing environmental awareness, promoting gardening activities)
- * Support the Yellowstone County Extension Master Gardener programs and projects
- * Support the Yellowstone County Extension by spreading the word about meetings and other activities in order to encourage gardening oriented persons to join the Master Gardener Program
- * Give support and input to state cooperative extension leaders – a "voice" for YC Master Gardeners, provide leadership in the development and evolution of the Master Gardener program
- * Increase environmental awareness
- * Promote gardening activities
- * Junior Master Gardener programs
- * Demonstration gardens, plant sales, memorial tree plantings
- * Plant clinics
- * Harvest clinics
- * Provide non-biased, sound horticultural information to the community
- * Not a garden club, but a service organization of certified master gardeners – trained volunteers who give their time in the community to help others garden well