

## BCMGA Annual Committee Report

Committee: Plant Sale Committee Year: 2025

\*Number of Active Members: 143+ \*Number of Public Contacts: 3000+

\*Number of volunteer hours (estimates are fine): 6,000+

### *Purpose of Committee:*

Raise funds to support BCMGA public education programs and organizational needs.

Provide hands-on educational activities for trainees and veteran MGs.

Build community among BCMGA members.

Raise funds for a future center for public education and committee propagation activities.

### *Goals for the year:*

Provide evening educational and participation opportunities for MGs, especially trainees.

Increase native plant production.

Continue improving infrastructure at current propagation center—irrigation, mist house, shade structures.

Continue refining focus of propagation efforts regarding what plants propagate well within a reasonable timeframe.

Expand knowledge of sources for commercially produced plant starts.

Continue providing sufficient funds to support BCMGA programs.

Provide a good selection of healthy plants at affordable prices to the public.

During sales, provide cultural information to the public on plants they might select to ensure they get the right plant for their needs.

### *Sales:*

1. In April, we secured a donation of bare root shrubs and fruit and ornamental trees from a grower east of Portland. We sold them at a 2-hour sale one evening. The few leftovers were potted up for the May 2024 sale.
2. The first Saturday in May our annual sale at the Fairgrounds was held. Plants in the Native, Edible, and Shade sections sold out well before the end of the sale. Due to our time/work investment, before the ½ price sale began, we removed a few flats of small seed-grown plants and some shrubs grown from cuttings to grow on for the 2025 sale. By the end of the ½ price sale, only about 30 plants were left. In past years Habitat for Humanity Restore has trucked away a few hundred leftover plants, but again this year we called to cancel the pickup. The clean-up crew took home those few remaining plants.

Attendance: The Solar Barn reported 1690 passed through the door during the sale hours, down from 2287 in 2024. The Floral Courtyard reported 820, down from 1136 in 2024. This reflects some duplicate counting, of course, as people visited both sites.

\*Information needed by Treasurer for annual IRS filing

Contacts: The number of contacts is difficult to count accurately due to the pace of questions asked, especially in the first hour, and the many “eavesdroppers” who can’t be counted. Even so, the area experts reported over 2319 direct contacts (3000 in 2024). A second clinic table in the Edibles section reported over 50 contacts (the clinic table in the Solar Barn reported 200).

Volunteers: 141 MG (67% of membership) including all but one trainee participated in making the sale a success. Other volunteers included MG partners, high school youth, members of a local church, and Boy Scouts.

#### *Propagation Events:*

According to the data from SignUp Genius history, we held 79 group workshop sessions over the year. 96 MGs and trainees volunteered for one or more of our workshop sessions. Breaking that down, 14 of those 96 MGs signed up for only one session. That means 73 came more than once to help and 37 helped more than 5 times. These workshops resulted in 1335 documented hours of attendance. This doesn’t include those who attended but didn’t sign up, notably some of the leadership team.

Propagation events/workshops produce plants for sales. Equally important is providing MGs hands-on education in propagation methods, sanitation procedures, plant identification, and cultural knowledge. These events also have a strong social component, which encourages community building for the organization. Volunteers often meet each other for the first time at these events. The shared workspace and a shared task encourage conversation and knowledge exchange.

To accommodate different schedules, Saturday work events were included, usually one in each month. Evening events had few attendees and so were not continued in 2025.

Other propagation events occur on a smaller scale, such as taking cuttings at members’ homes, sanitizing pots, and preparing dahlias for storage.

Individuals also spent many hours on unscheduled tasks such as watering, weeding, infrastructure maintenance and construction, plant labeling, materials procurement, researching which plants to propagate, fertilizing, pruning, etc.

The propagation schedule runs year-round. Currently, perennial and native seeding starts in November and edibles in January. As the edibles seedlings get potted and need more space, perennial and native seedlings must vacate the greenhouse by March 1, often facing risky weather.

We have made progress in expanding the leadership at propagation events. We have encouraged some to become Session Leaders, who coordinate one activity on a workshop day and guide a small group of volunteers in the task, whether it is up-potting seedlings or sanitizing pots. Other Leaders take on a repeating task, such as matching labels to a group of plants potted at the previous session. Session Leaders have also coordinated the small groups at

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Saturday events to complete targeted tasks. We plan to continue distributing responsibility for propagation categories. As of 2025, a distinct team now coordinates the dahlia preparation process.

How have your goals and events met the educational mission of BCMGA?

Public education occurs directly at sales events, especially effective because an individual's specific needs are addressed. This results in many, many contacts with people motivated to get relevant answers.

We are thoughtful about what information goes on the labels put in each pot, including cultural information and specific features—drought or deer tolerance, aggressiveness, pollinator supportive, etc.

Many MGs say that their most important horticultural education has occurred through the hands-on practice gained at workshops, working side-by-side with more experienced MGs.

Work continues to make the PHS facility more conducive to raising healthy plants. A donated greenhouse frame was erected and now provides summer shade for TSV plants.

We look forward to the new labeling equipment, which should result in sturdier labels and less remaking of labels destroyed by weather and UV damage. Unfortunately, the ordered equipment has been caught in the tariff disorder and has not yet been delivered.

We would like to increase native plant production further, but limited space both in and outside the greenhouse is a limiting factor.