

BCMGA Annual Committee Report

Committee: Fairgrounds Entrance Gardens Year: 2025

*Number of Active Members: 10 *Number of Public Contacts: 300+

*Number of volunteer hours (estimates are fine): 400

Purpose of Committee:

Create and maintain gardens demonstrating sustainable landscape gardening practices at the Benton County Fairgrounds. Each of the seven gardens addresses a common local gardening challenge. These include pollinator support, bird support, water conservation, deer resistance, cottage-style, child-friendly, and use of native plants. A corollary purpose is to expand MG knowledge by allowing participating MGs to research plants appropriate to the individual garden's characteristics and test those plants' suitability to their intended purpose.

Goals for the year:

Provide opportunities for MG participation on a flexible schedule
Ensure that all gardens have sufficient volunteer support
Experiment with candidate plants
Create attractive, informative gardens for fairgrounds visitors

Events/Activities:

Because of the public nature of the gardens and the frequent events at the Fairgrounds, people discover the gardens. Placement at a main entrance for the fair and other major events encourages visitors to discover the gardens. Because garden teams work on their own schedule, an MG is often present when people wander through the gardens and read the educational signage. When invited to, they often ask questions.

Each year, gardens are improved. Underperforming plants are replaced by others, and additions improve diversity. One of the first gardens planted, the Pollinator Garden, continued with a major renovation.

2025 was a year of volunteer stability. All volunteers from 2024 continued managing and improving their gardens.

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

All seven gardens now have educational signage defining each target challenge, providing strategies for gardeners to use in their own gardens, and encouraging gardeners to use sustainable, environmentally-supportive practices. The signage is colorful, simple to read, and provides links to the BCMGA website with specific information such as planting lists.

All perennial plants within the gardens have permanent identification labels.

Has your committee had opportunities to meet the needs of underserved populations?

The committee organization supports one underserved MG population: those whose work or family commitments restrict their ability to participate in regularly scheduled daytime

*Information needed by Treasurer for annual IRS filing

meetings. Individual gardens are managed by a single person or small team who work in their gardens on whatever schedule suits them best. This may mean small group work sessions or individuals tending the gardens solo.