

Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans

Handbook



Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans Handbook

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MASTER GARDENERS OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS (MGGNO) AT A GLANCE

Legal Name:	Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans, Inc.	
Date of Incorporation:	August 1, 2006	
Parishes Served:	Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard Parishes	
LSU AgCenter Office:	Jefferson Parish Extension Service Office 1221 Elmwood Park Boulevard, Suite 300 Jefferson, LA 70123 Phone: (504) 736-6519	
MGGNO E-mail Address:	<i>mastergardeners.gno@gmail.com</i>	
MGGNO Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 55126 Metairie, LA 70055-5126	
MGGNO Website:	<i>www.mggno.org</i>	
Facebook:	<i>Facebook.com/MasterGardenersOfGreaterNewOrleans</i>	
Facebook Private Group:	<i>Facebook.com/MGGNO members</i>	
LSU AgCenter Website:	<i>www.lsuagcenter.com</i>	
Executive Committee:	President	Cynthia Maldonado
	Vice President	Colleen Wood
	Secretary	Bryce Scholl
	Treasurer	Laurie Ricchiuti
	Immediate Past President	Linda Vinsanau
Committees:	Communications	Tammany Baumgarten
	Community Outreach	
	MGGNO Directory	
	Education	Colleen Wood
	Finance	
	Fundraising	
	Membership	Usha Ramdhyan
	Nominations	Eileen Hollander
	Projects	Nell Howard
	Special Events	
LCES Advisors (LSU AgCenter Advisors):	Dr. Joe Willis, Anna Timmerman, Chris Dunaway	
Membership Meetings:	Dates, times, locations, speakers & topics vary; details and schedule to be published on the MGGNO Website	
Dues:	\$25 Annually - Due December 31st	
Volunteer Hours:	40 hours first year; 20 hours annually subsequent years Report volunteer hours on LSU AgCenter website <i>http://www2.lsuagcenter.com/LMGServiceLog/User/login.aspx</i>	
Continuing Education:	6 hours annually Report education hours on LSU AgCenter website <i>http://www2.lsuagcenter.com/LMGServiceLog/User/login.aspx</i>	
Projects:	Published on the MGGNO website	
Recertification:	Contact LCES Advisor or MGGNO Membership Committee Chairperson	
Directory of Members:	Published annually	
Name Badges:	Order through LSU AgCenter Office – Jefferson Parish	
Mission Statement:	"To increase the public's love for and knowledge of gardening and responsible stewardship of the environment."	

LOUISIANA MASTER GARDENER™ (LMG) PROGRAM

About the LMG Program

The Louisiana Master Gardener program is a volunteer training program designed for individuals who have an interest in gardening and want to learn more about it and then give back to their community. The program is offered by the LSU AgCenter Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service (LCES) in most parishes. It is designed to recruit and train volunteers to help meet the educational needs of home gardeners while providing an enjoyable and worthwhile service experience for volunteers.

Volunteers are part of the volunteer staff of the LSU AgCenter Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. They provide unbiased, research-based educational assistance and programs on consumer horticulture issues to the gardening public.

The Louisiana Master Gardener program provides invaluable training and educational opportunities. The program is open to all people regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. Master Gardener programs are all-volunteer programs sanctioned by land-grant institutions in each state and function as an extension of the college or university. In Louisiana, the program is sponsored by the LSU Agricultural Center and is directed by the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service.

Experienced and beginning gardeners seeking up-to-date horticultural information can advance their gardening expertise and gain self-satisfaction through volunteer efforts. The volunteer aspect of the Louisiana Master Gardener program allows individuals to dedicate their time and talents to enhancing the quality of life for citizens of their community by using the science and art of horticulture. It allows individuals to put into practice what they know and learn.

History

The Louisiana Master Gardener program was started in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1994, as a means of extending the educational outreach of the LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. It was adopted statewide in 1997, and now offered in 20 parishes with volunteer participation in 40 parishes. Louisiana Master Gardeners serve many roles in helping county agents deliver educational horticultural programs and information.

Objectives of the Louisiana Master Gardener Program

- To expand the capacity of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service to distribute horticultural information to individuals and groups in the community
- To develop and enhance community programs related to horticulture; depending on community needs, these may include environmental improvement activities, community and school garden programs and public horticultural events
- To enhance 4-H Youth Development programs by complementing co-curricular and extracurricular horticultural programs
- To develop a Louisiana Master Gardener volunteer network under the direction of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
- Develop and enhance the Junior Master Gardener program

Who are Louisiana Master Gardener Volunteers?

Anyone with a willingness to learn and desire to help others can become a Louisiana Master Gardener. Volunteers should be interested in horticulture, willing to help people, outgoing, flexible, dependable, unbiased, and open-minded. Previous volunteer work and good verbal skills are desirable.

The Master Gardener program is divided into two parts: instruction and service. In the first part, participants receive 40-50 hours of intensive, practical horticultural training. A few of the following topics are covered in the program are:

- Soils and Plant Nutrition
- Basic Plant Pathology and Entomology
- Vegetable Gardening
- Fruit Culture
- Woody Ornamentals
- Annuals and Perennials
- Lawn Management
- Environmental Horticulture
- Problem Solving

After successfully completing the classroom portion, which involves regular attendance and passing a final exam, participants receive the title of Louisiana Master Gardener Apprentice/LMG Intern. They will receive the first certificate noting their accomplishments of classroom instruction. The name badge, second certificate, official name badge, and title should only be awarded after the 40 volunteer hours are completed and reported. After that, 20 volunteer hours and 6 continuing education credit hours are needed to annually maintain the status of Louisiana Master Gardener.

This is also covered in the Louisiana Master Gardener Handbook Introduction Chapter – see “Who are the Master Gardener Volunteers?”

Volunteer Activities

Master Gardeners share their knowledge and skills in numerous ways. As a Master Gardener, you have volunteered to do work related to horticulture for your local LSU AgCenter office. This work may consist of a variety of jobs because Master Gardeners bring a wealth of expertise to the program. If you can think of a job that will use your talents, please suggest it to the LCES Advisor you are working with. Keep in mind, all LMG volunteer activities should incorporate an educational component to be considered for approval.

Below are some activities commonly performed by Louisiana Master Gardeners:

- Create and maintain demonstration gardens or 4-H school gardens
- Work at plant health clinics
- Conduct home gardening visits
- Produce a home horticulture newsletter
- Answer telephone calls
- Instruct Master Gardeners
- Conduct garden tours and contests
- Create and maintain youth, community, or school gardens
- Maintain an office reference library
- Compile plant lists for specific areas
- Write and design educational materials

- Give talks to groups interested in horticulture
- Produce educational Power Point presentations
- Help with 4-H club meetings and programs
- Serve on an extension advisory committee

Volunteer Responsibilities/Requirements

As a Master Gardener, you represent the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, a branch of the LSU AgCenter. When performing volunteer services, Master Gardeners should comply with the following:

- Represent the LSU AgCenter Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service in a professional manner
- Complete the agreed upon minimum hours of volunteer requirements in the time allotted by LSU – usually 40 hours by the end of the following year after graduation and 20 hours annually thereafter
- Maintain a written (and photographic) record of volunteer activities and provide the LCES Advisor with timely documentation, preferably a monthly activity report
- Respect civil rights, confidences, and clientele information
- Provide unbiased, university research-based information
- Follow published Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service consumer horticulture recommendations
- Refer all commercial horticulture calls and/or questions to an LCES Advisor
- Use the Louisiana Master Gardener title only when assisting at extension-sponsored programs
- Wear a Louisiana Master Gardener name badge only at scheduled or approved events
- Adhere to the policies of the Louisiana Master Gardener program

MASTER GARDENERS OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS (MGGNO) PROGRAM

Leadership

MGGNO is governed by the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past President - the Executive Committee - and four (4) additional Board members (one of which is elected by the latest LMG Class) with input and advice from the LCES (LSU AgCenter) Advisors.

Elections are generally held in November. Elected leaders take office on January 1 the following year. Additionally, MGGNO leadership includes the Chairpersons of the various Committees.

Executive Committee

The MGGNO Executive Committee consists of the four elected officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer), and the Immediate Past President. Elected positions are for a one-year term with a maximum of two (2) consecutive years in that office. To be eligible to run for an office, one must be a Full Member of MGGNO (graduate of a LMG class, dues-paying member of MGGNO, and has completed the annual volunteer requirements).

Board of Directors

The MGGNO Board of Directors consists of the Executive Committee and four elected Directors. Meetings are conducted with the President or Vice President presiding as the Chairman of the

Board. Three of the Director positions have a term of two years. The fourth Director position is a “new class” position, which has a term of one year. There is no limit to the number of terms a Director can serve.

To be eligible to run for a two-year Director position, one may be a Full Member of MGGNO (graduate of a LMG class and a dues-paying member of MGGNO who has completed the annual volunteer requirement) or an Associate Member of MGGNO (graduate of a LMG class and dues paid but basic volunteer requirement not yet met).

The bylaws maintain one (1) Director Position for a member of the latest graduating Louisiana Master Gardener class from the New Orleans Metropolitan area. To be eligible to run for that particular position, one must be a member of the latest graduating class, be an Associate Member of MGGNO (graduate of LMG class, dues-paying member of MGGNO, but perhaps not having yet completed the volunteer hours’ requirement) and must be nominated and elected exclusively by his/her LMG classmates.

Leadership Duties

The Board of Directors generally meets monthly. The general membership is welcomed and encouraged to attend the Board of Directors meetings.

The duties of the key office holders are detailed in the organizational bylaws. The unspoken expectations of these key positions include:

- Consistent and conscientious leadership
- Willingness to attend the monthly Board meetings (with no more than three unexcused absences); as well as the monthly membership meetings
- Bring forward and present task assignments and be prepared to make the best judgments possible for the sake of the organization
- Available by e-mail, cell phone, or some other reliable source of communication to interact frequently, consistently, and productively with the other Board members
- Shoulder a fair share of the workload of the Board
- Assure the preservation and the dignity of the organization

Elections

Any member of MGGNO may express an interest in a leadership position or nomination to the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee at any time. Should you wish to run for one of the Officer or Board positions, contact the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee, preferably in an informal written fashion (e.g., an e-mail or a written note). Any information shared in such a way with the Nominations Committee will be treated with respect and confidentiality. The Nominating Chair / Committee will check with the Membership Chair to be sure that all nominees are qualified LMG/MGGNO members in good standing for the year.

If you wish to nominate a person other than yourself for an Officer or Board position, contact that person first and ensure that he or she is willing to accept the nomination, then follow the same procedure as above, noting that the person so nominated has agreed to serve if elected.

As per the organizational bylaws, elections are to be held at the general membership meeting-by written ballot and counted by independent parties or electronically in November of each year. Only members in good standing will be able to cast a valid vote. The results of the election will be announced promptly.

Officers and Directors will be recognized and sworn in at the holiday meeting in December following the elections. Officers and Directors will officially take office on January 1 of the year of service.

MGGNO COMMITTEES

MGGNO leadership includes the Chairpersons of the various committees. The Board of Directors establishes Standing Committees as needed, appoints the Chairpersons and the committee members, and gives a written charge to each committee. The President establishes Ad Hoc (Special) Committees as needed after consulting with the Board of Directors and appoints a Chairperson. An Ad Hoc Chairperson may appoint the committee members.

Committee Chairpersons serve at the discretion of the Board of Directors or the President and may be replaced or dismissed at any time. General obligations of Committee Chairpersons include:

- Provide committee information at regular membership meetings
- Provide committee information to the incoming Chairperson at the end of the current Chairperson's term
- Accept the assignment given to him or her by the Board of Directors or the President
- Refine the concept and develop the responsibilities of the mission as needed
- Organize an effective committee
- Methodically accomplish the identified tasks to the best of his or her abilities
- Continually manage the essential undertaking until told otherwise by the Board of Directors or the President
- Effectively render those reports and/or duties specified in this Handbook

Communications Committee

Duties and obligations of the Communications Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Publish an updated membership directory annually for all MGGNO members and e-mail directories annually to all members
- Ensure that all public-facing communications published in print or online adheres with LSU Ag-Center brand guidelines for the Louisiana Master Gardener program
- Coordinate all public relations efforts with President and Secretary and LCES Advisor
- Coordinate all communications with members via e-mail and print with President and Secretary
- Coordinate all communications with MGGNO patrons (garden centers, nurseries, plant societies, other LMG groups throughout the state) in conjunction with the President and Secretary to pass on to the MGGNO website specialist
- Maintain and develop content for the MGGNO website
- Maintain and develop content for the MGGNO Facebook page and private FB group
- LCES Advisors publish the GNO Gardener Magazine and e-mails a copy to MGGNO Members and the public; MGGNO Communications Committee members should strive to send an article monthly to either highlight a specific outstanding MGGNO member or a Project that we have been involved with in our community
- Ensure that members without an e-mail address are notified via postal mail or by phone when appropriate
- Coordinate with President and Secretary to provide membership with notices of updates from other committees, events, membership meetings, Board meetings, etc.

- Maintain a relationship with print, radio, and TV media as appropriate
- Adhere to MGGNO policy for protecting the privacy of members' e-mail addresses and all other personal information, as well
- Provide monthly committee reports to the Board of Directors, Membership or when otherwise requested by the President

Community Outreach/Speakers Bureau Committee

Duties and obligations of the Community Outreach Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Develop and maintain a list of horticulture-related organizations, associations, and clubs (referred to as 'Outreach Community Groups') in the New Orleans metro area and provide lists to MGGNO Board of Directors, as well as Chair of Projects, and Secretary to coordinate all community projects (including contact names); this list may also include community gardens, school gardens, non-profit organizations, and other pertinent community informational listings)
- Establish and maintain relationships with Outreach Community Groups via their websites, newsletters, events, and communications personnel
- Maintain a relationship with selected Outreach Community Groups
- Participate in their events to promote or expand the footprint of MGGNO through educational or marketing tables/tents
- Invite their participation in MGGNO events through vendor booths or educational tables
- Coordinate with Communications Committee to distribute information to inform and promote Outreach Community Groups' events to our membership
- Coordinate with Communications Committee to distribute information to inform and promote MGGNO events to Outreach Community Groups
- Advise MGGNO Fundraising Committee on items that would sell at Outreach Community Groups' events and of upcoming special events for them, as well
- Provide monthly committee reports to the Board of Directors, Membership or when otherwise requested by the President

Education Committee

Duties and obligations of the Education Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Plan and organize educational opportunities for MGGNO monthly meetings, as well as other times and events (e.g., field trips, workshops, etc.) in conjunction with Board and LCES Advisor requests
- Plan and organize educational opportunities for the gardening public
- Confirm with speakers and coordinate their equipment, handouts, Power Point presentations and/or other audio/video presentation needs and any additional requirements with them, etc.
- Reserve meeting rooms for general meetings and training sessions
- Notify the membership at large and the Communications Committee of educational opportunities for publication on the MGGNO Website, in newspapers, etc. as appropriate
- Work with the Communications Committee to help create and maintain a permanent database of contact information for speakers
- Mentor new members and associates to the Master Gardening experience
- Work closely with the Board and its' members to ensure a Quality Louisiana Master Gardening experience for all MGGNO members
- Provide monthly committee reports to the Board of Directors, Membership, or when otherwise, requested by the President

Finance Committee

Duties and obligations of the Finance Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Assure the proper use and accountability of MGGNO funds and other assets of value
- Report to the membership and to the Board of Directors at each of their official meetings the exact status of the funds in the MGGNO accounts and the encumbrances against those funds
- Finance Committee should seek and obtain appropriate supplemental funds such as grants and contributions in order to enhance the MGGNO treasury and project potentials; so, any member working with grant writing on behalf of MGGNO should coordinate directly with Treasurer/Finance & Projects Committees
- Conduct proper fiscal planning and to portray those conclusions in both a projected and an actual budget
- Make certain that fiscal reporting requirements to Internal Revenue Service, LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Master Gardener Program, and other such agencies are completed in a timely and appropriate manner including any parish /state/ federal tax records and filing annually; plus licensing as required for a 501(c)(3) as to be in full legal compliance with all agencies
- Establish and maintain a permanent system of records, which are properly safeguarded and easily retrievable QuickBooks / Excel / etc. whatever programs are necessary to have complete and fully available accounting documentation.

Fundraising Committee

Duties and obligations of the Fundraising Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Work with the Board of Directors to determine annual fundraising goal for the organization based on the projected budget
- Develop, monitor, and implement fundraising initiatives to meet the fundraising goal as submitted to and approved by the MGGNO Board of Directors
- Provide necessary procedures and supplies to MGGNO volunteers engaged in a fundraising initiative, i.e., receipt books, cash bags, calculators, etc.
- Monitor fundraising projects where MGGNO funds are expended on inventories against which MGGNO sales are made, such as plants, tools, gloves, etc.
- Ensure that fundraising efforts employ ethical practices and are fully documented
- Provide summary reports and supporting documentation including receipts, invoices, and all pertinent records to the Treasurer as soon as possible, but no later than thirty (30) days after completion of any initiative

Handbook/Bylaws/Directory Committee

Duties and obligations of the Handbook Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Advise the membership of the rules set forth in the MGGNO handbook
- Make appropriate changes to the MGGNO handbook
- Keep a current copy of the handbook on file at the LSU AgCenter offices in both Orleans and Jefferson parishes
- Make an electronic copy of the handbook available to every member of MGGNO
- Provide monthly committee reports to the Board of Directors, Membership or when otherwise requested by the President

Membership Committee

Duties and obligations of the Membership Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Maintain an accurate membership database, submit to both the Communications Chair / Directory Committee Chair and as need by the President and Secretary for printing the membership directory and updating the MGGNO email list; and make a copy of the MGGNO Directory available to each member
- Work with Communications Committee to develop membership benefits for publication; maintain relationship with patrons in coordination with the Communications Committee
- Provide procedures and/or paper forms (if member does not have Internet access) for members to record their volunteer hours, continuing education hours, and assist members with the reporting process to LSU AgCenter
- Certify members for active membership annually by December 31 of the current year
- Provide a list of members who have qualified for recertification to the President, Treasurer and LCES Advisor by December 31 of the year to be certified
- Review credentials of those applying for membership who have completed the Master Gardener training program somewhere other than the Greater New Orleans area; consult with the LCES Advisor to determine eligibility; notify applicant
- Assertively recruit those persons who have completed the Greater New Orleans Master Gardener Program (or who have relocated to this area from another Master Gardener Program) to become members of MGGNO
- Always ensure that there is membership information available at public functions and relevant club events (e.g., association meetings, class graduations, etc.)
- Provide monthly committee reports to the Board of Directors, Membership or when otherwise requested by the President

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is a requirement per the MGGNO bylaws. The Board of Directors must ensure this committee is always operational. Duties and obligations of the Nominations Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of President or until replaced by MGGNO Board of Directors action
- Monitor the status of all elected positions within MGGNO and to be alert to those positions which have become, or are about to become, vacant
- Discover and develop new leadership potential for MGGNO
- Review membership documentation and other sources of information for evidence of those members who desire to be considered for elected office
- Confer with the MGGNO President to confirm that a vacancy of an elected office does exist and that action to produce a Slate of Nominations for that office is desired of the Nominations Committee
- Announce the existence of the vacancy to the entire MGGNO membership by all reasonable means
- Solicit from MGGNO members their willingness to be considered for appointment or election to a vacant position for the MGGNO Board
- Submit a slate of candidates to the MGGNO President for their guidance at least one month prior to the annual election; on the day of the election, present the official slate of nominees to the President and the MGGNO General Membership
- Submit nominations to fill an elected office whenever a vacancy occurs within the present Officer or Board positions; the sitting officers and board must consider these recommendations but are not bound to select from among these candidates; the Board of

Directors selects a replacement and installs that person into the vacant position until the effective date of the next election

- Follow the guidance of the MGGNO President as to what is desired next to assure the continuity of the elected offices and the propriety of the MGGNO election process
- Provide monthly committee reports to the Board of Directors, Membership or when otherwise requested by the President

Project Committee

Duties and obligations of the Project Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Ensure an accurate list of approved projects is maintained on the MGGNO Website with updated description, pictures, and link to the Project Chair
- Submit proposed projects to be considered as part of volunteer hours required for active membership to the MGGNO Board of Directors and the LCES for approval
- Substantiate sufficient positive impact (both public and membership) on the community of each project before approval
- Keep number of approved projects within the limits of the members ability to successfully perform the work required for the projects
- Update project list when new projects are approved by the MGGNO Board and the LCES Advisors and for the MGGNO.org website
- Provide MGGNO Project Proposal Form for Master Gardeners to complete when requesting new projects and assist members with this process as needed
- Review proposed projects to see if the project meets the current guidelines established by the LCES Advisor, as well as MGGNO
- Work with project coordinator of each project to determine the human, fiscal, and material resources needed for the success of each project
- Work with the Board of Directors to procure resources when necessary
- Monitor the status of each project using a quarterly reporting process
- Notify Communications Chairman to announce new projects via e-mail notices to members
- Keep members informed of progress of projects through e-mail postings or monthly committee reports at the monthly meetings
- Present a summary of the projects discussed, pending, or recommended biannually at a meeting of the Board of Directors or the general membership meeting
- Provide Project Committee reports biannually to the Board of Directors, Membership or when otherwise requested by the President

Special Events Committee

Duties and obligations of the Special Events Committee include:

- Serve as a Standing Committee during the term of the current President or until replaced by MGGNO Board action
- Recommend activities or special events to the MGGNO President and Board
- Organize and implement planning of all general MGGNO Meetings and events with a committee of members to assist – call for donations of snacks/food/beverages, etc. and let Educational Chair know if there are any problems
- Coordinate with Education Chair and Treasurer guest speaker gifts
- Coordinate Holiday Event for MGGNO annually in December
- Consider and deliver to the Board event suggestions made by MGGNO members
- Special Events may include: MG graduations, plant swaps/sales, plant society fairs, symposiums, garden tours/prowls, field trips, luncheons, holiday celebrations, etc.
- Provide monthly committee reports to the Board of Directors, Membership or when otherwise requested by the President

MGGNO POLICIES

Membership Requirements

There are three types of Membership:

1. **Full Member:** A Louisiana Master Gardener graduate, basic volunteer requirements met (both certifications and meetings), and dues paid. This entitles the member to full privileges of the association including voting, election to an Officer or Board position, and appointment to a committee or committee chairmanship.
2. **Associate Member:** A Louisiana Master Gardener graduate and dues paid but has not met the previous year's basic volunteer requirements (both certification and/or meetings). This entitles the member to most of the privileges of the association including voting, election to a Board position, and appointment to a committee or committee chairmanship, but not to election of an Officer position.
3. **Inactive Member:** A Louisiana Master Gardener graduate who has chosen to suspend volunteerism for a finite period and continues to pay dues. An Inactive Member is not allowed to vote, cannot be appointed to a committee or committee chairmanship nor be elected to an Officer or Board position.

A Louisiana Master Gardener-in-training is not a member, does not pay dues, cannot vote, and cannot be elected to an officer or Board position, but can be appointed to a committee. MGGNO has no honorary members.

All Members are required to submit a completed MGGNO Membership Application Form annually to the Membership Committee Chairperson. The MGGNO Membership Application Form is published and available on the MGGNO Website.

Annual Accreditation

Each year, the Membership Committee will determine which members have met their required volunteer hours, continuing education hours, meeting requirements and any other conditions of membership set forth by the Board of Directors.

Dues

Annual membership dues are \$25.00 payable to MGGNO. Dues are not prorated; dues remain the same throughout the year. A fillable application is available on the website. Members may print the completed application and bring it to a general meeting, mail it with your dues to MGGNO, or, if paying by PayPal, submit it via email to treasurer@mggno.com.

Members are required to pay annual dues on or before January 1 of each year for the forthcoming calendar year. Dues for the forthcoming year may be paid beginning October 1 of the current year. A Master Gardener will not be listed in the MGGNO membership directory if payment of dues is not current. Members are delinquent after February 1.

Meeting Attendance

Members are required to attend a minimum of three meetings from January 1 to November 30 of each year. (No meetings are held in December.) Meeting locations, dates, times, topics are published on the MGGNO website. E-mail reminders are sent at least one week prior to each meeting. Printed meeting reminders are mailed only to members without an e-mail address.

Volunteer Hours

Each member is required to complete forty (40) hours of approved volunteer service from the time of graduation to the end of the following calendar year and twenty (20) hours each

calendar year thereafter. Service hours should be reported online throughout the year and/or no later than Dec 31 of each year via the LSU AgCenter website or clicking the link on the home page of the MGGNO website.

Members without Internet access should submit their volunteer hours using the paper report form and submit it to the Master Gardener Coordinator at the LSU AgCenter Office or contact the MGGNO Membership Committee Chairperson for assistance in reporting the hours online.

Continuing Education Requirements

Each member is required to complete six (6) hours of continuing education each calendar year and to report these hours via the LSU AgCenter website or clicking the link on the home page of the MGGNO website.

Each of the regular MGGNO General Membership meetings usually includes a one-hour educational program. Other educational and volunteer opportunities are presented by MGGNO members, the LCES Advisors, and various civic or other organizations throughout the year in the Metropolitan New Orleans area.

Project Approval

Any Member may request approval for a NEW PROJECT by completing a Project Approval Form and submitting it to the MGGNO Project Committee Chairperson. The LCES will review the proposal, discuss with the Committee Chairperson who will usually respond within 30 days. If a Project is denied by the Advisor, the Advisor will provide the reason(s) and will give suggestions on how to improve the proposal and bring it into conformance. Upon approval from the Advisor, the MGGNO Project Committee will determine the feasibility and suitability of the project and submit its recommendation the MGGNO Board for approval.

The Chairperson will notify the Member submitting the project of the approval or denial of the project, as well as reasons if denied. Projects only need to be submitted to MGGNO for approval if the Member submitting the project would like financial assistance from MGGNO and volunteer assistance from its Members. If assistance is not required, the Member may submit the project directly to the LCES Advisor for approval.

All approved projects will be posted on the MGGNO website. When a project is completed, canceled, or otherwise no longer requires assistance, the project leader must notify the Project Committee Chairperson to request removal from the MGGNO website.

Project Progress Reports and Promotions

Project leaders are required to submit biannual project progress reports to the Chairperson of the Projects Committee on June 1 and November 1. The Project Progress Report Form is available on the Info & Forms page on the MGGNO Website.

The MGGNO website Project Page is updated with new pictures and descriptions to have the latest information available to both MGGNO members and anyone who visits our Website on a regular basis.

Project leaders who wish to recruit volunteers for their projects should contact the Project Committee Chairperson by e-mail to request a broadcast message be sent to all members or an announcement made at the next MGGNO General meeting.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Officers and members are obligated to adhere to the Conflict of Interest Policy posted on the MGGNO website.

Dress Code

Members are expected to wear their LMG name badge and, if appropriate to the occasion, approved LMG logo apparel at all official events where they represent Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans and LMG.

Replacement name badges may be ordered through the LCES Advisors and must be paid for by the Member. Contact the Communications Committee Chairperson for information on LMG logo apparel.

Expense Reimbursement

Members who incur expenses on behalf of MGGNO with prior Board of Director's approval should submit a MGGNO Reimbursement/Check Request Form along with receipts for expenditures to the MGGNO treasurer as soon as possible but no later than thirty (30) days after incurring the expense. Forms are available on the Info & Forms page of the MGGNO website. Request Forms may be mailed to the MGGNO treasurer at P.O. Box 55126, Metairie, LA 70055-5126 or submitted electronically to treasurer@mggno.com.

Stewardship of the Environment

Whenever possible, MGGNO will use large water dispensers and paper cups instead of individual water bottles for all projects and events. MGGNO encourages all members to promote sustainability to lessen any adverse impact on the environment.

MGGNO RESOURCES

Handbook

The official guidelines for this non-profit organization are published in the MGGNO Handbook, which must be approved by the Board and published on the MGGNO Website; a hardcopy is housed at the LSU AgCenter office. The Handbook Committee reviews the Handbook annually; recommended revisions are presented to both the Board and General Membership for approval.

Membership Directory

The Communications Committee publishes an electronic directory of all active MGGNO members annually in the spring. Members may keep their contact information current by submitting changes to the Membership Committee Chairperson.

Website

The official MGGNO website is located at www.mggno.org. The site features pages for the Calendar/Gardening Tips/Projects/Info & Forms/Who We Are/Speakers Bureau lists and request forms/Contact Information. Meeting information is located on the home page. Details of meetings, educational events, volunteer opportunities, and community events are available on the Calendar page.

All official MGGNO announcements to members are delivered via e-mail from *mastergardeners.gno@gmail.com* or by postal mail for members without an e-mail address. Access to this mailbox is shared by the President, Secretary, and the Communications Committee Chairperson

Electronic Communications Via E-mail

E-mail addresses of members are not shared with any individual or organization. MGGNO further protects the privacy of its members by sending all official e-mail messages as a blind copy to members. Individuals or organizations that wish to communicate with MGGNO members may do so only with the approval of an MGGNO Officer, Board member and/or the communications coordinator. Such external messages may only be sent through the MGGNO mailbox and then only if the message is deemed appropriate for MGGNO members.

Facebook Page

Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans has a private Facebook page for MGGNO members only. This page will post official events and upcoming activities and meetings. Additionally, members can post appropriate gardening/horticulture topics and pictures.

LSU AgCenter Offices

Although MGGNO members are volunteers, the LSU AgCenter offices are considered official workplaces for LMG volunteers during office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

