

Quilts in the Garden, June 20, 2026

Suggestions from Quilts in the Garden Committee & Garden Hosts

The comments from participants, volunteers, committee members, quilters and gardeners were overwhelmingly positive. While we didn't anticipate a bus break-down, that was the only glitch in a perfectly wonderful event. There were no complaints about the \$20 price for admission, there were rave reviews of the gardens and even more compliments of the 220+ quilts. Probably most importantly, the Marys River Quilt Guild collaborated extremely well with the Corvallis Modern Quilt Guild for a first-time joint event.

Publicity:

Publicity of the event needs to get started much earlier so calendars can be marked (3-6 months ahead).

A consistent logo should be used on all publicity. We used 3 different designs.

We should advertise the garden hosts by name and address early in the publicity process. Some people were not aware that tickets could be bought at the gardens or that their friends were hosting a garden.

We had visitors from Seattle, Cottage Grove, Newport, Portland, Salem and Eugene, so our publicity did reach outside the Corvallis area.

Transportation/Parking:

We had two buses for a 25 minute route, with the hope that guests would have to wait no more than 15 minutes for a bus. One bus had a malfunction on the very first run, before it even reached the first garden. A replacement bus arrived within 45 minutes, but this was an irritation and inconvenience for many of our guests.

We calculated bus capacity and need based on the assumption that 2/3 of the guests would attend from 10 to 1, and 1/3 from 1 to 4. In the future, organizers should assume that 7/8 of guest will attend between 10 and 1, as that was the situation in 2026. A third bus would have been useful in the morning, even if both buses had functioned, but this also would have been an additional expense.

Seating by the parking area and seating where people wait for the buses near the gardens would be helpful. More chairs overall in the gardens would also be useful.

Having a bell to ring when the bus is coming would be better than yelling.

If we could hold this event and not need buses, that would be ideal (4-5 walkable gardens or one large garden with plenty of parking).

We could have had a few quilts on display at the bus stop

There should have been more maps at the bus stop. Maps could include advertising.

Exchanging phone numbers among parking lot attendants and a representative in each garden worked well in letting people know when buses were on the way. Also Candy did a marvelous job of talking with people who were waiting for the buses.

Ticket Sales:

We sold 148 tickets on-line, 69 tickets at three garden centers (none at Thyme Gardens) and 89 at the gardens on June 20.

Selling tickets at quilt shops might be a good idea (Albany, Lebanon, Dallas)

There were many issues with PayPal and with those who wished to use credit cards instead of PayPal. Marys River Quilt Guild is currently working with “Zeffy” which is only for non-profits, and it does not have fees.

When tickets were purchased on-line, the location of gardens was shown only in an attachment to an email that the buyer received. This information was shown on the Marys River Quilt Guild website but not on the Corvallis Modern Quilt Website. Consistent info on both websites would have been good.

An informative and useful list of information about the cancellation policy, etc. was posted on the Corvallis Modern Quilt Guild website. This information could be used in future years.

Consider increasing the involvement of guild members in ticket sales and posting of flyers. These could be made available to members during guild meetings in April and May, and members could then sell tickets to their friends and post flyers around town.

Garden Hosts:

Garden hosts selected their own crew for set up on Friday, rather than having the crew assembled from volunteers that signed up through sign-up genius. The Garden hosts liked that approach as they selected experienced individuals and not too many people were involved. The 4 hours spent on Friday were crucial.

Foliage grows over some of the areas where quilts were intended, based on garden visits weeks earlier. Always have a back-up plan. Also be aware of areas where dripping sap might damage quilts.

For garden hosts without experience, a knowledgeable person (like Yvonne Thomas) should be assigned to participate in the second garden visit and the evening before the event. One set of garden hosts needed more input in hanging the quilts, and they would have been less anxious if that help had been available for the second garden visit rather than only a week before the event. Yvonne Thomas was an angel! She knew what needed to happen for hanging quilts, and gave encouragement to all involved.

Equipment was just right for each garden, especially the hanging system developed by Ann Geyer. Marcia Gilson saved the day several times and Belinda Barnes was involved in visiting the gardens from the very beginning right up to the very end.

We should develop an information sheet for neighbors of the garden owners that can be distributed at least a week ahead of the event. If there is a neighborhood association or HOA, that group should be notified.

Nametags should be provided to the garden owners.

Accessibility for people using walkers should definitely be taken into consideration. Walkers seemed to work this year, but all areas may not have been easy.

First Aid and emergency protocols should be discussed in the future. We had no issues, but it is worth talking about in the committee.

Volunteers:

Two committee members were assigned to coordinate volunteers, one from CMQG and one from MRQG. This worked well in the initial step of encouraging guild members to volunteer and communicating volunteer needs. Solicitation of volunteers during guild meetings and through guild newsletters was sufficient to get the number of volunteers needed for the event. We had a total of 54 volunteers.

Volunteers were asked to sign up for volunteer slots via Sign-up Genius, which worked well for those who were comfortable enough with computers to sign up that way. Others volunteered by word of mouth, and were entered into Sign-up Genius by a committee member, which meant that notifications were sent to the email of the person inputting the data rather than the volunteer. Consequently, volunteers who signed up through another person did not receive reminders or other communications from Sign-up Genius.

Volunteers signed up in Sign-up Genius for time slots in MRQG or CMQG gardens.. Information could then be downloaded into a spreadsheet, which was used to assign volunteers to a specific garden. Ten days before the event, Joyce sent an email message to all volunteers, assigning them to a specific location (garden or parking lot) and transferring communication to the Garden Host or Transportation coordinator. This worked well in providing a consistent message. Having the Garden Hosts communicate with their volunteers was seen as a positive move. We should have communicated the plan for connecting volunteers to Garden Hosts when Garden Hosts began their work.

Sign-Up Genius was helpful in assembling the list of volunteers but didn't work well for individuals who didn't sign up personally. We should look at other options for future volunteer sign-ups.

We had a total of 54 volunteers. We had 4 garden attendants in each CMQG garden and 5 in MRQG gardens. 4 volunteers were generally considered to be an adequate number. 3.5 hr shifts for garden attendants were too long for some. The 2 hour shifts for set up and the 1 hour shifts in the parking lot were a good length.

Quilts:

Each guild handled the quilts for two gardens, and used separate processes.

CMQG used an online submission process that electronically transferred data to a spreadsheet. One garden had specified the number and size of quilts it could show, and quilts were assigned by organizers to that garden based on size. The remaining quilts were assigned to the second, larger garden, with some large quilts placed in an “auxillary” pile to be hung as space allowed. Most quilters filled out a tag, which was placed on the quilt upon submission and throughout the event. Organizers had to fill out tags for quilts that lacked them. The online submission process worked well but, in the future, filling out a tag should be a requirement for submitting quilts to the event.

MRQG required that quilters attached a tag to their quilt, and organizers entered information from the tag into a spreadsheet. Garden hosts met with the organizers to select quilts for the two gardens.

Handling quilts for only two gardens worked well, so dividing the task between two organizers was viewed positively. However, the two different processes used by the two guilds was not clear to hosts of all CMQG gardens. The process should be clearly communicated to each garden host in the future.

There were plenty of quilts and perhaps we should have a limit of quilts per quilter.

It was suggested that the information label be located higher on the quilt as it was hard to lean over and read the info about the quilter.

Labels should include a “comment” or “other information” section where the quilter can specify the name of the pattern or designer or, if the quilt was made in a class, the name of a teacher who developed the design.

Perhaps having a different color label for quilts available for sale would be a good idea. Many people did not realize that some quilts were for sale.

Timing of Event:

The date of the event should be researched for other events also happening the same day ... this year Masters Gardener's were giving a free garden tour in Albany

Most of the guests came between 10am-1pm. Perhaps starting earlier and ending earlier would be better. Otherwise volunteers could be cut back after 1:30pm.

Finances:

We cleared \$3,848 after expenses. We will suggest to the Marys River Quilt Guild Board that this money be split equally between the two quilt guilds and that each Guild have a line item in their budget for \$1000 for Quilts in the Garden (for 2028 or 2029). The leadership of both Guilds needs to decide which guild takes the lead going forward. We suggest that both Guilds be involved together going forward.

Expenses were as follows: \$275 insurance, \$705 buses (they refunded \$700 because of the bus break down), Best Pots \$460 (for 3 port-a-pots), \$402 publicity, \$100 donation to Young Life for parking lot use, \$100 tips for 2 bus drivers. Expenses totaled \$2043.16.

Future:

Ideally, gardens should be located within walking distance of one another or with adequate parking so no bus is needed.

A good goal would be to have at least one or two gardens that are wheelchair accessible and cane-friendly or walker-friendly.

At least one committee member thinks that a display of quilts at a public park or garden center would be just as delightful for quilters (not gardeners) and would require a lot less work. if the purpose is to show quilts.

Marianne Dickson expressed interest in possibly being one of the co-chairs of Quilts in the Garden 2028!!