



California Garden Clubs, Inc.

District Director Handbook
2019-2021

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GUIDELINES FOR DISTRICT DIRECTORS

California is divided into 28 districts to facilitate communication and cooperation. Each district is autonomous, governed by its own by-laws under a district director who is elected by the district membership. All district directors are members of the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities to CGCI

1. Interpret and communicate CGCI programs to the district clubs and members.
2. Encourage and assist district clubs and members to participate in CGCI, Pacific Region and NGC projects, including awards programs and educational schools.
3. Visit the website to find current information to share with the district.
4. Attend all CGCI meetings: Fall Board, Winter Board, Pre-Convention Board, Convention, Post-Convention and Organizational; also District Directors Forums.
 - a. If unable to attend a meeting, advise the President and ask to be excused.
 - b. An alternate representative should be sent in place of an absent director so the district is represented and stays informed.
5. At the Convention in election years both outgoing and incoming directors should attend; so as to have a vote the incoming director attends as a club delegate.
 - a. Outgoing directors accept awards, if the winners are not in attendance, and recognition for the district at the Pre-Convention and Convention Meetings.
 - b. Incoming directors attend the Post-Convention and Organizational Meetings plus any orientation provided for new directors. They also TAKE HOME all awards and materials belonging to their district and clubs.
6. Encourage clubs to submit the Annual Contact Information Form by May 1. The form is available on the CGCI website.
7. Collect all award books of evidence, photos, booklets, etc. from the Awards Room at the close of Convention and return them to the district's clubs.
8. Refer to the CGCI annual budget for budgeted expenses. Reimbursement Forms are available from the Financial Secretary and on the CGCI website.
9. Publishing a district yearbook is encouraged. If entering for the District Yearbook Award (G-3), content requirements may be found on the corresponding Evaluation Form for this award on the website.
10. Publishing a district newsletter is encouraged. (See award PR2, Section 1).

Installation

- District directors are installed at the convention. Upon installation they officially take office and assume their duties as members of the Board of Directors.

Hosting CGCI Meetings

- All districts are encouraged to consider hosting board meetings and/or the convention, see Bylaws (Articles IX Sec. 5 and XI Sec. 2).
- Offers from districts to host may be presented at any regular meeting. The offer shall state the voted approval of the district's member clubs.

District Director Forums

- The District Director Coordinator presides over Forums held at Board Meetings and the Convention.
- Forums are planned to give guidance and information, encourage an exchange of ideas and promote cooperation.
- Suggestions for topics of discussion are welcomed. Information about each Forum will be made available to the directors approximately two weeks prior to a Meeting.

Reports

- Oral reports are required at the Winter Board Meeting and the Convention. Report on successful club events - tour, fundraiser, exceptional program etc.
 - Board members are listening for ideas for their own districts and clubs. It is not necessary to report about each club every meeting.
 - A time limit will be announced prior to each meeting.
 - Eliminate extra words to stay within the time limit and report only important news from the district.
- Email reports within two days of the close of a meeting to the President, District Director Coordinator, *Golden Gardens eNews* Editor and a condensed (100 words maximum) report to the Recording Secretary for distribution with the minutes.
- When reporting, chairmen should refer to themselves in the third person and use correct titles: Modesto Garden Club; Palomar District; California Garden Clubs, Inc. (CGCI); Pacific Region; National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC).

District Visits by the CGCI President

- The President should be invited to visit a district at least once during their term; they may not make an official visit without an invitation.
- Protocol is important, contact the Amenities and Protocol Chairman if you are not sure how it should be observed.
- Offer complimentary hospitality; allot time for the President to address the members; ask the President to present any certificates/awards; and invite and recognize local CGCI Board Members.

Presentation of Certificates

- Honoring and thanking clubs and club members is one of the most important and rewarding services that CGCI can perform.
- Certificates of Merit and Certificates of Achievement may be purchased from the State Pins & Miscellaneous Sales Chairman.
- Long-Service Certificates for members are available at no charge from the Certificates Chairman.

California Garden Clubs, Inc. - District Directors Timeline

Month-by-Month

June

- **By May 1 of each year** – Remind your clubs to submit updated Contact Information online via the Contact Information Form.
- **By June 1 of the second year in office** – The outgoing district director provides/submits the complete contact information for the incoming District Director via the District Contact Information Form.
- **Attend the Convention** (which usually is held in June) including the pre-convention business meeting, District Director Forum, the Awards Banquet and all business meetings.
- **Election years** (odd-numbered years)
 - At the convention, the outgoing Director accepts awards for district winners and accepts recognition for the District at the Pre-Convention and Convention Meetings.
 - Incoming District Directors are installed at Convention and are expected to attend the Post-Convention and Organizational Meeting.
 - The incoming Director takes home from the convention all awards and materials belonging to their district and clubs.
- **Reports:** Send an electronic report of any length to the President, District Director Coordinator and *Golden Gardens eNews* Editor. An abbreviated 100-word report for the CGCI Recording Secretary is sent electronically for inclusion in the meeting minutes. The oral report does not have to be a duplicate of the written report. Five minutes is allotted for the oral report at the meeting. The District Director Coordinator coordinates the District Directors reports.

July

- Place CGCI *Yearbook, Manual & Roster* order prior to deadline established (varies each year). One complimentary copy is provided to District Directors and club presidents.

August

- Register for Fall Board Meeting prior to deadline.

September

- **Fall Board Meeting** - District Directors are expected to attend the Fall Board Meeting (dates are usually determined a year or more in advance – check CGCI calendar on website) including all business meetings and the District Directors Forum. If the District Director cannot attend, notify the CGCI President and send a representative for the district.
- **Reports:** Oral reporting is optional at the Fall Board Meeting. But an electronic report of any length may be sent to the President, District Director Coordinator and *Golden Gardens eNews* Editor. An abbreviated 100-word report for the CGCI Recording Secretary must be sent electronically for inclusion in the meeting minutes (if presented at the meeting). The oral report does not have to be a duplicate of the written report. Five minutes is allotted for the oral report at the meeting. The District Director Coordinator coordinates the District Directors reports.
- **CGCI Yearbook, Manual & Rosters** (yearbooks) for the district and district clubs (and any extra yearbooks that clubs have ordered) plus membership cards for those clubs who have paid their CGCI dues are distributed. Be prepared to take home these materials. They will not be mailed.
- A list of any clubs that have **not** paid their CGCI dues will be provided for follow-up.

October

- **CGCI dues are delinquent October 1.** Follow up with any clubs on the unpaid list received at the Fall Board meeting to confirm dues are paid.
- Remind CLUBS about the Awards Program. Entries eligible for NGC awards including **Yearbooks and ALL Public Relations entries submitted for awards are due December 1.** **Mail early...**do not wait until December 1. Encourage clubs to follow the evaluation form for awards so that they are not disappointed with the results. All CGCI awards are listed in the yearbook and on the website. The website has the evaluation forms.
- Most CGCI award applications are NOW due January 10 of each year.

November

- **G4 Blue Ribbon Club Certificate of Achievement.** Distribute blue ribbon forms (available on CGCI's website) to each club president and establish a deadline as these should be sent to the Director to compile a list of clubs who earn 100 points out of 200. Submit the list to the appropriate chairman listed in the Yearbook/Website. This award is easy for the clubs to apply for and qualify to receive a blue ribbon.

December

- By **December 1**, certain award applications are due – National Garden Clubs Awards, some Pacific Region Awards and some CGCI Awards including Yearbook Awards. Be aware of these awards and deadlines.

January

- CGCI award applications are due by **January 10** each year.
- Remind clubs that participate in CGCI Liability Insurance program that payment is due prior to **January 15** each year.
- Register for CGCI Winter Board meeting prior to deadline.

February

- February 1: Renewal forms and fee due for Clubs that participate in the Group Tax Exemption Program
- **Winter Board Meeting** - District Directors are expected to attend the Winter Board Meeting (dates are usually determined a year or more in advance – check CGCI calendar on website) including all business meetings, meals and the District Directors Forum. If the District Director cannot attend, notify the CGCI President and send a representative for the district.
 - **Reports:** An oral reporting is expected at the Winter Board Meeting. Send an electronic report of any length to the President, District Director Coordinator and *Golden Gardens eNews* Editor. An abbreviated 100-word report for the CGCI Recording Secretary is sent electronically for inclusion in the meeting minutes. The oral report does not have to be a duplicate of the written report. Five minutes is allotted for the oral report at the meeting. The District Director Coordinator coordinates the District Directors reports.

March

April

- As clubs elect new officers, begin collecting data needed for District Roster of club presidents and treasurers.

May

- In an election year, compile the list of District officers. Include the names and FULL addresses of the incoming director and treasurer and the email address and/or telephone number of the district youth group leaders, newsletter and/or yearbook editors. **This list should be submitted online via the District Contact Information Form on the website prior to June 1.**
- **Register to attend CGCI Convention** including Pre-Convention Board Meeting, Convention, and Organizational Meeting.
- **By May 1 of each year** – Remind your clubs to submit updated Contact Information online via the Contact Information Form.

Publicity Ideas & Suggestions for Clubs

by Jane McKee, CGCI Communications Director

Definition: publicity: any information, promotional material, etc. which brings a person, place, product or cause to the notice of the public.

Do you have great programs, projects and activities but are not sure how to go about publicizing them? Here are some suggestions for getting the word out:

- Where do you get your information...
- Think beyond your club and/or neighborhood...
- Don't be afraid to ask...the worst they can do is say "no"...

WHAT?

Media resources include newspapers, magazines, newsletters, advertising flyers ("penny savers"), radio, TV, posters, handouts, online calendars and event notices and more.

WHERE & HOW:

- **NEWSPAPERS:** NOTE: Unfortunately in today's economic climate, many newspapers are no longer offering "community news" sections so it may be harder to obtain the coverage you need. But keep looking, there are alternatives.
 - **Small outlets** (usually a weekly edition covering a small town or neighborhood).
 - Contact the local editor or community editor and ask about coverage of ongoing activities (club meetings, guest speakers, smaller events), deadlines, how to submit (e-mail, fax) and photos (will they accept photos submitted by the club or do they prefer to provide their own photographer.) Invite them to your meetings/events.
 - **Medium outlets** (those covering one County, a segment of a County or a city area).
 - Contact as above, but many of these have a weekly "home/garden" sections and will do feature stories on larger events (flower shows, garden tours, luncheons, plant sales, etc.).
 - **Major media outlets** (those that cover the state or large counties) – *LA Times, San Francisco Chronicle, San Diego Union Tribune* etc.
 - Many have "local" editions covering a County or specific region but may restrict the type of coverage available i.e. "basic info" only, photos of the event (published after) but no pre-event photos, limited number of event submissions etc.
 - Under "contact us" (inside the local section) will be listed telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for everything from "late delivery" to "community news." Call or write and ask how to submit information on community events.
 - Today most major outlets rely on their online calendar section that will list the basic info of date, place, time, type of event. Check their websites for "submit your event" forms.

Following is a sample press release:

The _____ Garden Club will hold (insert your activity) on (date/time) at (location). (Insert specific information about the activity). The club meets the (insert your schedule ex: first Tuesday of the month), (time) at (location). Each meeting features (speaker, demonstration, refreshments, etc.). The program for (insert next monthly meeting if appropriate) will be _____. In addition the club sponsors (workshops/study groups/garden tours or whatever) throughout the year. Membership is open to anyone interested in gardening and guests are welcome at any meeting or event. For information contact: (name and phone number). _____ Garden Club is a member of _____ District, California Garden Clubs, Inc (CGCI) and National Garden Clubs, Inc. Founded in December 1931 with 23 charter clubs, CGCI has grown to 270 clubs with a membership of over 20,000. In addition to local community garden clubs, CGCI has 78 specialty Affiliates and

Associated Plant Societies and 158 Youth Groups. In 1932 CGCI was admitted to membership in National Garden Clubs, the largest volunteer gardening organization in the world.

- **TV/RADIO:**
 - Many local stations have programs that feature or highlight special community events or activities.
 - This may be a scripted ad or an informal interview with one or more of your members, maybe even “on location” at your event.
 - Check the local listings or their website for contact information.
- **MAGAZINES:**
 - Whether large or small, the important thing to remember is that magazines have a long lead-time for publication.
 - Most will need information a minimum of two (2) months in advance of their publication date. And most will, at the very least, offer a calendar listing or a paid ad.
 - Check your area for locally published magazines (Chamber of Commerce and Visitor’s Bureau are good sources) and how often they publish.
 - Many Chambers publish a local “resource” book listing businesses and attractions as well as clubs and their major events.
- **INTERNET:**
 - Post your SPECIAL event on the **CGCI** (and/or your district) online calendar.
 - “Google” the word(s) ‘garden’ or ‘garden club’, zero in on your area and you may find dozens of websites that are willing to publicize any/all activities.
 - You may also find the online version of magazines and other publications that have calendar listings.
 - If you have a club website be sure to link it to as many of these websites as possible.
- **POSTERS/FLYERS:**
 - Local merchants, nurseries/garden centers, libraries, community centers, real estate agents, farmer’s markets and many more...
- **MISCELLANEOUS:**
 - Check with other local organizations to see if you can post your events in their newsletters (perhaps an exchange?), on their websites (try the Chamber of Commerce or local Visitor Bureau), or have special event flyers available at their meeting.
 - How about real estate offices? Will they allow you to put club information flyers into “new resident” packets?
 - Free or special interest flyers/magazines that appear in your mailbox – many have calendar listings.
 - Nurseries and garden centers may have customer newsletters or a website that includes an event calendar.
- Did you have a PR plan that worked for you? Let us know – we would love to share it with all the clubs.

What Makes A Good Newsletter?

by Robin Pokorski, CGCI President 2007-2009

- Determine what your club members want and/or need to know. The newsletter is the communication tool between members. Content and presentation counts. Remember that “Less is More” in writing.
- To make it an award winner, use the evaluation sheet available on this website as a guideline (go to Awards). There are many information resources available to help you get information and layout ideas for your newsletter such as:
 - *Golden Gardens eNews*
 - *WACONIAH*
 - *The National Gardener*
 - The internet
 - CGCI website – www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org
 - National Garden Clubs website – www.gardenclub.org
 - Other gardening websites
 - District and/or club newsletters
 - CGCI Educational course materials
 - CGCI Board and Convention materials
 - Newsletters from local arboreta, botanic garden and garden centers

The keys to a good newsletter are good organization, proper production and circulation

- **Good Organization**
 - Prepare an issue-by-issue checklist so that everything that is needed to be included in each issue is included
 - Collect filler material in between times so that you always have a store of good material to include when room is available.
- **Proper Production**
 - Become familiar with good principles of layout and design. Always include a masthead and make the newsletter easy to follow.
 - Re-evaluate the layout annually to keep updating the “look.”
 - Always include the source of the material used in case people want to learn more about your subject.
 - If the newsletter is printed - use paper that facilitates reading. Vivid colored paper is eye-catching but hard to read. If the paper is too light, double sided printing may hinder readability.
 - Graphics and pictures add interest but need to be crisp and clear. Always give photo credits if available. But do be careful not to overdue the graphics! If the pages is cluttered or “too busy,” your reader will pass it by.
 - Production by committee is always a good idea.
 - Two (or three or more) heads are almost always better than one.
 - Solicit submissions by club members. They have a wealth of information to share and enjoy seeing themselves in print.
 - **BE SURE TO PROOFREAD!** Proofreading is an integral part of any newsletter. HINT: For spell checking, proofread backwards – for content proofing, read forwards.
- **Circulation** is another consideration. If no one gets your newsletter to read, why bother? Everyone likes to know what’s going on and learn new things. Send a copy to members as well as to:
 - CGCI President and Vice-Presidents
 - *Golden Gardens eNews* Editor
 - District Director and club presidents
 - Pacific Region Director and *WACONIAH* Editor
 - Another idea is to send a copy to speakers who give programs at your meetings before and after the speaker’s program. It gives them an idea of what to expect and how much you appreciated their good efforts.