

California Garden Clubs, Inc.
Minutes of the Fall Board Meeting
Harris Ranch Resort, Coalinga, California
September 19 – 20, 2023
Host: CGCI Executive Committee
President: Carol Vallens

Business Meeting #1

President Carol Vallens called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. on Tuesday, September 19. The Recording Secretary was present.

Northern California Blue Star Markers Chairman Maria Krenek led the Pledge of Allegiance.

President's Project Chairman Terri Taylor gave the Inspiration.

President Carol Vallens introduced the 2023-2025 Executive Committee and former presidents in attendance: Bob Gordon (2003-2005), Robin Pokorski (2007-2009), Rita Desilets (2013-2015), Sue Bennett (2015-2017), and Lynne Batchelor (2021-2023).

President Carol Vallens recognized those members of the Circle of Poppies in attendance: Joan Craig, Chuck Goodwin, Bob Gordon, Beverly Switzer, Charlotte Tucker, Judy Unrine, and Carolyn Villi.

President Carol Vallens recognized those members serving with her on the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Board of Directors and the Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc. Board of Directors.

Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst called the roll and the chair declared a quorum present.

Excused: Kathy Bramhall, Beverly Brune, Ron Byrd, Nancy Compton, Susan Delaney, Myrtle Findley, Ward Habriel, Cher Habriel, Karen Hall, Diane Hill, Joelle Holford, Rosalie Hooper, Carolyn Hoyum, Gudrun Kimmel, Marlene Kinney, Nancy McDougal, Jane McKee, Krystal Migliore, Rosa Radicchi, Terry Sampson, Jeri Stark, Bette Tang, Kathy Taylor de Murillo, Linda Travis, Elisabeth Tufo, Julie A. West, Carlotta Wixon-Welker and Pat York.

Registrar Robin Pokorski reported a total registration of 66 (including 62 board members).

Parliamentarian Greg Pokorski reported that the Rules of Order are found on page 4 of the Fall Board Meeting program. Rules of Order for Board Meetings were adopted at the Organizational Meeting on June 9, 2023 for this entire term.

Registrar Robin Pokorski moved to adopt the Fall Board Meeting program as printed. **Motion Passed.**

President Carol Vallens thanked the CGCI Executive Committee for hosting the Fall Board Meeting and Robin Pokorski and Rita Desilets for their involvement.

Without objection the chair appointed the following committee to review the minutes of this meeting: Greg Pokorski, Chairman, Judy Bates, and Chuck Goodwin.

Parliamentarian Greg Pokorski moved to adopt the minutes of the Pre-Convention Board Meeting on June 6, 2023 in Thousand Oaks as distributed by Jane McKee for Gail Vanderhorst on July 21, 2023.

Motion Passed.

Parliamentarian Greg Pokorski moved to adopt the Minutes of the June 7-8, 2023 Convention in Thousand Oaks as corrected after distribution by Jane McKee for Gail Vanderhorst on July 21, 2023.

Motion Passed.

Parliamentarian Greg Pokorski moved to adopt the Minutes of the Post Convention Meeting on June 9, 2023 in Thousand Oaks as distributed by Jane McKee for Gail Vanderhorst on July 21, 2023. **Motion Passed.**

Motion Passed.

Parliamentarian Greg Pokorski moved to adopt the Minutes of the Organizational Meeting on June 9, 2023 in Thousand Oaks as distributed by Jane McKee for Gail Vanderhorst on July 21, 2023. **Motion Passed.**

Motion Passed.

2023 Convention Chairman Rita Desilets reported. See Attachment C.

Financial Reports

Treasurer George Perko reported:

As of June 30, 2023:

Total Cash in Checking/Savings accounts	\$101,192	
Total Other Assets	\$515,117	
TOTAL ASSETS		\$616,309
OF which liabilities & restricted funds are		\$405,476
Cash Balance Available		<u>\$210,833</u>

Officers' Reports

Financial Secretary Rita Desilets reported. See Attachment A.

Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst reported the deadline for emailed reports is Wednesday, September 27, 2023.

Corresponding Secretary Shirley Lipa reported. See Attachment A.

Parliamentarian Greg Pokorski reported. See Attachment A.

3rd Vice-President Nina Blonski reported. See Attachment A.

Membership:

Clubs	181	9,472 members
APS	34	3,030 members
Affiliate	1	
Total	215	12,502 members

She moved to ratify the South Bay Bromeliad Associates as a new APS.

President: Barbara Smiley Number of members: 73

Motion Passed.

Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst reported for 2nd Vice-President Marlene Kinney.
See Attachment A.

1st Vice-President Adele Kelly reported. See Attachments B and C.

President Carol Vallens reported. See Attachment A.

Executive Committee Recommendations

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst moved to adopt or ratify the following recommendations:

1. To add \$74.00 to the \$300 budgeted for line code 1805, For Organization Locator Service. **Motion Passed.**
2. To budget \$8,000.00 for line code 4016, CGCI Hosted Meetings expenses. **Motion Passed.**
3. To budget \$8,000.00 for line code 5807, CGCI Hosted Meetings revenue. **Motion Passed.**
4. To add \$300.00 to the \$5,500.00 budgeted for line code 101, Auditor. **Motion Passed.**
5. To accept the invitation from Valley Lode District to host the 2025 Fall Board Meeting. Dates and place to be determined. **Motion Passed.**
6. To accept the invitation from Golden Foothills District to host the 2024 Convention at the Wyndham Hotel, Sacramento, May 19 – 22, 2024. Chairman: Sue Bennett. **Motion Passed.**
7. To ratify the following Official Calendar dates for the 2024 Fall Board Meeting at the Bear River Casino Resort, Loleta, September 8 -11, 2024. Chairman: Ellin Beltz **Motion Passed.**
8. To ratify the following Official Calendar dates for CGCI Landscape Design School Series 28, sponsored by Southern California Garden Club at Valley Park Baptist Church in North Hills, Alexis Slafer, Local Chair.
Course 1 — Friday & Saturday, June 21 & 22, 2024
Course 2 — Friday & Saturday, July 12 & 13, 2024
Course 3 — Friday & Saturday, July 26 & 27, 2024
Course 4 — Friday & Saturday, August 9 & 10, 2024
Motion Passed.

The meeting recessed at 2:39 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:55 p.m.

Committee Reports

California Consultants Council Chairman Sue Bennett reported, advising that the Council will be meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Belmont Room with a program “All about Landscape Design School” with the experts from Southern California Garden Club doing the presentation. All are invited.

Board of Trustees Secretary Sue Bennett reported for Chairman Julie A. West. See Attachment C.

Group Tax Exemption Program (GTEP) Chairman Sue Bennett reported and moved to ratify the removal of the Floral Arts of the Bay Area from the Group Tax Exemption Program.

Motion Passed. See Attachment C.

Awards Committee Chairman Pat Clayes and committee members Charlotte Tucker, Michele Blomberg and Lisa Cosand reported. See Attachment C.

Budget & Finance Committee Chairman Rita Desilets reported. See Attachment C.

Bylaws and Policy Committee Chairman Greg Pokorski reported and moved to amend Standing Rule #108 to read:

The incoming president shall be honored with an NGC life membership. In the case that the incoming president is an NGC Life Member, a donation to an NGC, PRGC, or CGCI project or program of an amount equal to the cost of an NGC life membership shall be made. This is the responsibility of the second vice-president. **Motion Passed.** See Attachment C.

1st Vice-President Adele Kelly presented a certificate to President Carol Vallens recognizing CGCI’s donation of \$200.00 to the NGC Plant America Project in honor of her becoming CGCI President.

Flower Show Schools Committee Chairman, Jennifer Waite reported.

Nominating Committee Chairman Lynne Batchelor reported. See Attachment C.

Procedures Committee Chairman Robin Pokorski reported. See Attachment C.

Strategic Planning Committee Chairman George Speer reported.

Scholarship Chairman Martha Smyser spoke regarding the President’s Project.

The meeting recessed at 4:15 p.m.

Business Meeting #2

The meeting reconvened on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at 9:02 a.m.

President Carol Vallens introduced the Timekeeper, Bette Langford, who explained how the reporting members would know when their time of three minutes was up.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst presented an additional recommendation: she moved to ratify a Flower Show Symposium on May 23 & 24, 2024, immediately following the 2024 CGCI Convention, at the Wyndham Hotel in Sacramento.

Motion Passed.

District Director Reports

District Director Coordinator Adele Kelly introduced those directors who reported. See Attachment B.

Advisory Council Chairman Lynne Batchelor reported. See Attachment C.

President's Project Chairman Terri Taylor reported. See Attachment C.

The meeting recessed at 10:10 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 10:27 a.m.

Chairmen Reports

1st Vice-President Adele Kelly introduced those chairmen who reported in the absence of Chairmen Coordinator Marlene Kinney. See Attachment C.

The meeting recessed at 11:09 a.m. To be reconvened at 12:30 p.m. rather than at 1:30 p.m.

Business Meeting #3

The meeting reconvened at 12:38 p.m.

Chairmen reports continued.

Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst read the Life Membership report from Life Membership Chairman Linda Travis and moved to ratify the following new Life Members:

Carol Weisker	Luther Burbank District
Kathleen Holmes	Mendo-Lake District
Monica Lewis	Judges Council of Southern California
Margaret McCay	Judges Council of Southern California
Martha Hunt	Greater Los Angeles District
Marilyn Hafermalz	Palms to Pines District
Kreg Hill	Judges Council of Southern California
Ron Lang	Palms to Pines District
Linda Lang	Palms to Pines District
Lori Witt	Sequoia Foothills District

Motion Passed.

2024 Convention Chairman Sue Bennett invited the members to the 2024 CGCI Convention to be held in Sacramento, May 19 – 22.

President Carol Vallens invited members to the 2024 Winter Board Meeting via Zoom, January 29 – 31, 2024.

The Executive Committee and President’s Project Raffles were conducted.

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Gail Vanderhorst _____ Date _____
Recording Secretary

Attachment A

Officer Reports

Financial Secretary, Rita Desilets

Since there are some District Directors and chairmen new to the Board, let's review how to request payment from CGCI for allowed expenses.

Find the Request for Payment form on the CGCI website and save this Word document on your computer. Complete the top section with your chairmanship, date, line code, name and mailing address. Itemize your expenses keeping in mind the budgeted limit. Type your name and save the file as a Word document, not a PDF.

Next scan the receipts saving them as a PDF. Attach both files to an email and send. If you do not scan, send the Word doc. email and snail mail the receipts. Your request will be processed when the receipts arrive.

Copies of the budget and cash receipt forms are available today.

Corresponding Secretary, Shirley Lipa

Since late June this secretary has sent:

1 Get Well card, 3 cards of Condolence, and 1 Happy Birthday card. A crash course in using Mail Chimp was given to this secretary by Jane McKee so that the 2023 Convention Minutes, the Call to Fall Board Meeting, and the above-mentioned card notifications could be sent to all CGCI Board members.

Parliamentarian, Greg Pokorski

According to our bylaws, the board of directors is the governing body of this organization and according to the standing rules, members of the board of directors shall attend regular and special meetings and conventions.

Who is the board of directors?

Officers = Executive Committee (not Executive Board)

District Directors

All committee chairmen

Members of the Nominating Committee

Members of the Board of Trustees

Members of the Advisory Council (former CGCI presidents – lifetime board members)

Members of the Bylaws Committee

Members of the Circle of Poppies (lifetime board members)

Many board members have multiple jobs, but all have one vote per person.

What does this board do (aside from individual projects and outreach)?

It is the governing body for the organization.

It transacts routine business.

It adopts standing rules.
It ratifies all classes of membership.
It adopts amendments to endowment charters.

Where do you find this information?

In the bylaws and standing rules.

Where do you find the bylaws and standing rules?

In the *Yearbook, Manual & Roster* and on the website. Both have been updated to include changes that were made over the course of the last year.

This officer has continued to review meeting agendas and minutes, participates in monthly Executive Committee meetings and monthly Bylaws Committee meetings and responds to inquiries from board members and from clubs and districts. That's the meat and potatoes of this position.

Additionally, this officer serves as chair of the Bylaws & Policy Committee, and you'll hear more about that in another report.

Madame President, thanks for the opportunity to serve CGCI and you in these positions.

3rd Vice-President/Membership, Nina Blonski

Current Membership

Number Paid as of September 16, 2023

<u>Total of Clubs</u>	<u>(total of members)</u>	
Clubs	181	(9,472)
APSS	34	(3,030)
Affiliates	1	
Total	215	(12,502)

CGCI has one new Associate Plant Society-

Madam President, I move to ratify the South Bay Bromeliad Associates

President: Barbara Smiley Number of members: 73

Motion Passed

This concludes my report.

2nd Vice-President, Marlene Kinney

2023 Fall Board Meeting 2nd Vice President's Report and Chairmen Coordinator

First of all, I want to thank our CGCI President, Carol Vallens for allowing me to attend this meeting via technology.

My goals for this term, 2023 to 2025 is to continue learning about bylaws under the direction of Greg Pokorski, Chairman. I have learned a lot from Adele Kelly under her bylaws Chairmanship term, 2021-2023. Thank You Adele.

My Chairmen Coordinator goals is to connect with all of you by multiple methods. The Kinney household is dealing with pancreatic cancer and my time can change abruptly. For all of you new chairmen, please share your ideas/suggestions. For our returning chairman, what kind of changes you will be making or thinking of making to attract someone new to step up and give the position a try.

This Executive Committee wants to hear from everyone including someone who has an interest but is afraid to ask questions. To be successful in moving CGCI forward in a positive way, we need to communicate in a safe environment. I will bring treats and I'm good for hugs. I look forward in meeting all of you in person real soon.

President, Carol Vallens

The CGCI Fall Board meeting was September 18-20, 2023, it was very successful and well-attended by many of our board members and a few guests. Two of the guests that attended, enjoyed the meeting so much that they joined the 2023-2025 CGCI board of directors. Our meeting at Harris Ranch in Coalinga, California was a new format for us in many ways. The meeting was a day shorter; meals were on your own with friends and we had no workshops or speakers. On Monday evening we did a game night where we had tables set up and you could go around and play different games and feast on snacks and fun with friends. On Tuesday evening the CCC had a wonderful program for us given by several of our own board members. We did not do workshops or speakers at this meeting and they were missed by many, so there is some tweaking that is needed if we do this type of meeting format again.

One idea I had been working on for over a year was to change the format for the chairmen's forum. This time we grouped the different chairman by like chairmanships and each group sat at a different table so they could all share ideas with each other. The feedback later that day and the next was fantastic. Everyone thought they got so much more out of the chairman's forum this time that we will continue to use this format going forward with a few minor tweaks here and there. Tuesday's meeting ended a little early, so members could rest up, have dinner and then attend the CCC meeting.

On Wednesday it was time for the district directors and the chairmen to report and I had requested that all members in attendance give an oral report, as well as submitting a written report. The reports were interesting, and everyone stayed within the time allotted so we could finish early on Wednesday as well.

Attachment B

District Director Reports

Bay Ocean District Director, Nancy McDougal

Bay Ocean District is still dealing with repercussions of the Covid years and the added loss of our beautiful Shane on whose spirit and knowledge we had assumed we could always rely. Though we survived well medically, the fact that the District lines of information and communication continued 'top-down' electronically throughout a time when no meetings were possible, seemed to foster the impression that face-to-face meetings were not as necessary as they had previously been. Several clubs have also found it difficult to start up again. As a result, we have had a very hard time getting representatives of groups back to meetings—despite short meetings, interesting programs, and morning pastries. Our main goal for the future is to revive attendance at our meetings and speed communication responses. Though we recognize that some clubs have problems of distance, traffic, or work schedules to come for a short meeting, most are able. We need for them to be also willing. An updated listing of local program presenters is being compiled and a group event is contemplated, both of which demonstrate the value of working together within our area---bringing the message & hopefully the cooperative response.

Buttes District, Former Director Carol Jauregui

The Buttes District is still slumbering and apparently we need to go back home and wake it up. No meeting dates have been set and our new District Director is being a caregiver to his wife.

I have gained so many good, practical ideas from this meeting, that I am actually recharged to go back and institute. The emergency card to be placed in the badge holder is such a great idea.

The bagged snacks to support President Carol's Scholarship project is do-able at club and district meetings.

Carolyn Villi's "Educational Garden", featuring deer resistant plants that will grow well in our own area, is a wonderful idea for demonstrating to the new members which plants will be successful in their own yards. My idea is to share with clubs that they could plant an area at their meeting place, and it would be like a demonstration garden. Existing members will benefit by learning what plants they can grow in their own gardens.

Donna Payton was also at our breakout table, and she told us about using plants that are both pollinator and insect friendly in the mix, for a "Two in one Garden"

There was a slogan that stated: "*If everyone takes a turn, it's easier on all of us*". Nothing could be more true. And I will add it to the yearbook and other publications.

Cascade District Director, Jill Cruz

Cascade District is trying to be proactive in getting new members by becoming computer literate. Cheryl Wheeler from Redding Wonderland Garden Club and her husband Wes are devising a District website and brochure that are interactive for all clubs in hopes to capture the computer driven younger crowds. We are encouraging team work and knowledge through public information booths, workshops, seed swaps, tours, and flower shows. We are learning that with fewer stepping up into officer positions, we need to change our bylaws.

Redding Wonderland Garden Club is working with a totally new set of officers and establishing a new website thru Apricot.

Lake California Garden Club has learned that there is actually a set of guidelines to host a District Meeting and has overcome hurdle after hurdle after accidentally scheduling the District Meeting on the wrong day.

Shasta Lake Garden Project is wondering if there will be anyone at the next meeting due to a disruptive, possibly mentally ill member who won't stop speaking out of turn and standing on tables to keep your attention. Any help here would be appreciated.

Red Bluff Garden Club informed me that they are moving forward with Flower Show School plans for the North State and their big luncheon fundraiser is set.

Anderson Valley Garden Club is processing a new Youth Garden Club at Monarch Charter School, and giving them planning guidance and \$500 to start their school Garden.

Cottonwood Garden Club has a new president learning to do newsletters.

Cascade Arrangers Guild has a flower Show Scheduled for April 2, 2024

The District Director is finding we can find peace in our gardens. It's our therapy, it's our happy place.

Thank you

Channel Islands District Director, Darcey Lober

The goals of this Channel Islands District Director for the coming year are as follow:

1. Solidify the camaraderie and information sharing of tours and programs between the various clubs in the district.
2. Invite special presenters to the District Meetings, and encourage presidents to welcome their clubs' members to join us.
3. Promote conservation, sustainable, and regenerative gardening techniques in personal, as well as, common spaces. We have native plant giveaways, and a conservation front yard signage promotion.
4. Invite Carol Vallens to the May 1, 2024 District Luncheon. We will be celebrating the 100th birthday of Ventura County Garden Club, at the Adolfo Camarillo Ranch House, in Camarillo.

Costa Verde District Director, Alexis Slafer

Being elected as the Costa Verde District Director is a great honor for me. I have been a member of the District for over 40 years and now look forward to serving in this new capacity.

The District, with 6 clubs is small...but mighty.

My theme *Your District: A Great Place to Grow* is the dream for our future. After being somewhat dark during the pandemic, we'll take advantage of each and every opportunity to enhance and enrich our District.

With the halcyon days of summer disappearing... it is time to say "Hello!" to our upcoming activity-filled year of Costa Verde District activities. Our board has been active revising our bylaws and host guidelines, as well as preparing an educational and fun schedule of activities.

Our speakers follow 3 NGC educational areas:

- Environmental -- with a talk on bees,
- Gardening with a talk on orchids and
- Floral Design with a talk on The Art of Ikebana from the Ohara School.

One activity that is a new experience for us is *Welcoming the San Fernando Valley District* members to our home at the South Coast Botanic Garden, while on their bus trip. What a wonderful chance to meet and get to know other garden club members.

And, finally we are anticipating with excitement the *Leadership Workshop*, being led by Robin Pokorski.

And these are just our initial plans. As our theme says Costa Verde District is A Great Place To Grow.

Diablo Foothills District Director, Jeri Stark

As I am not able to attend the board meeting, I am sending this report in my place.

Our District contains 5 clubs that have active clubs with their very well attended meetings containing programs that have wide interest among the members and in addition participate in separate smaller groups that support the communities where they live. A few of the activities include work parties in community gardens growing food for the local food banks, maintaining gardens in city parks, collecting seeds, and distributing through the local libraries, participating in annual parades. In addition, special interest groups meet to grow plants for sales to benefit their club; groups that meet to do crafts for the garden; groups to gain knowledge on edible gardening for personal use; and groups interested in flower arranging. With this report I am attaching documents from three of the clubs that list the programs and activities from the last couple of years.

Our district is floundering with limited participation and interest. Rental charges for meeting space have increased along with all other expenses and without an active group supporting the district the question comes up whether it is viable to continue as a district. We are interested in what other districts are doing to maintain interest and participation at the District level.

In addition, the costs to attend board meetings or conventions are such that the District and the Clubs are not able to support someone attending the meetings in other parts of the state. I can generally fund my own travels and expenses, but that is not true of all club presidents or district directors so the ability to interact with other clubs or districts is limited.

As I write this it occurs to me that perhaps rather than a district meeting, what if the clubs were inside a range of perhaps 100 miles, the clubs would meet for one day to hear a speaker and attend workshops that attendees could take back to their clubs. Any business portion would be very short and concise so as not to lose interest in attending.

Wishing you a successful and informative meeting.

Golden Foothills District Director, Annette Choate

Hello Madame President and members at large,

I am the new Golden Foothills District Director Annette Choate

Our district is excited to host the CGCI convention in May of 2024. My job will be to get my 10 clubs somehow involved and participating so it does not come down to a few.

My theme is "Teach others and be a force of Nature" It is important to share our knowledge, specialties, and talents that we all have. Whether it comes to the soil, plants or our environment.

A lot of my clubs go dark in the summer, but they shared they had successful plant sales, garden tours, workshops for fundraisers.

Chicago Park will put on their ever-popular Victorian Tea Affaire and this year feature "100 years of Garden Clubbing" vintage fashion show. This makes them a lot of money.

I Have 10 garden clubs in my district, and I belong to 4 of them. I hope I'm invited to each of them because I am looking forward to meeting other members of the clubs, I have only seen at district functions.

I hope to try and get more members interested in taking some of the schools offered by the NGC, I am a gardening consultant and plan to come down to the Landscaping course in Southern CA put on in June and promoting the environmental school as well. I have a member who said the zoom course of the environmental school was one of the best she had taken of all the schools

My challenge is to be the conduit between CGCI, and the district so more know what's going on in the state and what is available to them. Especially about the scholarships and awards, so more will apply. Thank you.

Greater Los Angeles District Director, Joyce Parrott

Greater Los Angeles District: Asked to focus on our goals for the upcoming year, a comparison was made between our District and the plight of the large, very old Banyan tree in Lahaina, Maui after the recent wildfires. The tree is now sprouting, and folks are hopeful for its survival. Signs of growth in the District are also evident. The Greater LA District will have its first meeting of the '23-'24 year in November. An email request was recently sent to each club asking about their upcoming activities, to be returned to this director. Five of the seven clubs responded overnight, which was a response not seen before. One club forwarded their report to all the other clubs in the district. Seeing this as a good exchange; this director will also forward each individual report to the other clubs, to increase awareness among the various clubs. Meeting location suggestions are also being offered. The sharing just described is an example of how the goal of increasing communication among the clubs will be encouraged. A second goal will be to increase the clubs' knowledge of CGCI programs and policies, e.g. through reports by the director, and quizzes at meetings. Third, it is hoped that district participation in the CGCI educational and awards programs will show an increase.

Humboldt District Director, Karen Hall

It is an honor to be Humboldt District Director. My theme is: "Redwoods, Rivers and Ranches". These three R's are what contributed to the formation of Humboldt County. I have been Vice President and President of Fortuna Garden Club. I joined in 2013, after retiring from my job as the office manager of a dental practice.

My goal as director is to encourage more members into each of our seven garden clubs. And, to promote Ways & Means Projects that benefit the district. We are a diversified group, so I am hopeful we will present many fun & profitable ideas with which to grow.

Many of us promote city beautification, with lovely flowers & trees, some advice & support youth gardening, and most have a Blue Star Memorial Marker. We all support Humboldt Botanical Garden, and recently there has been a joint effort to beautify the Hospice of Humboldt gardens. We are a wonderful group of people who care deeply about our community. People notice what we do and acknowledge our work in many ways. I am proud of the Humboldt District and what we do to make

our area a nicer place to live. It is my hope that we continue our good work together, and become more educated on our Redwoods, Rivers & Ranches.

Humboldt District has already begun making plans for the CGCI 2024 FALL BOARD MEETING. Our area is beautiful in the fall. We offer tall trees, breweries, vineyards, farm stands & farmer's markets, jewelry manufacturers, Victorian Villages and our wonderful Humboldt Botanical Gardens. There are many places for you to visit & a fine hotel, restaurant and casino for your stay. Hopefully a large group will attend & enjoy our hospitality.

Luther Burbank District, District Director Liaison Adele Kelly

There are nine clubs in the Luther Burbank District. This Liaison has contacted four clubs that have not submitted their CGCI Contact Information Forms and is in the process of contacting clubs that have not yet paid their CGCI membership dues for 2023-2024. This Liaison is also attempting to locate the financial files for the district to determine their financial status. This Liaison will setup a Zoom meeting with club presidents and treasurers to pass on information from the Fall Board Meeting and to discuss finding a District Director, Treasurer and Recording Secretary so that the district can become viable again.

Mendo-Lake District, District Director Liaison Adele Kelly

There are five clubs in the Mendo-Lake District. This Liaison has contacted one club that has not submitted their CGCI Contact Information Form and has not yet paid their CGCI membership dues for 2023-2024. This Liaison has also contacted the former district treasurer who is willing to pass on information from CGCI to the clubs. The clubs have also agreed to meet for the purpose of keeping the district active and the former treasurer will continue to collect dues. The club president of the club that hosts a district meeting will act as the director in the interim until someone steps up to serve as district director. This Liaison will setup a Zoom meeting with club presidents and treasurers to pass on information from the Fall Board Meeting and to discuss finding a District Director and Recording Secretary.

Orange County District Director, Launa Gould

Orange County District consists of 16 clubs with 1100 members. Clubs are busy with their activities and not very interested in attending District meetings. Travel distance to meetings at a central location is about an hour with traffic. Finding a central location to meet is our biggest challenge.

However, the June District meeting has become a big attraction. A light lunch is served, CGCI news and awards are announced. The main draw is the silent auction.

Clubs donate beautiful baskets.

We have a spirited silent auction.

ALL of the funds raised go to a District Scholarship.

This gives members of small clubs that do not give scholarships an opportunity to donate to a local student.

A scholarship recipient is chosen from clubs that submit one of their scholarship recipients. The District board awards from those submissions.

Interesting activities our clubs have planned:

- Renovate a Therapy Garden at the local elementary school. To accomplish this they are cooperating with Home Depot and reaching out to other companies and individuals.

- A school mom spoke at a club meeting about the school Green Team and several projects planned at the school. Members were so impressed the board decided to donate funds to the Green Team projects.
- HOA landscape company as speaker to learn more about the challenges of HOA gardening.
- For a community annual golf cart parade, a club will decorate a golf cart to promote their club. Our clubs are actively promoting garden clubbing in their community and schools.

San Fernando Valley District Director, Dana Boyd/presented by Martha Smyser

Dear Madam President Carol Vallens + CGCI Leadership,

Thank you for paving the way and investing in the local, district and state clubs and boards. Your hard work, encouragement, and success is what makes us all want to be a part of this winning team.

San Fernando Valley District is stacked with experienced leadership and we are fortunate to have that. One COULD be intimidated by this level of expertise but they have learned to share their experience AND nurture the new ideas of incoming leadership as well.

SFV District Goals:

1. Promote clubs to meet their goals and have fun doing so
2. Share best and new practices between club leadership & our governing bodies
3. Raise awareness of Garden Clubs by attending fundraising events within district
4. Promote CGCI President's Project - Planting the seeds of tomorrow today.

Below are few of the new developments in the SFV District:

- Orient the District activities to support and train people to succeed in their club roles.
- We did a summer tea this June for club presidents/treasurers in our 8 clubs to share ideas about fundraising resources, speakers, increasing membership, and parliamentary information.
- In August our (all new) exec team met to review the new yearbook and each person's past experience
- We added speakers to each district meeting to provide clubs speakers to consider for their clubs or as a fundraiser.

October - "Everything you wanted to know about awards but were afraid to ask", delivered by three members from different clubs as a quick-start to completing awards now online.

February - "About Roses" Scott Klittich from Otto & Son's & the CGCI & SCGC Garden Rose Chair, Natalie with her project

June - Shelley Sparks, Landscape Architect, will share how the Chinese principals of feng shui enhance the garden experience & a grant writer will speak to how to pursue grant opportunities for clubs in our district.

* Last year Martha (our Past DD) invited other districts to join one of our meetings, so this year, Costa Verde and SFV are meeting on their Turf at the South Coast Botanic Gardens for lunch and tour. This will be offered as a fundraiser.

* Finally, we are hosting a second fundraiser, "Tea and Roses" to generate awareness and funding for the Sepulveda Garden Center flower beds.

* As District Director, I plan to attend at least one club meeting for each of the SFV district clubs!

Santa Clara Valley District Director, Roseann Costabile

One goal for SCVD in the coming year includes making a pitch to activate the Central Coast District. The four clubs are located outside the Santa Clara Valley and are eligible to be represented as a CGCI District.

SCVD bylaws are outdated and need to be reviewed to reflect current policies and procedures. Create a printed document guide with dates, deadlines and resources for completing CGCI annual forms and payments to CGCI and SCVD. Guide will be sent via email and snail mail to presidents and treasurers.

As DD I will work toward more effective communication by telephone as well as electronic mail.

Top o' the State District Liaison, Carol Jauregui

As the liaison for the two clubs in this district, I can only report from afar as to how they are doing. Neither the McCloud club or the Yreka Garden Clubs have paid their CGCI dues.

In the past, the president of the Yreka club has told me that the McCloud hasn't expressed a desire to travel to Yreka for joint meetings or activities. Without a District Director, there is no person to encourage or plan a meeting between the two clubs. As liaison, I would like to be able to meet with the presidents, but picking the right time of the year to travel up there to pay them a visit is always weather dependent. They are approximately 53 miles apart. They pay no district dues.

Both clubs were members of GTEP, but I learned at the 2023 Convention that McCloud had dropped out of the program. McCloud has the larger membership of the two clubs. They do not list an email address, so communications has to be by snail mail; I have found that many clubs don't check their P.O. boxes that often. I will endeavor to reach them about their dues and to learn more about what programs they are doing as a club.

Valley Lode District Director, Paula Elias

I am happy to be the new VLD director after Berni Hendrix has served just about six years as the previous director. My motto is, when we all take a turn, it's easier on all of us. I plan on serving my two years as director supporting our club presidents to achieve their club goals. An example, I have taken my turn!

Our VLD goals for the year are:

*Increase social media awareness with a website, ongoing updates to our FB page and share club and district events on our public Google calendar.

*Develop a scholarship program for students within our VLD awarding \$1000.

*Offer a VLD Life Membership for \$50 with donations going to a new district scholarship program. Lucky for VLD, our advisory board, our former directors, including Berni Hendrix, Judy Sheppman and Bob Taylor are sponsors for this new Life Membership.

We have had our first VLD board meeting at a local nursery setting. All presidents are very excited about our VLD goals and they are busy planning the season with their clubs.

I believe anyone who has been a club president can be a director. I am developing a list of startup duties for an incoming VLD director. Everyone should take a turn.

Attachment C

Committee and Chairmen Reports

Advisory Council, Lynne Batchelor

The Advisory Council is composed of the former Presidents of CGCI. Members in attendance please stand to be recognized when I call your name. Currently there are 9 members including 1997-99 Beverly Brune, 2003-05 Bob Gordon, 2005-07 Elisabeth Tufo, 2007-09 Robin Pokorski, 2011-13 Julie West, 2013-15 Rita Desilets, 2015-17 Sue Bennett, 2017-19 Krystal Migliore. As the immediate past president 2021-23 I (Lynne Batchelor) serve as the chair.

As Robin says we are all Wasbuts which is short for I was important but now I'm not. Nevertheless, this committee brings not only a wealth of talent, knowledge, perspectives, diversity and experience to the organization but is highly invested in ensuring the current and future success of CGCI. Both as a committee and individually we are here to serve as a resource for each and every member.

We had our first meeting yesterday and took a few minutes to reflect on our term:

Robin-They were the best two years of my life.

Sue-I would be happy to do it again.

Bob-They went by too fast.

Lynne-I only regret that Covid robbed me of my first year because this last year visiting clubs/districts, meeting members, working with the Executive Committee, making friends was absolutely amazing. We tackled our first order of business which was to provide requested input on the proposed changes to the bylaws on Article XV (Advisory Council). We agreed unanimously* with their three proposals:

1. To change the name to Advisory Committee as we are not a council with our own bylaws, governing organization, dues, bylaws which exists outside CGCI, but are a committee of the board.
2. Assign the responsibility to submit recommendations to the Executive Committee when consulted which clarifies both our duties and the chain of command for recommendations.

Amenities and Protocol, Jeanne Johnson

This chairman is pleased to announce that Linda Smith has agreed to be the co-chairman of the A&P committee.

The president's son did the name tags that were placed at the executive's table. They were computer generated using CGCI's logo.

Water was placed at executive's table for each person.

Because there were no meals at this meeting, there was less information to be given to the group.

Information given during my report: remain quiet during the meeting, never approach the head table during the meeting; give information to A&P Chair, be courteous and respectful to each other and listen.

Arbor Day, Chuck Goodwin, Reporting for Berni Hendrix

At the CGCI FB2023 Chuck Goodwin, member of the Bylaws and Policy Committee, reported on the plans for the 2024 CGCI Arbor Day Tree Planting, scheduled for March 2 or 3, 2024. At this point

President Carol Vallens was recognized. She announced that former Valley Lode District Director Berni Hendrix had accepted the appointment as CGCI Arbor Day Chairman for the 2023-2025 term.

Returning to his report, Chuck recognized CGCI Environmental Schools Chairman Cynthia Jackson, who announced that the Ceres Garden Club would host The Environmental School, Series 7, in Modesto, beginning with Course 1, November 4-5, 2023, Course 2, January 6-7, 2024, Course 3, February 3-4, 2024, and Course 4, March 2-3, 2024. Berni Hendrix is the Chairman of the School. He then recognized Paula Elias, Valley Lode District Director, 2023-2025. The Ceres Garden Club is a member of the Valley Lode District.

The 2024 CGCI Arbor Day tree planting will be conducted by the Ceres Garden Club in conjunction with Course 4, on March 2 or 3, in the community of Ceres, which is less than a ten minute drive south of the location of the Environmental School, being held in Modesto.

All CGCI members are invited to attend the Arbor Day tree planting and more complete information will be posted to the Official CGCI Calendar.

Arboreta & Botanic Gardens, Sherry Molinari

An updated list of Arboreta & Botanic Gardens will be sent to CGCI shortly. As of today there are 77 gardens on the list.

I have visited perhaps a third of them and continue planning to visit more as I travel up and down the state. I find the chairmanship to be of great interest and I hope when you look at the list you will plan on visiting as many as you can, in your area, as you travel in California.

Awards, Pat Claves

Members: Pat Claves (Chairman), Judy Bates (Certificates), Michele Blomberg (Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest Assistant), Lisa Cosand (Youth Awards), Emily Troxell (Flower Show Awards), Charlotte Tucker (Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest), Elisabeth Tufo (Sponsors/Finance).

- My goal as Awards Chairman is to make every garden club member aware of the 58 (plus individual sections and classes) CGCI awards that are available, plus 4 youth contests. They need to know about the over \$6600 in award money that is available each year besides the ribbons, certificates, and trophies. **I am asking the District Directors to bring this message back to their clubs so that all clubs will know about this opportunity – APSs can also apply for awards.** The awards program creates pride and encourages members to further their efforts. Finally, receiving a prestigious CGCI award is one of the highest honors to be achieved.

- By the way, we received the first electronic award submission last week from Dos Valles Garden Club – a yearbook. The process worked perfectly!

- As submissions are now electronic and stored on my computer, this will supply *Golden Gardens eNews* and the Facebook page with many future interesting articles and posts, including high quality photos.

- Elisabeth Tufo reports that all monies have been received for the 2023 awards year, except one sponsor still owes a tiny bit of money, and Award #41 needs a new sponsor, but Elisabeth thinks that she has found a district to sponsor Award #41. In the future, if you, your club or your district would like to sponsor an award, let Elisabeth (elisabethtufo@earthlink.net) know as she is keeping a list of potential award sponsors.

Awards Page on Website: <https://www.californiagardenclubs.com/cgciawards/>

Blue Star Markers, Southern California, George Unrine

Caruthers Garden Club ordered a Blue Star Byway Marker with installation planned for Feb. 2024. Delivery time is now estimated at 20 to 24 weeks. Grants are available to help clubs and districts purchase markers - \$350 for large markers and \$100 for small markers. Application form is on the CGCI website and funds will be available when application is approved at the next board meeting following the order. Consider beautifying a new or old Blue Star Marker site and submitting a B2 award application.

Board of Trustees, Julie A. West

The Board of Trustees met virtually September 14, 2023 via Zoom with a quorum present. June 30, 2023 (End of Fiscal Year) Financial reports were reviewed with invited guest (CGCI's Financial Advisor and Treasurer), George Perko. Vanguard's June 30, 2023 quarterly statement was also reviewed and the good news is that both endowments gained in value.

The Restricted Fund Guidelines for 2023-2025 are being updated to be presented and approved at the 2024 Winter Board.

Budget & Finance Committee, Rita Desilets

The Budget & Finance Committee met on Sept. 13 on Zoom. Present were George Perko, Adele Kelly, Sue Bennett, Julie West, Launa Gould and President Carol Vallens. The agenda included review of 2022-23 financial records as well as the July-August transactions. One of the two US Bank CDs matured in August and was renewed for 11 months at a much higher interest rate of 4.83%. Four items were approved to be included in the Executive Recommendations at this meeting.

Bylaws and Policy Committee, Greg Pokorski

The great and enthusiastic Bylaws & Policy Committee members are Lynne Batchelor, Nina Blonski, Chuck Goodwin, Jeanne Johnson, Marlene Kinney, George Speer and this chairman. I realize there are some who think they are not interested in bylaws and parliamentary matters, but most or all of us find this to be a most interesting subject. The committee met by Zoom twice since the term began – on August 21 and September 11. In the meetings, the committee members review suggestions for amendments to bylaws, standing rules and policy.

We hope that all board members are familiar with these governing documents which are posted on our website. Bylaws and standing rules are also contained in the YMR. The website and yearbook have been updated to reflect amendments processed through the 2023 convention.

An article in the July/August issue of *Golden Gardens eNews* explains the amendment process and timeframes and that all board members may propose changes. Please use the Amendment Request webform implemented earlier this year to submit your suggestions. Do you all know where that is found?

Because bylaws can only be amended once a year at convention and proposed changes must first be approved by the board of directors, bylaws proposals must be submitted to this committee by November 1 so that they can be considered prior to referral to the board at the Winter Board Meeting.

At this time, please refer to the handout regarding Standing Rule 108. On behalf of the Bylaws & Policy Committee, I move to amend this Standing Rule as indicated on the handout.

To read:

108. The incoming president shall be honored with an NGC life membership. In the case that the incoming president is an NGC life member, a donation to an NGC, PRGC or CGCI project or program of an amount equal to the cost of an NGC life membership shall be made. This is the responsibility of the second vice-president.

Rationale: Sometimes the incoming CGCI president already has an NGC Life Membership. This honorarium should be available to benefit any worthy CGCI, PRGC or NGC cause.

The motion passed (without any opposition).

Chairmen Coordinator, Adele Kelly

In the absence of 2nd Vice President and Chairmen Coordinator, Marlene Kinney, President Carol Vallens and 1st Vice President Adele Kelly conducted the Chairmen's Forum held on Tuesday, September 19, 2023. Forty-two chairmen were present. After roll call, President Carol Vallens broke the chairmen into groups. Groups were organized under a new format that consisted of chairmen who had similar or related chairmanships. Each group brainstormed ideas that could help their fellow chairmen work together to be more productive and successful. The new format received many positive comments from the chairmen and will be used in future Forums.

The following chairmen gave oral reports at the Fall Board Meeting:

Lynne Batchelor

Sue Bennett

Pat Clayes

Lisa Cosand

Rita Desilets

Chuck Goodwin (for Berni Hendrix)

Jan Goehring

Launa Gould

Jill Cruz (for Carolyn Hoyum)

Bette Langford

Sherry Molinari

Donna Payton

Greg Pokorski

Robin Pokorski

Judy Powers

Alexis Slafer

Martha Smyser

Shelley Sparks

George Speer

Terri Taylor

Charlotte Tucker

George Unrine

Judy Unrine

Carolyn Villi

Jennifer Waite

District Director Coordinator, Adele Kelly

The District Directors' Forum was held on Tuesday, September 19, 2023. Seventeen district directors or their alternates, and two district director liaisons were present. The following new district directors were introduced: Nancy Bird, Dana Boyd, Annette Choate, Jill Cruz, Paula Elias, Alexis Slafer, and Paul Vander Werf.

Topics of discussion included:

- CGCI Contact Information Forms
- Hosting CGCI board or convention meetings
- District Director budgets and line codes
- Need to review district and club bylaws periodically
- Need to review the financial health and status of districts

President Carol Vallens addressed the Forum and spoke about the importance of succession planning. An open discussion period followed.

On Wednesday, September 20, 2023 the following district directors gave oral reports to the Board of Directors:

Arboretum – Nancy Bird
Bay Ocean – Susie Mawdsley (Alt.)
Buttes – Carol Jauregui (Alt.)
Cascade – Jill Cruz
Channel Islands – Darcey Lober
Costa Verde – Alexis Slafer
Golden Foothills – Annette Choate
Greater Los Angeles – Joyce Parrott
Humboldt – Maria Krenek (Alt.)
Luther Burbank – Adele Kelly (Liaison)
Mendo-Lake – Adele Kelly (Liaison)
Orange County – Launa Gould
Palomar – Sharon Tooley
San Fernando Valley – Martha Smyser (Alt.)
Santa Clara Valley – Roseann Costabile
Top o' the State – Carol Jauregui (Liaison)
Valley Lode – Paula Elias

Facebook Administrator, Pat Clayes

- My goal as Facebook Administrator is to post more articles from clubs, district, and associate plant society (APS) newsletters. But I cannot do this unless clubs, districts, and APSs send their newsletters to me. I currently receive about 27 newsletters a month – with over 235 clubs and 46 associate plant societies, you would think that I would be receiving more newsletters. **So, I am once again asking the District Directors to ask their clubs to send their newsletters to me.** Also, more followers would be nice. As of today, the Facebook page only has 1,830 followers (17.5% men and 82.5% women – 60% being 55+ young).

- **District Directors: Please let your district members know of CGCI's Facebook page.**

Facebook Address: <https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaGardenClubsInc>

Flower Show Schedules, Carolyn Hoyum

Sorry to have missed the CGCI Board Meeting in Harris Ranch BUT I am anxiously awaiting the first Flower Show Schedule to arrive so I can start critiquing it! "Please" if your district, and or Club is going to host a flower show send me a copy of your schedule! I would like to help you, your club or district have the perfect schedule. I have been reading and rereading the flower show handbook so I can more knowledgeably assist you. I am out of California for a year so the address to send schedules to for the next awards year is:

Carolyn Hoyum 2172S 1800E, Salt Lake City Utah 84106

Also if you are having problems writing one you can always call me at 360-581-1671 and as my new nanny position is demanding I will call you back after 7:30 pm which remember we are an hour ahead here.

So BRING "EM" ON! I'm waiting!!

Gardening Schools, Greg Pokorski

It's the same old story. This chairman is looking for clubs and/or districts to sponsor Gardening Schools. There have not been any in California since 2020, but for many years we had schools running all the time.

Last night, this chairman facilitated a program about NGC Schools at the California Consultants Council meeting which was well-attended and included a number of newcomers, so hopefully some people are newly informed about the value of NGC Schools, including Gardening Schools.

Contact this chairman for information. You can hold schools in the classroom, by Zoom or as a hybrid, involving Zoom and classroom participation.

Incidentally, Zoom schools were invented in California at the beginning of the pandemic and are now widely available across the country, having been embraced by NGC.

At the beginning of this year we had thirteen Gardening Consultants in danger of lapsing at the end of this year. Four have refreshed, and hopefully more will. Several reminders have been sent to these consultants and several articles have been in *Golden Gardens eNews*.

There is a Zoom Gardening School Course 1 on November 4 and 11 (two Saturdays), sponsored by Cushing Gladiolus Garden Club which is an Oklahoma Zoom garden club which some of us Californians belong to. Those consultants needing or wanting to refresh can utilize this opportunity.

So contact this Chair for information about holding a Gardening School, and Consultants contact this chair if you need information about your status.

Districts and clubs, know and recognize your Consultants and engage them in providing information, programs and exhibits to your groups.

Golden Gardens eNews, Pat Clayes

Members: Pat Clayes (Editor) Proofreaders: Judy Bates, Sue Bennett, Julie West. Writers-at-Large: Nancy Compton, Cheryl Habriel, Phil Stanley, Bette Tang.

- My goal as *Golden Gardens eNews* editor is to include informative articles from our chairmen, not only about fundraising, dues, etc., but about the items which are in CGCI's Mission Statement, such as gardening, floral design, civic beautification, environmental responsibility and related subjects to accomplish the CGCI's goal of the exchange of information and ideas. Having the award applications on my computer with good quality photographs will also give us some great information to share with our

club members about some of the worthy projects and achievements accomplished by our members, clubs and districts.

- Another goal is to obtain more subscribers to the newsletter. **District Directors: Do your club members know about the publication? Do they know how to subscribe?** Only approximately 4,000 people subscribe to *Golden Gardens eNews*. With over 16,800 CGCI members, it's a shame that we do not have more subscribers to this free publication that is published six times a year.

Link to subscribe: <https://www.californiagardenclubs.com/enews-subscription-form/>

Group Tax Exemption Program (GTEP), Sue Bennett

Once again, a big shout out to George Perko. Thank you for all your help.

Since June 2023

- This Chairman has sent required paperwork to the Franchise Tax Board.
- Updated the Renewal Form, Cover Letter and Handbook
- Worked with Jane McKee to have the GTEP Annual Renewal Paperwork sent out, which was done late August. Earlier than announced.
- As of Saturday's mail, () GTEP renewal forms have been received.

* Congratulations to Los Osos Valley Garden Club and Paradise Garden Club, Inc. for being the first two I received.

Madame President, I move to ratify the removal of the

- Floral Arts of the Bay Area
- from the Group Tax Exemption Program.

- Total 113 member clubs/districts

Reminder, the deadline is to have the renewal paperwork postmarked by February 1, 2024. There is a late fee of \$15 for all those with a later postmark.

Be Kind, we are all volunteers.

Hotel Contracts, Rita Desilets

This chairman reviews the final meeting contracts before they are signed to ensure they are complete, accurate and favorable in terms to CGCI.

Landscape Design Schools, Alexis Slafer

This chair is pleased to report that Landscape Design School, Series 28, will be hosted by Southern California Garden Club, in North Hills. This school is currently in the planning phase, but it will be an in-person school, being held during the summer next year, 2024. There are flyers with this information available from this chairman.

The total number of active Landscape Design Consultants now stands at 36 -- this number includes Master and Provisional consultants. Luckily, there are only 2 consultants whose credentials will lapse at the end of this year... if they don't refresh by December 31st. If you are concerned about your current Consultant status, please ask this chairman.

There have been and continue to be many school and refresher opportunities across the country...it is so easy to attend a Landscape Design School or to refresh via Zoom. Just look on the NGC website for an

upcoming event that fits your schedule. Or, even better, attend the school being planned by SoCal Garden Club.

Please encourage your club or district to sponsor a landscape design school. Our Landscape Design Consultants are the perfect people to act as local school chairs. Also, look to our Consultants with their expertise to act as speakers at your programs. And, this chair is happy to help in any way -- it will be a lot of fun...and "pain free". Just contact this Chair so we can chat about it...

Life Membership, Linda Travis

It's been a busy summer for this newly installed CGCI LM Chair.

Since June, we have processed ten new CGCI LM's. New names to be ratified:

Carol Weisker	Luther Burbank District
Kathleen Holmes	Mendo-Lake District
Monica Lewis	Judges Council of SoCal
Margaret Ann McCay	Judges Council of SoCal
Martha Hunt	Greater LA District
Marilyn Hafermalz	Palms to Pines District
Kreg Hill	Judges Council of SoCal
Ron Lang	Palms to Pines District
Linda Lang	Palms to Pines District
Lori Witt	Sequoia Foothills District

(As of September 4th, there have been no PR LM's or NGC LM's processed for this same time period).

Following in the footsteps of NGC's efforts to 'go paperless', all previous LM application hardcopies (for CGCI, PR and NGC) have been converted to electronic formats, as follows: CGCI LM Chair computer file; two flash drives; a Read Only CD and 'the Cloud'. (Hardcopy applications will be maintained for the two previous years plus current year only). The oldest record scanned had a date listed as "Pre-1956" ...a very good year, incidentally!

The biggest improvement has been the revamping of the CGCI website LM application process, to streamline form generation and submittal. Special thanks go to both Jane McKee (Webmaster Extraordinaire) and Tom Travis (CGCI LM Chairman's IT Support/Husband) for their hard work. Your PR LM's and NGC LM's are now submitted by the applicant directly to those respective Chairs (not through the CGCI LM Chair) which should expedite these awards.

Please continue to look for updates on the CGCI LM process and awardees, in future issues of the *Golden Gardens eNews* letters.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your CGCI LM Chair and for your continued support of the scholarship fund.

Memorial Gardens, Sherry Molinari

This chairmanship was brought back in Shane Looper's presidency. It had not been around or updated for several years. When I received the information sheet from Shane I sent it to all District Directors and presidents of clubs in the state. I had two responses, one that was wrong and the other one sent to Shane has been lost since her death.

I will send again to all new District Directors and presidents and hopefully I will get a better response this year. The information sheet gives full details of what information this chairman needs to make a new list which will be posted on the CGCI website.

Nominating Committee, Lynne Batchelor

As I call their names, I am requesting that the members of the committee please stand, so that everyone will recognize them. The members of the Nominating Committee representing Region 1 are Jeanne Johnson from Humboldt District and Charlotte Tucker from Valley Lode District; representing Region 2 are Milly Benson from Montana de Oro District and Jana Dudley from Sequoia Foothills District; representing Region 3 are Robin Pokorski from San Fernando Valley District and Alexis Slafer from Costa Verde District; our Alternate is George Speer from Palomar District and I am the Chair Lynne Batchelor from Palomar District. All members were in attendance at our committee meeting.

This committee holds the future of CGCI in their hands as their task at Winter Board 2025 is to present a slate of 7 officers who will lead our wonderful organization. The office of President has been filled as Adele Kelly will become President Elect following Convention 2024. We will actively be seeking candidates for all other offices positions: Vice Presidents including 1st, 2nd, 3rd; Secretaries including Financial, Corresponding and Recording; and Treasurer.

We need the help of all members of the Board of Directors in order to identify potential members willing to step into leadership. Please talk to members of your clubs and districts whose skill sets will make them a valuable part of our leadership team. Don't wait for someone to nominate you; tell us you are interested. Merely expressing interest does not obligate you to do anything but provides you with the opportunity to meet with our committee to further explore the idea of CGCI service. Please give names of potential leaders to any member of the nominating committee either in person during these two days or via email/phone/text at any time. Our contact numbers are in the Directory and will be in the next *Golden Gardens enews*.

The Nominating Committee members would like to attend your district meetings in order to try to identify potential leaders for the state organization and to make a two-minute presentation about the opportunity to serve CGCI. Please advise the members in your region (see first paragraph) of your district meeting dates.

As an aside because this is my first meeting in 8 years that I am not sitting on the stage, let me assure you that serving on the Executive Committee is so much fun. Because when we are up there, we present a very solemn and professional demeanor, you may have the idea that it is not a very pleasurable experience. I assure you that is not the case. Although we handle the business of the state professionally, there is ample time to cement friendships and enjoy ourselves. So please consider joining the Executive Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Penny Pines, Terry Sampson

As the new chair for Penny Pines I have found this position to be very interesting. I have had some contact with the National Forest and I am learning more about this organization as I go along. I will be writing articles for the *Golden Gardens E news* periodically. I will have more information on Penny Pines at the Winter Board meeting.

Permanent Files, Rita Desilets

The Permanent Files contain CGCI's historical books and records. They are stored in a closet at my house. Included are Yearbooks, minutes, *Golden Gardens* printed and *Golden Gardens e-News* on flash-drive. An updated list of materials is maintained by this chairman.

If anyone is interested in taking on this chairmanship, let me know. Have truck, will deliver.

Pollinators and Insects, Donna Payton

Hello!

I am Donna Payton, CGCI Insect and Pollinator Chair for 2023-2025. My goal for this term is to encourage garden club members and all California residents to grow native plants on balconies, patios, gardens, and yards. Why native plants? Native plants are better suited to our seasonal rainfall pattern and our increasingly hotter, drier climate than the alien cultivars from Europe and Asia that our local wildlife cannot use for food which are sold in most nurseries and big box stores.

More importantly, native plants provide food and habitat for the "little things that run the world"-insects! Insects are essential to the food web which all animals, including humans, depend on for survival. The caterpillars of butterflies and moths are the most advantageous because of their soft bodies, making them easy to digest, fat *and protein filled sausages*, essential food for birds, some insects, spiders, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and even humans in some places. Plus, the butterflies and moths that survive to adulthood from these caterpillars become vital pollinators.

Which native plants are most beneficial? Native plants which are *host plants*- plants with leaves that butterfly and moth caterpillars are able to eat. Of these, the native plants which are able to provide food for the highest number of butterfly and moth caterpillars are called *keystone species*. For example, narrow leaf milkweed is host (food) for 7 species of butterfly and moth caterpillars while a scrub oak tree is host to 166 species, so scrub oaks are a keystone species in California.

To find which native plants are native to your area, go to the National Wildlife Federation Plant Finder and enter your zip code to find which flowers, grasses, trees and shrubs host the largest number of caterpillars, to do the most good. Another great resource is Calscape which lists 19 categories of plants with that you can grow to nourish wildlife and fuel the food web for all of us.

Post Office Box, Robin Pokorski

I am so pleased to serve as your PO Box Chairman – it actually is an interesting job. The San Fernando Post Office is open for only limited hours each day so mail may sit at the post office for a few days before I am able to retrieve it. I know that our organization needs an official and permanent PO Box address HOWEVER, I would so appreciate it if you would send your donations to my home address in order to expedite the processing of your donation.

Additionally, mail addressed to the PO Box must have California Garden Clubs as the main addressee or it will be returned. Sempervirens, sorry to say, has sent 2 or 3 newsletters but they are returned each time. And a new wrinkle to make you aware of is if your club or district sends correspondence such as sympathy cards, congratulations and the like to specific board members, it only means that after I pick them up I then have to forward them to the correct person. Please advise your Corresponding Secretary to use the address listed in the email sent, NOT our PO Box.....Poor Myrtle will be another year older before I get her card forwarded on to her!

Thank you for the opportunity, President Carol, to serve CGCI in this capacity.

President's Project, Terri Taylor

"Plant America – Plant seeds for tomorrow, today"

It has been a busy summer. Setting up record keeping, coming up with creative ideas for fund raising.

Giving thought to what it really means, to help students who need our support to complete their education.

Without a doubt, there is a greater need today than ever before.

We began our journey in June of 2023 as several generous donations were received. We have also added some ideas for collecting “Spare Change” which to date has added another sum of money to the scholarship fund. You can take a “Spare Change Bank” home and return it filled to the brim. Every penny counts. I have several businesses who have taken a larger can and will also add to our fund. This is one of the ways to raise funds and awareness.

We are planning a yard sale, hosting a Tea, and looking for other ways to include others, not just CGCI and other Districts to do all the funding.

As of August 31st. we have received \$2701.00 and since then are now over \$3000.00. During this meeting you will notice more ways we are asking for your support.

Cowboy cookies, Happy Trails to you trail mix, Table décor, Jewelry, Silent Auction and Raffle.

A life size “Giving Tree” is barren and waiting to be filled with leaves and flowers. As you donate, your name will be written on the leaf and placed on the tree. You can donate in honor or memory of someone. Their name will also appear. If you give a single \$200.00 donation you will have a flower added to the tree.

Please help to fill this tree by convention if not before.

Procedures Committee, Robin Pokorski

I have the pleasure of chairing another GREAT committee: Procedures. Back by popular demand the Procedures Team of Launa Gould and Alexis Slafer and this chairman will pour over each and every position and attempt to document “how to do this job.” We have not met yet but will soon set a schedule to meet via Zoom regularly – pouring over each and every facet and aspect of procedures.

We hope well-documented procedures will encourage more people to join our CGCI Board of Directors bringing with them their new ideas and a renewed jolt of energy to this board.

Thank you, President Carol, for the opportunity to serve you and CGCI as your Procedures Committee Chairman.

Registrar, Robin Pokorski

Please consider the CALL your invitation to an event with a specific RSVP date and show your courtesy to your hosts in responding sooner than later. A firm “final date to register” is on all registration forms. When you receive the CALL, register right away. Since many of us like a challenge, I challenge YOU to try to get your registration in before Marlene Kinney! She is usually the first in, and is my poster child for courtesy! On the other end of things.....a late-comer she may be, but the award for the best rendering of a moose is given to Kathy Taylor de Murillo!

An item to bring to your attention are the increased costs associated to putting on a CGCI meeting – convention or board meeting. Partly because of the pandemic and partly because CGCI no longer brings in enough members to these meetings, hotels are charging meeting room rental. These fees can range from \$2,500 to \$6,000 per meeting. These costs will need to be recouped in the registration fees so don't be surprised that our registration fees will increase.

This chairman applauds our President for her far-sighted vision to hold this meeting at this facility and make it work without meals. Meals would have been more than \$55 per lunch and upwards of \$80 per dinner for even the cheapest menu selections. Additionally, the price of this room would have nearly doubled as it would then require servers as well as set-up and clean-up. This was a smart, cost-efficient solution and it's up to all of us to make it a success!

We continue to improve this registration process and welcome your input. Thank you, President Carol for the opportunity to serve CGCI in this capacity.

Roses, Natalie Bloxham

My name is Natalie Bloxham. I am a 50 year member of the Toluca Lake Garden Club, SFV District Treasurer and an avid rose gardener. Last November I joined Southern California Garden Club and was approached by a member who invited me to join her committee charged with deadheading and weeding of the public rose garden just outside our meeting place known as the Sepulveda Garden Center.

This garden, covering 3200 square feet, consisted of roses covered with suckers in four 80 foot long beds filled with nut grass. The member seemed overwhelmed and not too happy with her responsibility.

I heard myself saying "I would be happy to take it over!"

I was asked to prepare a proposal for the board. I did that. They accepted and agreed to fund my conservative budget which included employing a rose guru who has taken care of my own rose garden since 2002.

Since then, both I and my gardener, Enrique, have transformed one of the four beds so that I could then meet with the city, show it as an example of my plan, and encourage the city to repair the concrete borders around two of the beds which were public safety hazards.

The city has agreed to fix the borders. I told them I wanted the work completed by the end of December, and they thanked me for giving them four months in which to complete the repairs

My goal is to transform this public garden by February 2024 into a tranquil public gathering place and create a lecture series on all things horticultural for the general public.

If you have a passion about something, don't just think about it. Take action! Good things can and will happen.

Scholarships, Martha Smyser

The Chairman gave a brief summary of the various scholarships available through CGCI. The Pacific Region and National Garden Clubs and referred members to the CGCI website. The scholarship information can be found by going into the forms section and finding the scholarship tab. The Chairman encouraged clubs which give scholarships to college students to make sure they know about our scholarships and to submit an application.

This year CGCI will give out four scholarships each of which is for \$2,000. In addition to the Robert Gordon and Lynne Batchelor scholarships we have the Alberta Thiry Memorial Scholarship. New this

year is the Glenn and Anne Capes Memorial Scholarship which will be awarded to students who either live in or are studying in Butte, Shasta, Humboldt or Tehama Counties.

The Chairman heartily supports President Carol Vallens' project Planting the Seeds of Tomorrow, Today which seeks funds to support our scholarships.

Sempervirens Fund, Judy Unrine

-Because of the Covid Virus and devastating fire that destroyed many of the Sequoia trees in Big Basin State Park, the dedication of the 2011-2022 President's Tree, honoring Julie West, Rita Desilets, Sue Bennett, Krystal Migliore, and Shane Looper, was delayed. On June 2, 2023, President Lynne Batchelor held the dedication. Past President Sue Bennett was the only president being honored able to attend.

-Big Basin Rescue Fund: February 2021-June 2023. During the 2023 Convention, Big Basin Rescue Restricted Fund was closed and remaining funds were donated to Sempervirens Fund.

One week ago Sempervirens Fund Management announced the purchase of property at Castle Rock Hollow. CGCI received a thank you note from the Sempervirens Fund management: "It is official, Castle Rock Hollow is protected forever, thanks to you and your support. It wouldn't have been possible without your help to raise the remaining funds to protect the forests which were zoned for commercial timber harvest.

Santa Cruz District Superintendent of State Parks stated that by protecting Castle Rock Hollow the western border of Castle Rock State Park was completed, the Skyline to the Sea Trail was realigned, and nearly 6,000 protected acres of habitat and wildlife corridors were connected.

-We would like to thank Riviera Garden Club and Milly Benson for their generous donations. The Redwoods are a symbol of longevity. These donations will help with the fight to protect and preserve the beautiful trees for future generations. Donations to the Sempervirens Fund can be made by accessing the CGCI website.

Stamps, Terry Sampson

A "big" thank you for all of the clubs/members that have sent their used postage stamps to me. Once a year I send all of the stamps I have received to the Postal Museum in Tucson, AZ. They sort the stamps and use them for educational purposes. Once again, thank you for supporting this cause.

State Pins and Miscellaneous Sales, Sherry Molinari

This is a new chairmanship for me for 2023-2025. I look forward to being of help for those who wish to purchase CGCI pins and the many publications that are available to take back to your clubs. I also encourage you to bring in books of interest about gardening, specific plants, time to plant, identification of plants, etc. to share with your fellow members of CGCI. These types of books did very well at this Fall Board Meeting. If you missed getting something you wanted for your club such as *How to Be a Blue Ribbon Club*, I will be sure to have them next time we meet. Thank you for your purchases at the Fall Board Meeting.

Youth Coordinator, Lisa Cosand

As youth coordinator, I have two jobs: to encourage and help with registration of junior clubs, either the hands on kind or monetary support ones.

My second job is to collect and have judged the four youth awards other than Smokey the Bear which Charlotte Tucker and Michelle Blomberg handle.

Congratulations to the members who listened at the last meeting and encouraged their clubs to register their youth groups. We increased from 11 clubs to 33 clubs. Now I am pretty sure there are more out there but what a great start. We will be ratifying some new clubs at this meeting. The question has come up, does a child need to be in a youth club to enter the contests. No, there are individual entries but they must come through a garden club member as their mom, aunt, dad, or grandpa. We have more individual entries now since the clubs didn't operate during the pandemic.

AS far as awards, it is time to encourage your Youth to enter. December 1 is the deadline for most of them except Smokey the Bear which is Jan. 24 this year. If a class is writing poetry, please just send the top five in for judging. I have made a chart so you can see what grade can enter which contest. The fourth and fifth graders have the most opportunities and are eligible to enter all 5 contests.

The winners will receive their checks this coming year in April to distribute before the end of school.

As for the supporting evidence for the award, please have just the photograph of the sculpture without the child holding it. Whenever a picture of a child is used, a release must be signed. Releases are on the website.

2023 Convention Chairman, Rita Desilets

Having a great Southern California Garden Club team made being chairman of the convention a joy! The convention began with a tour of the Reagan Library, followed by dinner and a fun game night. The Awards Banquet, CCC Banquet and Installation Gala followed. Our speakers and workshops were well received. The variety of educational exhibits, a great raffle and ever popular boutique added to the excitement. Attendance was less than planned, however the event was a financial success none-the-less.

It is my pleasure to announce that a check for \$2,038.55 was given to CGCI during the summer.