

California Garden Clubs, Inc.
Minutes of the Fall Board Meeting
Harris Ranch Resort, Coalinga, California
September 8 – 10, 2025
Host: Valley Lode District
President: Adele Kelly

Business Meeting #1

President Adele Kelly called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. The Recording Secretary was present.

Governance Committee member Chuck Goodwin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Advisory Committee Chairman Carol Vallens gave the Inspiration.

President Adele Kelly introduced the 2025-2027 Executive Committee and former presidents in attendance: Bob Gordon (2003-2005), Elisabeth Tufo (2005-2007), Robin Pokorski (2007-2009), Rita Desilets (2013-2015), Sue Bennett (2015-2017), Lynne Batchelor (2021-2023), and Carol Vallens (2023-2025).

President Adele Kelly recognized those Circle of Poppies members in attendance: Chuck Goodwin, Bob Gordon, Robin Pokorski, Judy Unrine, Hank Vanderhorst, and Carolyn Villi.

President Adele Kelly recognized those members serving with her on the 2025-2027 National Garden Clubs, Inc. Board of Directors and the 2025-2027 Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc. Board of Directors.

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

Excused:

Ellin Beltz, Dana Boyd, Kathy Bramhall, Beverly Brune, Nancy Compton, Lisa Cosand, Susan Delaney, Diana Drummey, Myrtle Findley, Patricia Holloway, Donna Hood, Rosalie Hooper, Cynthia Jackson, Gudrun Kimmel, Shirley Lipa, Dyanna Madro, Nancy McDougal, Jane McKee, Krystal Migliore, Rosa Radicchi, Cornelia Reynolds, Terry Sampson, Phil Stanley, Beverly Switzer, Linda Travis, Charlotte Tucker, Julie A. West, Lori Witt, Carlotta Wixon-Welker.

Registrar Robin Pokorski reported a total registration of 66 members (including 53 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 5, 2025 for this entire term.

Fall Board Meeting Chairman Paula Elias moved to adopt the Fall Board Meeting program as printed.
Motion Passed.

President Adele Kelly thanked Paula Elias and Valley Lode District for hosting the 2025 CGCI Fall Board Meeting.

Without objection the Chair appointed the following committee to review the minutes of this meeting: Greg Pokorski, Chairman, Marlene Kinney, and Carol Jauregui.

Minutes Review Committee Chairman Greg Pokorski reported that the minutes of the June 3, 2025 Pre-Convention Board Meeting in Laguna Hills were reviewed and posted on the CGCI website on July 17, 2025. Without objection they were **adopted as posted**.

Minutes Review Committee Chairman Greg Pokorski reported that the minutes of the June 3-4, 2025 Convention in Laguna Hills were reviewed and posted on the CGCI website on July 17, 2025. Without objection they were **adopted as posted**.

Minutes Review Committee Chairman Greg Pokorski reported that the minutes of the June 5, 2025 Post-Convention Meeting in Laguna Hills were reviewed and posted on the CGCI website on July 17, 2025. Without objection they were **adopted as posted**.

Minutes Review Committee Chairman Greg Pokorski reported that the minutes of the June 5, 2025 Organizational Meeting in Laguna Hills were reviewed and posted on the CGCI website on July 17, 2025. Without objection they were **adopted as posted**.

2025 Convention Chairman Launa Gould reported on the 2025 Convention in Laguna Hills. See Attachment B.

Financial Reports

Treasurer George Perko reported:

As of June 30, 2025:

Net worth:

Total Cash in checking/savings accounts	\$81,748	
Total Other Assets	\$662,657	
TOTAL ASSETS		\$744,405
of which liabilities and restricted funds are		\$455,655
Cash Balance Available		\$288,750

Officers' Reports

Financial Secretary Launa Gould reported. See Attachment A.

Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst reported the deadline for emailed reports is Wednesday, September 17, 2025.

Corresponding Secretary Shelley Sparks reported. See Attachment A.

Parliamentarian Greg Pokorski reported. See Attachment A.

2nd Vice President/Chairmen Coordinator Nina Blonski reported. See Attachment A.

1st Vice President/District Director Coordinator Marlene Kinney reported. See Attachment A.

President Adele Kelly reported. See Attachment A.

Executive Committee Recommendations

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst read the following recommendations from the committee:

1. To add Financial Secretary Launa Gould as a signer on all Bank of America accounts and to add Symposium Treasurer Nina Blonski as a signer on the Bank of America account ending in 8298; and to remove 2019-2021 President Charlene (Shane) Looper as a signer on Bank of America accounts ending in 7947 and 8298; and to remove 2019-2025 Financial Secretary Rita Desilets as a signer on Bank of America accounts ending in 1028, 7947, 8298, 8324 and 7050. **Motion Passed.**
2. To accept, with regret, the resignation of Elisabeth Tufo as APS Liaison. **Motion Passed.**
3. To approve the registration fee of \$10.00 for the 2026 Virtual Winter Board Meeting, with a late registration fee of \$20.00 if postmarked between January 14, 2026 and January 21, 2026. No registrations accepted if postmarked after January 21, 2026. **Motion Passed.**
4. To ratify the date of February 13, 2026 for a Virtual Flower Show Procedures (only) course for Course 3 of the Flower Show School sponsored by Southwestern Judges Council. **Motion Passed.**
5. To ratify corrected dates of February 19-21, 2026 for Course 3 of the Flower Show School sponsored by Southwestern Judges Council in Poway. **Motion Passed.**
6. To ratify the dates of April 15-16, 2026 for a Flower Show Schools Symposium in Fresno hosted by Valley Judges Council. Chairman, Jennifer Waite. **Motion Passed.**
7. To ratify the dates of May 11-14, 2026 for the 2026 Convention at the Handlery Hotel in San Diego. Hosted by Palomar District. Chairman, Diana Drummey. Treasurer, Sharon Lowery. **Motion Passed.**
8. To approve Diana Drummey to serve concurrently as Palomar District Director and 2026 Convention Chairman. **Motion Passed.**
9. To ratify the dates of August 31 to September 2, 2026 for the 2026 Fall Board Meeting at Harris Ranch Resort in Coalinga, hosted by Hermosa Garden Club. **Motion Passed.**
10. To ratify the dates of January 25-27, 2027 for the 2027 Virtual Winter Board Meeting. **Motion Passed.**
11. To approve new line code 1584 for Pollinator Poster Contest Chairman. Budget \$50.00. **Motion Passed.**
12. To revive line code 1531 for Honor Book Chairman. Budget \$50.00. **Motion Passed.**

13. To establish line code 2902 A/V Tech Support for CGCI meetings. Budget \$5,000.00. **Motion Passed.**
14. To increase the late fee to \$50 for GTEP renewals postmarked after January 15. Organizations not renewing by March 1 will not be eligible for renewal. **Motion Passed.**
15. That the annual liability insurance rate for the 2026-2027 policy year be \$1.75 per member with a \$20.00 minimum per club. That the late fee for insurance payments received after January 15 be increased to \$30.00. That the charge for Additional Insured Certificates be \$45.00 and that there be no change in the \$15.00 rush fee for Additional Insured Certificate requests received less than 14 days prior to the event. **Motion Passed.**

The meeting recessed at 2:28 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:41 p.m.

Committee Reports

Advisory Committee Chairman Carol Vallens reported.

Board of Trustees Chairman Robin Pokorski reported. See Attachment B.

Budget & Finance Committee Chairman Launa Gould reported. See Attachment B.

Group Tax Exemption Program (GTEP): Corresponding Secretary Shelley Sparks reported for GTEP Chairman Cynthia Jackson and moved on behalf of the chairman that the following clubs, which did not satisfy renewal criteria, be removed from the GTEP program:

Newport Hills Garden Club

Salida Garden Club **Motion Passed.**

Also, on behalf of the GTEP Chairman, Shelley Sparks moved to ratify Rossmoor Garden Club as an addition to the GTEP Program. **Motion Passed.**

See Attachment B.

Governance Committee Chairman Greg Pokorski reported. See Attachment B.

Life Membership: Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst reported for Life Membership Chairman Linda Travis and moved to ratify new CGCI Life Members, including two names not disclosed at this time because they will be awarded and surprised at their September club meetings. **Motion Passed.** See Attachment B.

Membership Chairman Rita Desilets reported. See Attachment B.

She moved to ratify the following groups:

APS: Ikebana Teachers Guild of Southern California, 37 members, President: Haruko Takeichi
Motion Passed.

Club: Huntington Beach Garden Club, 12 members, Orange County, President: Kristine Hise
Motion Passed.

Nominating Committee Chairman Carol Vallens reported.

The meeting recessed at 3:12 p.m.

Business Meeting #2

The meeting reconvened on Wednesday, September 10, 2025 at 9:03 a.m.

Announcements were made.

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

District Director Reports

District Director Coordinator Marlene Kinney introduced those directors who reported. See Attachment C.

Chairmen Reports

Chairmen Coordinator Nina Blonski introduced those chairmen who reported. See Attachment B.

The meeting recessed at 11:01 a.m.

Business Meeting #3

The meeting reconvened at 1:01 p.m.

Chairmen reports continued.

President Adele Kelly announced the 2026 Winter Board Meeting will be held virtually via Zoom on January 26, 27, and 28, 2026.

2025-2027 President's Project Chairman Barbara Weiler announced the winners of the Silent Auction.

Announcements were made.

The meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

Gail Vanderhorst _____ Date _____
Recording Secretary

Attachment A Officers' Reports

Financial Secretary, Launa Gould

Thanks to Rita Desilets for the seamless transition of records and spreadsheets along with her advice.

Most of you attending today have a budget and/or collect checks for your chairmanship.

To get reimbursed for expenses:

1. Fill out the Request for Reimbursement form found on the website.
 - a. Know your Line Code or look online or email the Financial Secretary then make a note of your line code in your procedures because they do not change.
 - b. Scan and email, or mail your receipts and the Request to the Financial Secretary.

If you receive cash or checks:

1. Fill out the Cash Receipt Report found on the website.
 - a. Know your Line Code or look online or email the Financial Secretary then make a note of your line code in your procedures because they do not change.
 - b. Mail checks to the appropriate address.

Copies of these forms are available at the head table.

Corresponding Secretary, Shelley Sparks

4 Convalescent cards were sent

2 Thank yous were sent

This officer received training from Jane McKee and Sue Bennett in regard to the website. The call to CGCI convention and Fall Board Meeting were sent by this officer.

Parliamentarian, Greg Pokorski

This officer reviews agendas prior to state meetings, assists in meeting preparation and reviews minutes following meetings. He participates in monthly Executive Committee meetings and serves as chairman of the Governance Committee. He responds to parliamentary inquiries from board members, clubs and districts.

The Harvest Bingo game being played at this Fall Board Meeting asks players to meet a CGCI board member. I heard some ask at the Button Art Craft event last night "who is a CGCI board member?" Because this is a board meeting, most of you are board members. Remember the board of directors includes officers, district directors, members of the nominating committee, members of the board of trustees, members of the advisory committee, members of the Circle of Poppies and all officially appointed committee chairmen and committee members. Most of our chairmen are chairmen of committees of one – all are board members.

The officers at this head table are the executive committee, not the executive board. The executive board is another name for the full board of directors. Most of us in this room are part of the executive board. These two terms are often confused.

Parliamentary Procedure helps facilitate effective and efficient meetings with protections for all members. You are encouraged to use it and practice it and learn more about it. Use it in clubs, districts and councils.

Madam President, thank you for the opportunity to serve CGCI and you in this position.

2nd Vice President & Chairmen Coordinator, Nina Blonski

All Chairmen were emailed a welcome letter on August 13, 2025, which included a few tips on their chairmanship and encouraged them to attend the CGCI Fall Board meeting. This chairman coordinator also informed the chairmen about the breakout session during our time together, and that they will be discussing “What goals would you like to achieve for the 2025-2027 term?” And “How best to promote your committee?”

On September 9, during the scheduled chairman's forum at Harris Ranch, I met with the Chairmen in person. Chairmen were assigned in groups to discuss the above prompts. At the end of the forum, one individual from each table group shared what was discussed or achieved by their working group.

9/12/2025 Reminders to write articles in *Golden Gardens* and to email in their reports to be included in the board minutes to Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst. Deadline is September 17, 2025. Limit 300 words.

1st Vice President & District Director Coordinator, Marlene Kinney

As 1st Vice President, I attended the Camp Smokey special ceremony on July 16, 2025 (that took place inside the California State Fair grounds in Sacramento). What a day to remember.

The District Directors, District Directors Liaison, and Alternates met on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. After Roll Call was taken, President Adele Kelly was welcomed, CGCI Hosting Pacific Convention in 2026 was given by Gail Vanderhorst, Events Coordinator Robin Pokorski spoke about hosting events, and report time limits were done. Members Only Section, FAQs, Cybercrime is alive, and Important Dates to remember were handed out.

President, Adele Kelly

Since our Convention in early June, your President has come running out of the starting gate with vigor. I have visited three garden clubs and one district. I attended the Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest Award Ceremony at the Sacramento Fair, a Blue Star Memorial Ceremony, and a gardening school course. During these visits, I had the opportunity to meet new people and talk with garden club members. I learned about projects and programs that support CGCI's mission at the grassroots level. I was touched and honored to participate in the Blue Star Memorial Ceremony, where the public, our veterans, and garden club members attended with much gratitude. And I welcomed the opportunity to expand my knowledge of gardening at the gardening course, as I believe one should always continue to learn.

Just last week, I also attended the NGC “Care to Share” meeting, where concerns about membership were discussed in a round table discussion. I learned that all states experience the same membership challenges. One tidbit that I did note was that California charges the lowest membership fee of \$2.75, and one state charges as much as \$25 per member. Another was that we have to do a much better job of marketing who we are and what we are about through the use of technology.

So, that's sums up what your president has been doing over the past few months. However, just the other day, I was thinking about why I joined garden club 18 years ago. The first reason was obvious: I wanted to learn about gardening, but over time, I realized it was about so much more. It was about continuing to learn, achieving goals, undertaking adventures, making friendships, and developing new passions. I never imagined that I would be standing before you today as your president. My newest passion is my President's Project. It just makes my heart sing to know that CGCI will help make a lasting impression on the future of the students through the expansion of their high school garden. I hope you will join me in this passionate purpose.

In last month's *Golden Gardens* issue, I asked each board member to be prepared to come to the Fall Board meeting with a goal or new idea for this term. I would like you to put on your thinking caps and ask yourself: why did you join garden club, what keeps you coming back, and what goal or new idea

will help you revitalize or find a new passion? I would like all of you to write your goal or new idea on a Post-it Note and place it on this whiteboard (names are optional). I'll start with three of mine:

1. Answer emails within 48 hours.
2. Develop better sleep habits so that I can be the best version of myself and therefore a better president for all of you.
3. Explore the idea of putting a digital whiteboard on the website where goals and ideas can be shared.

In conclusion, I will simply end by saying the possibilities are endless. Let's grow CGCI together.

Attachment B Committee and Chairmen Reports

2025 CGCI Convention, Launa Gould

93rd annual Convention was hosted by San Clemente Garden Club. It was held in Laguna Hills at the VOCO Hotel, June 2-5, 2025.

203 people registered. 100 of them were first time attendees.

The meal attendance ranged between 70 and 84 except for Wednesday lunch.

New concepts were tried and were mostly successful. Offering different options caused more work for Registration and explanation of the options.

The Design Night was an exciting start to the convention and attracted an extra 18 attendees that paid \$75 just for that day.

The other new concept was the DAY PASS for the Installation of Club and District officers. We had 168 attendees at the Wednesday lunch!

The Marketplace was an attractive draw. There were 9 clubs that had tables and 4 vendors. The marketplace brought \$4000 to the clubs and vendors. Only fee charged was for vendors tables.

A tour to Tree of Life Nursery was enjoyed by all. The tour almost broke even because of cost of the bus rental.

The financial statement is available, and the final figures were great.

Net Income \$9,566

30% to CGCI \$2,870

70% to SCGC \$6,697

Present an oversized check to George Perko, Treasurer, for \$2870.

Awards, Pat Clayes

Members of the Awards Committee are Judy Bates (Certificates), Emily Troxell (Flower Show Awards), and Elisabeth Tufo (Sponsors/Finance).

The Awards Manual for the 2025 Awards Year was finalized in August after NGC's Awards Handbook was published on its website, and after learning that PRGC's Awards Program would not change from last year. Please note that PRGC has not yet placed its 2025-2027 Awards Manual on its website or updated the cover sheet.

In line with the activities of NGC and PRGC, we have relocated the Youth Contests from the Awards Manual to the new 2025 Youth Contest Manual that can be found on the website under "Youth Activities." Judy Bates will continue to create the Youth Contest Certificates, and Elisabeth Tufo will continue to be the Sponsors/Finance Chairman for the contests. Also, the California Consultants Council commendations have been removed from the Awards Manual. These can be found on the CCC page of the website.

CGCI is seeking an individual to help administer the Awards Program. If you have strong computer, internet, and organizational skills, and are interested, please contact either Adele Kelly or me.

Black Point Historic Gardens, Julie A. West

Black Point Historic Gardens is located behind the General's residence at Fort Mason in San Francisco. CGCI's partnership with Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy continues through June 30, 2026 with a goal of raising \$10,000. Donations received since 2021 total \$9,904.95. Funding is used for propagation materials, plants, garden tools, compost and scientific study of the transformation of any overgrown garden monitoring the effects of a garden planted with ornamental and native plants on pollinators and wildlife in an urban setting.

We need \$95.05 to reach our goal but let's exceed that! Donations of any amount are welcome. If you would like to donate "in honor of" or "in memory of" or support the project in general, please visit CGCI's website: <https://www.californiagardenclubs.com/black-point-garden-new-2021/https://www.californiagardenclubs.com/black-point-garden-new-2021/>

Blue Star Northern California, Maria Krenek

It was a great honor to attend the dedication of a Blue Star Memorial Marker at the Redding VA Outpatient Clinic on July 30, 2025. This Blue Star dedication was sponsored by the Cascade District under the direction of Cascade District Director, Judy Paul. It was well attended and beautifully done. Thank you, Judy and the Cascade District.

Two more Blue Star Markers will be dedicated shortly after the completion of our board meeting here at Harris Ranch. The Modesto Garden Club with the Commemorative Air Force Central CA Valley Squadron will dedicate a Blue Star Memorial Marker on September 19, 2025 at the Air Force Squadron Hangar in Modesto. Thank you, Nancy Robinson and the Modesto Garden Club. The second Blue Star Marker is planned for dedication on September 20, 2025 in my own district, Humboldt. The marker is actually a re-dedication of a marker that was vandalized in Pepperwood, CA. Thank you, Jan Vaughn and the Southern Humboldt Garden Club. I plan to attend both ceremonies.

The loving effort that makes these markers possible is felt and shared in these very moving ceremonies. The experience reminds us all of the sacrifice of our service men and women and their families. We must always remember.

Board of Trustees, Robin Pokorski

The Board of Trustees consists of Lynne Batchelor, Pat Clayes, Lisa Cosand, Roseann Costabile, Alexis Slafer and myself as chairman. The Trustees met via Zoom on September 1, 2025 with George Perko, CGCI Treasurer and Financial Advisor, President Adele Kelly and 1st Vice President Marlene Kinney as guests. Year-to-date financial records from as of June 30, 2025 were reviewed. The endowment funds with Vanguard were reviewed and are in balance in accordance with the parameters established by Standing Rule 45. The internal monthly review continues with no issues noted except that CGCI is so fortunate to have had Rita Desilets and to now have Launa Gould and George Perko as excellent stewards of our money.

The CGCI Endowment Fund which is invested in 62.1% Stocks and 37.9% Bonds reported a balance on June 30, 2025 of \$119,214.54 which demonstrated a quarterly increase of \$5,943.97.

The CGCI Scholarship Endowment Fund which is invested in 64% Stocks and 36% Bonds reported a balance on June 30, 2025 of \$227,707.75 which demonstrated a quarterly increase of \$11,067.21.

The Trustees have established an Endowment Funds Tracker for a quick visual reference. The Trustees would very much like a volunteer to help improve the spreadsheet with a chart. Please see this chairman if you have Excel and charting expertise that you are willing to share with us.

The Restricted Guidelines document which was initially set up as an Excel spreadsheet has been converted to a Word document for ease in updating.

Budget & Finance Committee, Launa Gould

Members of committee:

Launa Gould	Financial Secretary
Cynthia Jackson	GTEP
Marlene Kinney	1 st VP
George Perko	Treasurer

Robin Pokorski Board of Trustees
Carol Vallens Former President
Julie West Insurance Advisor
Courtesy invite to Adele Kelly, President

Virtual meeting held August 29, 2025

George Perko - Reviewed June 30, 2025 fiscal year end financials

Signers have been updated on both US Bank and Bank of America

US Bank CD balances as of September 3, 2025

#4022 - \$109,329.83 Matures 9/30/25 –

Recommend: withdrawing \$10,000 from US Bank CD #4022 on 9/30/25 and transfer to B of A CD to keep the funds in the bank within insured amount.

#7664 - \$140,834.32 matures 12/8/25

Discussions were held on Line Codes, GTEP and Liability Insurance.

Cactus and Succulents, Ellyn Meikle

Since this Chairman's report at the CGCI Convention last June, the Agaves have spiked and bloomed extensively. This year's display of various blooming Agave species has been spectacular, to say the least!

This Chairman has continued to promote and educate about using cactus and succulents in water-wise gardens and creative projects.

During the summer, this Chairman met with teachers, sponsors, and students to organize a mentorship program for Narbonne High School's student garden club. The club has access to a 4-acre on-site horticulture property that hasn't been used for at least 40 years. Students in the garden club are eager for knowledge and resources in gardening, including working with cactus, succulents, and water-wise gardens within their 40 raised beds. Their eastern plots are located alongside a busy street. This Chairman has been recruited to mentor students in planting cactus and succulents, as well as creating water-wise gardens along the street-side fence to enhance the avenue's beauty. With support from the Riviera Garden Club of the Costa Verde District, the program recently donated 50 liters of organic garden soil to help prepare the beds for the fall season. In addition to their cactus and succulent gardens, the mentorship will include education on companion planting, organic pest control, seasonal crops, and raising funds for tools, seeds, and other garden supplies.

Talking about mentoring, this Chairman will guide a Girl Scout in the Torrance area to help her complete her Gold Award project. The project involves refurbishing a local middle school's garden with cactus and succulents and educating students about water-wise plants, native and invasive species, as well as fruits and vegetables. The Girl Scout's Gold Award requires 80-100 hours of service to make a lasting impact on the community and environment. She reached out to this Chairman, who is honored to partner with her on the project. This Chairman will provide guidance, expertise, and tips to help her succeed in refurbishing Fleming Middle School's garden.

Donations Coordinator, Robin Pokorski

Being the Donations Coordinator is a wonderful job! This chairman gets to experience the unbelievable generosity of our districts, clubs and members. While we absolutely require a post office box for our legal needs as an organization, this chairman requests that checks be sent to my home address, which you all have in your spiffy new, uncluttered Directory!

Our districts, clubs and members are part of an incredible force for good. This chairman is so very proud to be a part of it!

Thank you, President Adele, for the opportunity to serve you and CGCI as your Donations Coordinator.

Environmental Schools, Cynthia Jackson

The Channel Islands District has expressed an interest in conducting a school. Just recently, Southern California Garden Club has also expressed interest.

I will be following up and working with them to bring that to fruition.

Event Coordinator, Robin Pokorski

The Event Coordinator chairmanship was created to mentor those clubs and districts considering hosting a CGCI event. This chairman maintains and has already updated the Meeting Procedures manuals that may be found on the website.

Help is available in hotel negotiations as well as ideas for venues and the needs each event requires. Hosting an event is a wonderful bonding mechanism for your club or district as well as a potential fundraiser.

The offers have been flooding so please see me if your club or district might be interested in hosting one of the few remaining meetings that still need hosts. The joy of working together on a group project is invaluable.

Flower Show Schools, Jennifer Waite

It remains an honor to serve as the CGCI Flower Show School Chairman!

We have been very busy, with two Flower Show Schools running consecutively. In fact, due to some scheduling issues, they are running at the same time. Red Bluff will be completing their Course IV at the end of the month, and Southwestern Judges Council will be hosting their Course II. We are looking forward to adding Student and Accredited Judges to our lists very soon.

There are several other upcoming events that are worth mentioning:

Valley Judges Council will be hosting a Judges Symposium in Fresno on April 15 and 16th, 2026 and the Judges Councils will be planning a Flower Show during our President's Convention in 2026.

Dyanna Madro is currently perfecting our list of judges and Judges Councils but she will be reporting on her progress at a later time. I do want to extend my sincere gratitude for all her hard work, because as can be imagined, she is working with a moving target. But her enthusiasm and stick to it work has been amazing!

Thank you again, Madam President and Board for the opportunity to report for this committee.

Flower Show Schools Judges Credentials, Dyanna Madro

This report is to confirm that all CGCI Judges records have been thoroughly recreated and are now fully up to date.

Judges Extensions and Symposium Attendance

There are currently 14 judges who have received two extensions within this year. To maintain their good standing with CGCI, it is imperative that these judges attend a symposium in 2026.

Current Status of Judges and Students

- Total judges in good standing: 47
- Number of students in various stages of completion: approximately 27

Thank you for your attention to these updates.

Gardening Schools, Greg Pokorski

Successful Gardening School Courses 1 & 2 were conducted by Southern California Garden Club (SCGC) in July and August. Course 3 will be held this month. Course 4 will be held in late October to conclude Series 27. Local Chair Robin Pokorski has information brochures/registration forms at this meeting. Additionally, information is posted on the CGCI and NGC websites.

Approximately 40 attended each session with about 27 taking exams towards becoming Gardening Consultants. Five refreshed at Course 1; seven refreshed at Course 2. California Consultants Council (CCC) Treasurer Sue Bennett attended Course 2 and presented information about the CCC.

This chairman wrote an article about these courses for the current September/October issue of *Golden Gardens*.

Instructors were impressed with the sophistication level of this NGC educational program and with the scope and activity of garden club.

It was called to our attention during team discussions at the Chairmen's Forum that not everyone is aware that any of these courses can be taken without having to take all four courses that comprise the complete school. Any one course can be taken for the information/education. Courses may be taken in any order.

Los Osos Valley Garden Club will be conducting Gardening School Series 28 in February and March of 2026. Information is included in the current issue of *Golden Gardens*.

This chairman previously reported that California is down to 61 Gardening Consultants, down from well over 100 several years ago. Four of these are on extensions and another 27 need to refresh this year or lapse. We've been chipping away at that with those who have refreshed at the SCGC School. Lapsing Consultants can still refresh at Course 3 or 4 this year or request extensions and refresh in Los Osos next year. There are also several Zoom Gardening School refresher opportunities: two this month, one in November and one next February. There is also a Zoom Bi-Refresher (ES and GS) on October 11 and a Zoom Tri-Refresher on October 15 & 16.

Many do not seem to care about maintaining Consultant status, especially those who attended the Valley Lode District School in Turlock in 2020 as there has been little to no response to multiple reminders.

A new issue of *Newscape* will be out shortly. This NGC publication is primarily focused on Landscape Design School but now includes news about Environmental and Gardening Schools.

Contact this chairman to learn how to sponsor and conduct a Gardening School or for information about your student or consultant status.

Golden Gardens, Pat Clayes

Members of the **Golden Gardens** Committee are Judy Bates, Sue Bennett, Nancy Compton, Elyn Meikle, Shelley Sparks, Phil Stanley, Brad Welles, and Julie West.

Golden Gardens currently has over 3,000 subscribers. Members of the committee are dedicated to providing members and the public with engaging and diverse articles. We have once again asked the Chairmen to submit articles about their chairmanships to be featured in *Golden Gardens*. I appreciate those Chairmen who have faithfully contributed articles. We have been receiving great articles through our club and district newsletters for inclusion in *Golden Gardens*, so please continue sending your newsletters to me. Let's elevate *Golden Gardens* to new heights! Together, we can transform it into an even more amazing newsletter!

Governance Committee, Greg Pokorski

The members of the Governance Committee this term, who serve with this chairman, are Lynne Batchelor, Chuck Goodwin, Jeanne Johnson, Alice Lewin, George Speer and Carol Vallens. The President may attend meetings as an ex officio member and in accordance with Standing Rule 5 the vice presidents may attend meetings and participate except for the right to make motions and the right to vote.

The committee began monthly Zoom meetings on August 18 and will next meet on September 15.

All CGCI members may propose changes to bylaws, standing rules and policy. Please use the Amendment Request webform found on the Governance section of the website.

Standing Rules may be adopted or amended at any board meeting.

Bylaws can only be amended at annual conventions. Proposed amendments must be submitted to this committee by November 1 so they can be reviewed and dealt with prior to the Winter Board Meeting, at which time they must be presented to the board of directors who will decide whether or not they will be moved forward for the vote of the membership at convention.

The master bylaws and standing rule documents were updated this summer to reflect changes adopted during the past year. These updated documents were posted on the website and on pages 53-82 of the new 2025-2026 *Yearbook, Manual & Roster*.

This information was summarized in an article in the July-August issue of *Golden Gardens*.

Group Tax Exemption Program (GTEP), Cynthia Jackson**1. Motion-Removals**

At the Pre-Convention Board meeting on June 3, 2025 in my absence Recording Secretary Gail Vanderhorst presented this chairwoman's GTEP report which included ratification motions. Because of questions regarding the removal of clubs, the report was deferred to Convention.

After discussion during the Convention session on June 4, 2025, this chairwoman then moved to ratify the removal of twelve clubs from the CGCI Group Tax Exemption program due to their non-submission of renewal forms. Due to ongoing concerns, the motion was deferred to this Fall Board meeting.

Subsequent to the Convention, renewal issues were resolved for most of those clubs. I now move that the following club(s) which did not satisfy renewal criteria be removed from the GTEP program:
Newport Hills Garden Club
Salida Garden Club

2. Motion-Additions

Also, I move to ratify the addition of the following club(s) to the program:
Rossmoor Garden Club

Landscape Design Schools, Alexis Slafer

This Chairman regrets to say that there is no Landscape Design School currently being planned or scheduled. However, while there are no Landscape Design Schools or Refreshers being offered in California, there are opportunities to attend that are available across the country -- either in person or virtually via Zoom...just check out the National Garden Clubs website for information and schedules.

Of course, this Chairman feels it is best to hold Landscape Design Schools here, in California...but that doesn't happen by magic...we need clubs and/or districts to host them. In fact, more than one club can join together to host one. Please take the time to enthusiastically discuss these opportunities with the members at your next meeting. Not only is it an opportunity to help your members and others in your local community learn about landscape design...with an emphasis on residential design...but as a side benefit -- your membership can increase ... while increasing revenue.

Currently, the total number of CGCI Landscape Design Consultants stands at 91.

Several of the instructors at the most recent school, held last year -- expressed interest in teaching at other venues, either in person or virtually. Please contact this chairman to get their contact information when you start planning your school. And, of course, this chairman is more than eager and willing to assist with planning your new Landscape Design School.

Thank you for the opportunity to be the chairman of our Landscape Design Schools.

Legislation/Government, Nancy Compton

A Ban on Plants Near Homes Could Be Dangerous Advice

California's currently proposed ban on plants near homes could be conflicting advice, as firefighters have reported noticing that green, well-tended plants and trees have helped protect homes from wind-blown embers, slowing the spread of fire.

Scientists who have been studying this issue are seriously concerned about new wildfire protection regulations being developed by the State of California that would prohibit almost all plants and other combustible material within five feet of homes, an area known as Zone O.

Wildfire safety guidelines have long encouraged homeowners to avoid having flammable materials next to their homes. However, the state's plan for an ember-resistant zone is being expedited under an executive order from Governor Newsom which goes further by also prohibiting grass, shrubs, and many trees. This is currently a hot issue that I intend to follow, and I have joined the community's Firesafe Council to stay abreast of further developments.

Liability Insurance, Launa Gould

Insurance is a **huge benefit** of belonging to CGCI because of its reasonable cost.

An Insurance **committee** has been formed to help with the process.

The Liability Insurance Chairman is responsible for submitting correctly completed requests to our Insurance Agent.

There are two major parts to our insurance program.

General Liability and Additional Insured.

1. General Liability - available for clubs to be insured for their normal activities, such as field trips, plant sales, and flower shows.

We broke off the G/L part and gave it to Tammy Eacker (Introduce Tammy). There are over 260 clubs that request General Liability Insurance. Tammy will receive the payments and process those requests between November 15 and January 15.

The insurance year is Feb 15 to Feb 15.

Insurance is not automatically renewed.

Applications to renew or obtain G/L Insurance will be emailed to all club Presidents and Treasurers on record with CGCI in mid-November with a January 15 deadline.

2. Additional Insured Certificates - available for venues that require it (meeting rooms, plant sales) and for homeowners who host events and garden tours.

Paula Elias will help with processing the Homeowner certificates.

The responsibility for this chairman is to make sure all documents are in order before sending on to the Insurance agent who produces the certificates.

There have been about 170 Additional Insured requests processed this year.

More venues are now requiring insurance.

It is important when you start to plan an event or meeting, to ask about the insurance requirements and start the insurance process early. The process can be complicated working with some venues.

I am here to answer your questions and help with your insurance needs.

Launa.gould@gmail.com

Life Membership, Linda Travis

Since June 1, 2025, we have had **five new CGCI LM's**.

Annette Choate **Auburn GC/Auburn Arrangers/ Golden Foothill District**

Brenda Buford **Hanford GC/Sequoia Foothills District**

Nancy Bird **Year Around GC/ Cascade District**

The following LM's are to be presented at club meetings in September and the names should NOT be stated during this Fall Board Meeting:

Kay Newby **Woodside Hills GC/ Bay Ocean District**

Sue Sweeney **Woodside Hills GC/ Bay Ocean District**

Requesting ratification of our five new CGCI LM's.

This brings the 2025 YTD total to 24 CGCI Life Memberships.

I continue to submit articles to the *Golden Gardens* Newsletter. Please continue to look for updates on the CGCI LM process and awardees, in future issues.

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

Membership, Rita Desilets

These are the membership numbers as of August 29, 2025.

1 Affiliate

201 clubs with 11,951 members

38 APSs with 2,959 members

for a total membership of 14,910 members

Madam President, I move to ratify the following groups:

APS: Ikebana Teachers Guild of Southern California, 37 members, President: Haruko Takeichi
Club: Huntington Beach Garden Club, 12 members, Orange County, President: Kristine Hise

Thanks to Jane McKee for the countless hours she spent setting up the new i4A database and training several of us on various aspects of the new format.

Most clubs had no problem updating their club information and submitting annual dues renewal form. Those who experience problems were given helpful information in a timely manner by Jane.

Thank you to Nina Blonski for being part of the membership team as New Clubs Chairman. She has a wonderful patience for working with prospective new CGCI clubs, giving them all the information they need. If you know a garden club or APS that would enjoy membership in CGCI, please let Nina know.

Penny Pines, Terry Sampson

Penny Pines is still alive and well. We have been working with several of the National Forests to make sure they process the submissions on time. It is, still, a work in progress. I am contacting each NF to talk with a Penny Pines representative and, hopefully, will have a list that I will send out to all of clubs with the National Forests that act quickly. Thank you all for your patience and understanding with the long waits for the certificates.

President's Project, Barbara Weiler

The purpose of the President's Project, Abraxas Garden-Abraxas Orchard is to raise \$30,000 for the expansion of this innovative teaching garden. Abraxas is a continuation school that serves at risk students as well as special needs students (ages 18-21) who have developmental disabilities. In the words of Bob Luttkick, their teacher; "The Abraxas Garden isn't just a program—it's a lifeline. Many of our students arrive disillusioned with school, burdened by challenges like homelessness, addiction, or learning differences. In the garden, they find something different: belonging, purpose, and the chance to create something real.

Our garden and culinary programs provide experiential learning, therapeutic space, and vocational training. Students who once skipped school now show up to harvest, cook, and give tours. Others who had never eaten a fresh vegetable now grow and prepare their own meals. One student summed it up best: "This place gave me a reason to come to school—and a reason to care."

As of September 10, 2025, CGCI has raised \$6,429.00 from donations, silent auctions and sales. A \$10,000.00 matching grant has been received from the Youth's Friends Association to support this project. All donations received for the Abraxas Orchard will be matched, up to \$10,000.00

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. The day after the deadline for registrations to be in my hand, the programs and name tags and everything else that needs copying are printed so when someone registers late, it causes several people additional work.

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 \$2500 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!

Sempervirens Fund, Judy Unrine

Let's Celebrate!

\$125 for 125 years

Let's celebrate the Redwood trees. Let's celebrate Sempervirens, the organization we support that cares for the Redwood trees.

We appreciate the many, many years they have been working for us to save and protect the Southern-most stand of Coastal Redwoods from extinction.

\$125 for 125 years, that's a great big "Thank you" for 125 years.

Redwoods were found much farther south than they are now. As populations increased, the roar of the chain saws took their toll. The wood was used in general construction, shingles, sawed poles and posts, grape vine supporter, foundations, blocks, siding, interior furnishings, door panels, office fixtures. The list is endless, but not the trees.

The wood was precious. It was durable. It lasted. But not the trees. Once cut, 300 plus years of growing tall and proud was gone. It was published that, "Seedlings are easily produced and stand transplanting very well." That statement seems to be the excuse for the destruction.

In the Santa Cruz Mountains, the non-profit Sempervirens organization has done so much to help the Redwoods survive the devastating fires. But more than that, they are looking to the future in preventing the damage of forest fires by implementing the methods of the Native Americans who nurtured the land; they have opened waterways to help the watershed and they have studied the wildlife and are creating nurturing habitat. They continue to shepherd the redwoods.

Sempervirens

Coastal Redwoods Donations

Any amount is appreciated.

Thank you, Maria Krenek, for your generous donation in June.

Thank you, Judy Unrine, for \$125 for 125 years.

To donate:

Go to CGCI website. Use the link <https://www.californiagardenclubs.com/donate-online/>.

From the pull-down menu pick "Projects." Choose Sempervirens, the Coastal Redwoods.

Now you have two choices: Donate Online or Donation Form.

Both forms have choice of in Memory or to Honor.

Mail with check payable to CGCI:

California Garden Clubs, Inc.

P. O. Box 823

San Fernando, Ca 91341-0823

Social Media/Facebook, Pat Claves

The Facebook page is updated daily using Canva's scheduling system. We are sharing wonderful and informative articles sourced from our club and district newsletters that I receive. Thank you all for continuing to share your information with our members and the public.

Stamps, Terry Sampson

A box of stamps was shipped to the Postal Museum in Tucson, AZ last May. They are so thankful to receive so many stamps from CGCI. In fact the total number we sent to them was 8,500 used stamps. In just one year the Museum has helped over 13,000 students, teachers, and parents across the country. Thank you to all of the CGCI members who forwarded their used stamps to me.

Web Advisor and Members Only Database, Jane McKee

- The Members Only section was successfully launched on April 30, 2025. A reminder that presidents and treasurers of each member organization have direct access to their personal profile and/or their Organization's information. By logging in they can pay dues and/or update contact information directly. It is password protected.
- Online Directories
 - These Directories are available ONLY to those logged in to a valid member account. Directories are intended to assist clubs, districts or CGCI board members obtain information for yearbooks, newsletters or other official purposes or to locate specific organizations or individuals. These include:
 - All active Organizations (list only) or (with contact information)
 - Organizations by district (list only) or (with contact information)
 - CGCI Board of Directors (list only) or (with contact information)
 - Youth Groups
 - CGCI Board Members only – restricted to board members
 - ✓ GTEP members with contacts
 - ✓ Orgs by District – paid 25-26
 - ✓ Orgs by District – NOT paid 25-26
- Find a Club (Organization Locator)
 - It does not require a password to **view**. It is intended for an individual (perhaps a prospective member) looking for an organization near them.

- The information is contained in the Members Only database. It is the responsibility of each organization to keep it current by logging in and updating information on meeting places, day/dates/time, contact phone or email and brief description of the organization. One can search by:
 - Zip code or city (where the individual resides or is moving to)
 - Keyword (rose, bromeliad, cactus etc.)
 - District (with dropdown list of CGCI districts)
 - Type of membership (garden club or APS)
- Calendar (NEW): The events calendar was replaced in July by a feature of the Members Only database software. Like the Organization Locator it is available for anyone to view. But it does not require a password to submit event information. Note: as always, the calendar is for SPECIAL events only – no regular meetings or activities.
- A new FAQ document answering the most often asked questions has been sent to all board members and posted to the Members Only section under the Help menu.
- Questions regarding the Members Only section can be directed to cgcimembership@cagardenclubs.org.

Webmaster, Sue Bennett

What has this chairman done since Convention? In addition to responding to emails and phone calls, this chairman is responsible for updating the CGCI website's Breaking News and Awards Information, posting items such as NGC, *WACONIAH*, and *Golden Gardens*, as well as handling any other tasks assigned by Jane McKee or President Adele. This chairman is also continuing to become familiar with the website, membership database, and Gmail.

This chairman is in the process of reaching out to the 19 Districts/Clubs with information about what needs to be updated on their respective websites, which are managed by this webmaster. The 44 Districts/clubs that are not maintained by this webmaster; however, have links from the CGCI website need to remain current with October 1 being the deadline.

Please ensure that your President, Secretary, and Webmaster have the website login credentials, password, and hosting information documented. This way, if your webmaster becomes unavailable, your website can still be accessed and maintained. Recently, one District and one Club within CGCI have faced challenges due to missing this important information.

Reminder: Jane is the Web advisor and Members Only Database administrator. This chairman is the Webmaster, while Susan Delaney is the Web admin. Susan's primary role is updating the calendar with "special" events, not monthly meetings.

Don't hesitate to ask this chairman any questions, in person, via email or CGCI's 1.888 number.

Yearbook, Manual, & Roster, Launa Gould

This summer was spent gathering information from multiple sources for the new *Yearbook, Manual & Roster*.

The print deadline was met early, and books printed on time.

500 yearbooks were printed at a printer that has supplied us with a great quality book at below average cost.

My team member, Robin Pokorski did the labor-intensive work of addressing, stamping, stuffing and mailing over 400 books. Thank you, Robin!

She put MY return address on them, so you know who gets all the returned books and follow -up trouble!

The information gathered for the book is only as good as the information received. Therefore, there are always corrections and additions that need to be made. Because updates come from several sources, there are loopholes in the process and an update in one place may not get to the Yearbook Chairman.

My goal this year is to work on procedures for closing those loopholes and creating solid information for our officers and committees.

I have started a list of Corrections and Additions that need to be made to this yearbook and will email the list to you on a ½ sheet so you can slip it/tape it into your book.

Please add your corrections to my list.

Your input with fresh ideas for the yearbook is appreciated.

Attachment C

District Directors' Reports

Bay Bridges District Director, Sandy Jaeger

At our Spring meeting held on April 24, 2025 we learned of several new programs that our district clubs had started. These created great interest amongst the other clubs.

The Berkeley Garden Club used the De Young Museums annual Bouquets to Art for their event. At the Museum various paintings are used as inspiration for flower arrangements. Club members picked paintings also for inspiration and then constructed flower arrangements inspired by their selected painting. This produced wonderful displays that were greatly enjoyed by the members. They plan to do this again, possibly annually.

Hillside Gardeners of Montclair holds a biannual garden tour. The 2024 tour netted over \$40,000 for the club. This being the "off" year the club decided to have a tour of member's gardens. Members volunteered their gardens and a small committee toured the gardens to select the finalists. On two consecutive Thursdays different gardens were available to visit. Hosts provided cold drinks and snacks and people were encouraged to not just visit the garden but to sit together and talk. In this way people got to meet people they were not familiar with and made new connections. It was super successful and plans are being made to repeat it in two years. And, best of all, two gardens were so great that they will be on the 2026 tour!

Bay Ocean District Director, Nancy McDougal

Bay Ocean District plans to meet soon after each of the three CGCI meetings to discuss any developments and to keep contact with the clubs in our area. The meetings are short with an interesting program and light refreshments served. Though fewer than half of our affiliated clubs are typical groups with general interests meeting monthly, we draw a small attendance of those who are interested in the fellowship and programs offered at each meeting. Communication is largely through a newsletter announcing each meeting & other information of interest in the forthcoming months and a roster showing contact information for each of the groups and all dates, activity information, and contact helps that have been found most useful over the years. No District fund-raisers or group events are planned, though invitations usually are extended to attend each other's events.

Buttes District Liaison, Carol Jauregui

A question was sent out by our President, Adele Kelly: What are the plans for the district?

For me to answer that, I must say that as liaison, my duties are the same as a District Director. I need to do the same amount of work and continue to hold board and general meetings. The only difference is that a liaison is appointed and not elected.

Now that most of the clubs have used the Members Only Section, and become familiar with it, it's time to hold a district board meeting and catch up with the district's purpose and mission:

To share what CGCI has to say with the clubs.

Here is what I learned at the fall board meeting:

- That the CGCI liability insurance is going up to \$1.75 in January of 2026.
- That future dues are payable on July 1 and delinquent on July 15. A late fee of \$25 will be charged if postmarked after July 15.
- I will encourage the clubs to go back into the Members Only and pay additional dues as new members join their club. I'll answer any questions that the clubs may have.
- We will discuss how to attract new members, per Robin Pokorski's list of 25 at convention.

- Share that two of our district's clubs are seeking 501 c 3 status. I will speak to them about joining GTEP.

All of this is best done in person, and not by email. As I previously reported, many don't frequently check their email. Texting works, but not for group situations with lengthy messages.

I also plan to update every President with the above mentioned in printed format and handout a new, current district yearbook.

Cascade District Director, Judy Paul

Our Cascade District, Blue Star Memorial Marker, was dedicated at the VA Northern California Healthcare System at the Redding Outpatient Clinic on July 30, 2025! The plaque was delivered in a short amount of time, but we did encounter some delays in getting it installed due to regulations and guidelines for government facilities. It looks fantastic, the ceremony, with Honor Guard, music, and guests was perfect, and best of all, another "blue star" is shining in the north state! Special thanks to Maria Krennek for driving over the mountains to come and share in this ceremony, and to President Adele Kelly and Robin Pokorski for sending inspiring messages that were read that day.

This director has scheduled our first Cascade District Board meeting for September 18. The goal of these meetings is to share and support our clubs, as well as passing on information from CGCI and NGC directives and projects. Three of our clubs have quite low memberships, so this is a concern to address. Another topic will be the possibility of sprucing up the other Blue Star Memorials in our district. This director will work to build interest and enthusiasm for this endeavor! We have some old markers that need attention.

Finally, Red Bluff Garden Club will be hosting an NGC Flower Show School, Course IV, September 24-26, 2025. We do now have small group of student judges after successful completion of three FSS courses! Yeah, for the completion of this 4- course journey!!

There will also be a large fall luncheon hosted by Red Bluff on October 11, the Cascade District Fall Meeting hosted by Anderson Valley Garden Club on October 23, and some fall plant sales!

Costa Verde District Director, Cindy Kovacs

The Costa Verde District is the lower part of Los Angeles County comprising of 6 clubs. We have 3 meetings and a holiday party each year, with one bus trip to a nearby botanic garden.

Since the last report, the Hermosa Garden Club had a Blue Star Memorial Marker Dedication at Greenwood Park in Hermosa Beach. It was very moving and well planned by Alexis Slafer and her club. My to-do list for this year is to prepare the yearbook, visit our 6 clubs and 2 unaffiliated garden clubs in the district. I plan to encourage Life Memberships, and set up a sharing table at our District meetings so the clubs can see what is happening in the area. I thought at the Board meetings, we might have a President's forum to bring problems and utilize the shared knowledge of the group to advise or propose solutions.

Golden Foothills District Director, Erin Angulo

Our first meeting of the new Golden Foothills District is October 6th. I have put together my agenda and will be sending it out ahead of time and include items that I would like the club presidents to be prepared to share. These include favorite speakers with phone numbers and email contacts, as well as ideas they have used to gain new members. We have a number of new treasurers as well and I will go over the Treasurer's Toolkit available on CGCI's website.

Our first general meeting of the new year will be the following week which includes a speaker and potluck. In the past, this has been a wonderful way for club presidents, treasurers and members to meet and learn from other clubs. My theme is "Planting Seeds of Success and Knowledge," so I am hoping that both meetings will build confidence in the new club presidents and treasurers.

I will also start a district newsletter that will be emailed quarterly with information from CGCI, the district and our clubs.

One membership increase idea is to get your speaker and info in your local paper. The Auburn Garden Club had 10 guests attend an orchid talk and 5 joined the club!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Greater Los Angeles District Director, Joyce Parrott

Most of the clubs in this district have been inactive over the Summer, but the Culver City Garden Club has continued to hold meetings each month. A Board meeting was held in August, attended by four of our five clubs. A general meeting is planned for November. Goals for the upcoming year include increasing awareness of CGCI by encouraging readership of the *Golden Gardens*, as well as encouraging participation in the Awards Program. Currently only one club, the Los Angeles Garden Club, consistently participates in this program.

Mendo-Lake District Director, Cornelia Reynolds

At the June 2025 District meeting, I was installed as District Director; Ginabelle Smith, Secretary; and Bill Monlux, Treasurer. Peggy Cullinane of the Fort Bragg club accepted appointment as Parliamentarian.

The meeting adopted a more detailed format for financial reports. The budget was reviewed to ensure funding for representatives to attend the Fall Board meeting and May 2026 Convention. Bill Monlux will represent the District at the CGCI Fall Board Meeting. A committee was appointed to propose changes to the District's Bylaws.

I have begun visiting District clubs. I visited Potter Valley Garden Club which has been inactive and not paying District dues. They are a thriving Club with 33 members. But as they are able to directly receive all the benefits of being in CGCI without participating in the District, it is not easy to present to them the value of the District. I presented first that the Districts are the governance structure of CGCI, through which we can participate in the development and direction of CGCI. My second point centered on the opportunity to share ideas and energy among the Clubs in the District.

Some members of other Clubs feel that the PV club is undermining CGCI and thereby other Clubs. I would like to understand the reason they can receive the benefits of CGCI without being in the District, as I have to respond to people on both sides of this charged issue. The ultimate measure of my visit will be whether the Club decides to rejoin the District. The District Fall meeting on September 17 in Fort Bragg will have a report on the CGCI Board meeting from Bill Monlux and a floral demonstration and garden tour.

Orange County District Director, Donna Hood

Orange County District has 16 clubs and 1100 members.

The Orange County District's theme for the next two years will be "Let's Connect." District Director Donna Hood wants club members to connect with each other, connect with other clubs, connect with their communities, and connect with their gardens. She will be visiting OC garden clubs to promote the connections theme.

A Meet and Greet was held with club presidents and the OC District Board in July. Donna Hood and Launa Gould presented things club presidents need to know, such as insurance information, IRS reporting and how to be a Blue-Ribbon Club. This meeting was well received.

Club presidents also exchanged successful program ideas.

San Clemente: The Art of Photography

Laguna Beach: Protecting Wild Bees

Mission Viejo: Pumpkin centerpiece with succulents

Niguel Shores: Medicinal Herbs

Lake Forest: How to sharpen Garden Tools and Pruning Trees

Plans for 2026 include having an OC District booth at the South Coast Plaza Garden Show in April.

The District meeting will be held on the fifth Monday of March at Sherman Gardens. The fifth Monday is a good time to meet because it does not conflict with other club meetings.

Roadrunner District Director, Terry Sampson

The Roadrunner District has 3 clubs with new boards for the 2025-2027 term. Getting everyone organized has been a challenge but, I believe, we have a strong group who are willing to learn and become GREAT leaders. Our upcoming District meeting will be held this October and having all the clubs there should make for a fun and interesting afternoon. The Home Tour is on for next spring with 4 houses/gardens and all of us are looking forward to exploring and getting new ideas for our gardens. As a District we are hoping to get a field trip organized for all 3 clubs to enjoy together.

Valley Lode District Director, Paula Elias

Valley Lode District is very happy to be hosting the Fall CGCI board meeting. We are seven strong volunteering for the meeting. We hope those who attended the Button Art enjoyed it. We have 18 clubs in VLD all very involved with their local communities with school and community gardens, garden tours, plant sales, table settings, city beautification to name a few along with holding monthly meetings with interesting speakers where the public is always welcome.

We recently selected a young man from the Turlock Garden Club scholarships to receive our VLD \$1000 scholarship. All scholarship applicants at the club level are welcome to apply for our district scholarship.

We only have one new club president in the district so we have an experienced board.

This year at our district level we will be embracing the CGCI Awards Program encouraging clubs to participate starting with a workshop pointing out the many contributions of our clubs. We have been lucky to have clubs awarded and would like more to be involved. It is so exciting to attend a CGCI convention and be awarded for hard, fun work.

We are looking forward to the next two years with our new CGCI President and we will invite her to visit our district during a general meeting.