

California Garden Clubs, Inc.
2026 Virtual Winter Board Meeting, January 26-28, 2026
Tentative Schedule

Committees that will meet prior to Monday, January 26, 2026

Meeting Time	Committee	Chairman	Technical Host
TBD by Chairman	Advisory Committee	Carol Vallens	Carol Vallens
TBD by Chairman	Board of Trustees/Treasurer, George Perko, Scholarships, Martha Smyser	Robin Pokorski	Robin Pokorski
TBD by Chairman	Budget & Finance	Launa Gould	Carol Vallens
January 8, 10 A.M. -12 P.M.	Executive Committee	Adele Kelly	Adele Kelly
January 19, 3-5 P.M.	Governance Committee	Greg Pokorski	Greg Pokorski
January 13, 4-6 P.M.	Nominating	Carol Vallens	Carol Vallens
TBD by Chairman	Procedures	Robin Pokorski	Robin Pokorski
TBD by Chairman	Strategic Planning	George Speer	George Speer
TBD by Chairman	Website	Sue Bennett	Sue Bennett
TBD by Chairman	Youth Activities	Lisa Cosand	Adele Kelly

Monday, January 26, 2026

Meeting Time	Committee/Group/Lecture	Chairman or Speaker	Technical Host
9:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.	Administrative Committee	Robin Pokorski Shelley Sparks, Julie West, George Perko, Rita Desilets, Launa Gould, Alexis Slafer, Linda Travis, Shirley Lipa, Mike Gould	Robin Pokorski
	Awards Committee	Pat Clayes Judi Bates, Emily Troxell, Elisabeth Tufo, Ashley Smith	Sue Bennett
	Environmental Concerns & Horticulture	Dianne Steinhauer, Patricia Holloway, Carolyn Villi, Nancy Compton, Kathy Taylor de Murillo, Paul Vander Werf, Ellyn Meikle, Judy Powers, Dyanna Madro	Carol Vallens
	State Projects	Barbara Weiler, Milly Benson, Joan Craig, Hank Vanderhorst, Julie West, Maria Krenek, George Unrine, Melvin Gaines, Terry Sampson, Judy Unrine	Adele Kelly
10:45 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Educational Schools: Environmental, Gardening, and Landscape Design	Cynthia Jackson Greg Pokorski Alexis Slafer	Carol Vallens
	Events Committee	Robin Pokorski Jeanne Johnson, Linda Smith, Rita Desilets, Bette Langford, Diana Drummey, Paula Elias	Robin Pokorski

Meeting Time	Committee/Group/Lecture	Chairman or Speaker	Technical Host
10:45 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Golden Gardens	Pat Clayes Brad Welles, Judy Bates, Sue Bennett, Ellyn Meikle, Julie West, Nancy Compton, Shelley Sparks, Phil Stanley	Sue Bennett
	Lunch 12:00 – 1:00 P.M.		
1:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.	Lecture I All Board Members – Officers, District Directors, Chairmen are invited and encouraged to attend.	Amanda Krauss Sempervirens Representative <i>“Sempervirens Introduction: Protecting Redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains”</i>	Carol Vallens Adele Kelly
2:15 P.M. – 3:15 P.M.	California Consultants Council (CCC)	CCC Chairman, 2 nd Vice President – Nina Blonski	Carol Vallens Adele Kelly

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Meeting Time	Type of Meeting/Lecture	Chairman or Speaker	Technical Host
9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.	District Directors Forum	District Director Coordinator, 1 st Vice President – Marlene Kinney	Carol Vallens
11:15 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.	Lecture II All Board Members – Officers, District Directors, Chairmen are invited and encouraged to attend.	April Lowe Master Gardener <i>“Grapes Are Like Teenagers”</i>	Carol Vallens Adele Kelly
	Lunch 12:15 – 1:15 P.M.		
1:15 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.	Business Meeting #1, All Board Members – Officers, District Directors, and Chairman are required to attend.	Presiding Officer – CGCI President, Adele Kelly	Carol Vallens Adele Kelly Robin Pokorski

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Meeting Time	Type of Meeting/Lecture	Chairman or Speaker	Technical Host
9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.	Lecture III All Board Members – Officers, District Directors, and Chairmen are invited and encouraged to attend.	Jim Schmidt Horticulturist/Motivational Speaker <i>“Stagecoaches, Insects, and a Flourishing Future”</i>	Carol Vallens Adele Kelly Robin Pokorski
10:15 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.	Business Meeting #2 All Board Members – Officers, District Directors, and Chairman are required to attend.	Presiding Officer – CGCI President, Adele Kelly	Carol Vallens Adele Kelly Robin Pokorski
	Lunch 12:30 – 1:30 P.M.		
1:30 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.	Business Meeting #3 All board Members – Officers, District Directors, and Chairmen are required to attend.	Presiding Officer – CGCI President, Adele Kelly	Carol Vallens Adele Kelly Robin Pokorski

SPEAKER INFORMATION

Monday, January 26, 2026, 1:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M. – Lecture I – “*Sempervirens Introduction: Protecting Redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains*,” Amanda Krauss – Sempervirens Director of Tribute & Legacy Giving

Amanda Krauss is a passionate environmentalist and fundraiser with more than 14 years of non-profit experience. At Sempervirens Fund, Amanda leads the Tribute and Legacy Giving programs, working closely with those who want to honor special people and create a legacy for the future of redwoods. She is also the liaison with CGCI’s Sempervirens Fund Chairman.

Tuesday, January 27, 2026, 11:15 A.M. – 12:15 P.M. – Lecture II – “*Grapes Are Like Teenagers*,” April Lowe – Master Gardener

April Lowe is a Master Gardener and a retired federal law enforcement officer who worked as a Border Patrol Officer. April now teaches horticulture skills to youth detained at the County Probation Department’s Youth Transition Campus. She leads a group of San Diego Master Gardeners, guiding troubled young men and women in growing plants while cultivating character. She is a self-taught gardener who has gardened throughout her career to relieve stress. In 2021, she began working at her parents’ vineyard, gaining knowledge of grapes and how to cultivate, prune, and watch for pests. She became a Master Gardener in 2023, and her primary areas of focus are food production and orchard and vineyard maintenance.

Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M. – Lecture III – “*Stagecoaches, Insects, and a Flourishing Future*,” Jim Schmidt – Horticulturist/Motivational Speaker

Jim Schmidt is a retired horticulturist from the University of Illinois with B.S and M.S. degrees in horticulture. At the University, he worked in Consumer Horticulture, 4-H and Youth Gardening, trained Master Gardeners, and taught courses in herbaceous plant identification. Jim served for many years on the National Garden Clubs Board (Flower Show Schools Committee, Handbook Exam Committee) and was an instructor for flower show schools for 4 decades. Throughout his career, he has been a speaker on various gardening topics at Extension-sponsored schools and field days, local civic clubs, and commercial conferences. Currently, Jim is a part-time horticulture instructor at a local community college and does horticultural consulting, landscaping, and maintenance.