

# Golden Gardens

Official Publication of California Garden Clubs, Inc.

March-April 2026

Vol. 5-18



California Garden Clubs, Inc.

a member of

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

and

Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc.

\*\*\*\*\*

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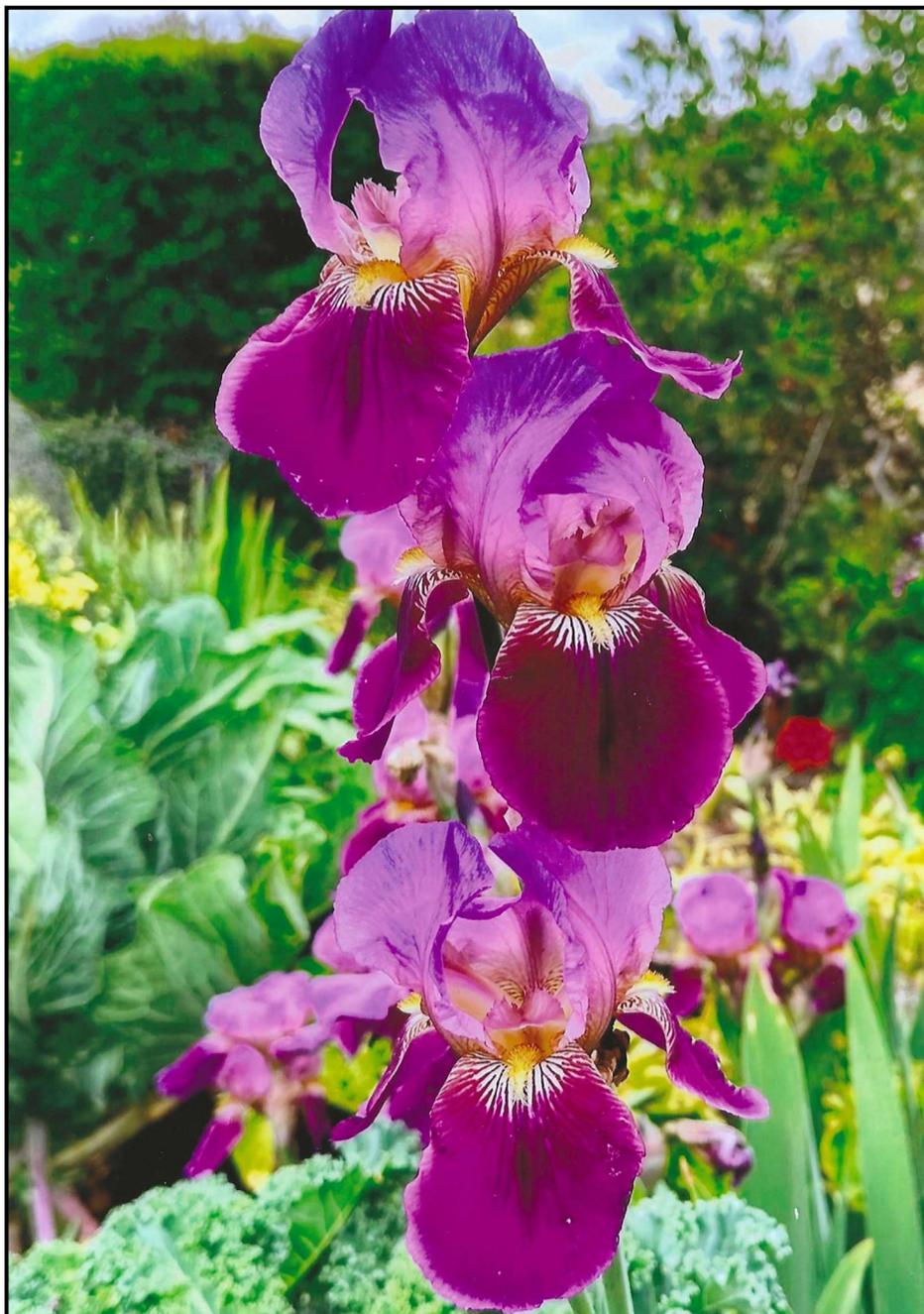
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## WELCOME SPRING



Iris in the Garden of  
Diane Clark of Vista Garden Club

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## CGCI PROJECTS

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 Blue Star Markers: [George Unrine](#) (Southern  
 CA) & [Maria Krenek](#) (Northern CA)  
 Conejo Valley Botanic Garden: [Melvin Gaines](#)  
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 See 2025-26 *Yearbook, Manual & Roster*

## Golden Gardens

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- Distributed electronically—FREE. To subscribe or view past issues, visit: <https://www.californiagardenclubs.com/newsletters>
- Submit articles to the [Editor](#) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month: **December** (for January-February issue); **February** (for March-April issue); **April** (for May-June issue), **June** (July-August issue); **August** (September-October); **October** (November-December issue).

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OFFICIAL CALENDAR

Check the CGCI [Calendar](#) for links to brochures, flyers, registration forms, etc. For schools in other states, check the [NGC website](#). See CGCI Calendar for club, affiliate, associate plant society, and district "special" events which are open to the public.

**2026**

**May 4-6**, NGC Convention, St. Louis, MO  
**May 11-14**, CGCI Convention, Handlery Hotel, San Diego. Host: Palomar District. Chairman: [Diana Drummey](#)  
**Aug. TBA**, Flower Show School Symposium, Fresno. For more information, contact FS Schools Chairman [Jennifer Waite](#)  
**Aug. 31-Sept. 2**, CGCI Fall Board Meeting, Harris Ranch, Coalinga. Host: Hermosa Garden Club  
**Sept. 24-26**, Flower Show School, Course 4, Poway. Sponsor: Southwestern Judges Council. [Updated brochure](#)  
**Oct. 12-14**, PRGC Convention, Thousand Oaks, California. Chairman: [Robin Pokorski](#)

**2027**

**Jan. 25-27**, CGCI Winter Board Meeting, Virtual

**CGCI DUES — REMINDER**

The final date to report and pay dues for additional members for the 2025-2026 year is **April 15**. The Additional Members form is available in the "Members Only" Section of the website (see [home page](#)).

Don't forget that dues for the 2026-27 year are due **July 1**, and the payment deadline is now **JULY 15** (no longer October 1). The renewal forms will be sent to organizations approximately May 1. Payments submitted after July 15 will incur a \$25 late fee.

**THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I am delighted to report that our recent Winter Board Meeting was a success. Despite the digital distance of a virtual format, we tackled the business of our organization. My sincere gratitude goes out to every board member who logged in and contributed. Your dedication keeps our organization thriving. The energy from this meeting proves that while we may be meeting on screens, our roots remain deep and our growth is unstoppable.

Beyond the business, we were treated to an exceptional lineup of guest speakers who reminded us exactly why we do what we do. We were fortunate to learn from experts across several fields, ranging from conservation to cultivation:

Amanda Krauss, Sempervirens Director of Tribute & Legacy Giving. Amanda shared a poignant presentation on the future preservation of California's majestic redwood trees, which remains a cornerstone CGCI State Project. For more information on how you can support this vital cause, please contact our CGCI Sempervirens Chairman, Judy Unrine.

April Lowe, San Diego Master Gardener. April brought a bit of Southern California sunshine to our screens, sharing her deep knowledge and passion for growing grapes. Whether you have a vineyard or just a backyard trellis, her insights were invaluable.

Jim Schmidt, Retired Horticulturist/Motivational Speaker, University of Illinois. Jim's presentation, titled "Stagecoaches, Insects, and a Flourishing Future," provided the inspiration and motivation we needed. His horticultural expertise and motivational speaking style continue to be a guiding light for our gardening community.

Unfortunately, in early February, your President received disappointing news. It is with deep regret that we acknowledge the resignation of our First Vice President, Marlene Kinney, who has stepped down to focus on her health. Marlene served CGCI for many years with an unwavering dedication and deep-seated passion for our mission. Her leadership journey began as the District Director for Diablo Foothills, and she steadily ascended through the ranks, serving as Corresponding Secretary, Third Vice President, and Second Vice President. While her presence on the Executive Committee will be greatly missed, her legacy of commitment to CGCI remains an inspiration to us all.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for May 11-14, 2026, to attend CGCI's 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention at The Handlery Hotel in San Diego. The convention is being hosted by Palomar District, Chairman, Diana Drummey. This year, we're digging into our roots with our theme: "Seeds of Liberty – Celebrating America's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday." We've cultivated a schedule of inspiring speakers, a marketplace, a design-only flower show, crafts, workshops, and, most of all, the best part – lots of camaraderie. Watch for "The Call" in mid-March.

Happy Spring,

*Adele Kelly*

2025-2027 President

## FEATURED ARTICLE

## DO YOU LOVE ORCHIDS? YES, YOU CAN GROW THEM!

By Arthur Hazboun, South Bay Orchid Society

**Cymbidiums (outdoors)**

While orchids do grow differently than roses, geraniums, and Dutch irises, there are just a few things you need to know to be successful at growing orchids. First, most of the orchids we grow are epiphytes, which means that their roots need access to air. In the wild, many orchids grow in trees or on rocks where their roots are exposed. If you plant a Phalaenopsis in soil, it will die very quickly because the roots cannot breathe. This represents one of the biggest and most important differences among plant families that you need to understand. Now there are a few basic things we need to know to be successful orchid growers. It starts with buying the right kind of orchid for you.

Many people make the mistake of buying a small inexpensive plant. This is not a good strategy for learning to grow orchids. Orchids can store nutrients and move them when and where needed within the plant. If you buy the largest and healthiest plant you can afford, it gives the plant time to adjust to the new growing conditions and gives you time to learn how to care for it. The plant can take some abuse while the two of you get acquainted.

**EASY ALL-YEAR OUTDOOR ORCHIDS:** Cymbidiums (Cym.), Dendrobiums (Den.), Cattleyas (C., L., Lc., Blc., Slc. Rlc.), Oncidiums (Onc.), Zygopetalum (Zygo.)

**EASY INDOOR GROWERS:** Phalaenopsis (Phal.)

There are five simple things you need to know to be successful with orchids (besides what orchids grow in); these are, water, temperature, sunlight, fertilizer, and airflow. Water, temperature, and light are the more critical, so we'll start there.

**Watering:** Most Southern California water is adequate for the orchids I've listed above. So, you may water them right from the tap. Most orchids we buy are growing in either fir bark or sphagnum moss.

**Growing in bark:**

- Water early in the morning after breakfast.

While orchids do grow differently than roses, geraniums, and Dutch irises, there are just a few things you need to know to be successful at growing orchids. First, most of the orchids we grow are epiphytes, which means that their roots need access to air. In the wild, many orchids grow in trees or on rocks where their roots are exposed. If you plant a Phalaenopsis in soil, it will die very quickly because the roots cannot breathe. This represents one of the biggest and most important differences among plant families that you need to understand. Now there are a few basic things we need to know to be successful orchid growers. It starts with buying the right kind of orchid for you.

- Water the mix in the pot, not the leaves. (It is OK for the leaves to get wet.)
- Water all around the pot to saturate all the bark.
- Water should stream out of the holes in the bottom of the pot.
- Watering frequency will vary depending on the time of year, temperature, humidity, growing media, size of plant and pot. During typical Southern California summers (and even our freak summer-like periods in the winter) you'll need to water twice a week. During the winter, once a week should be sufficient.

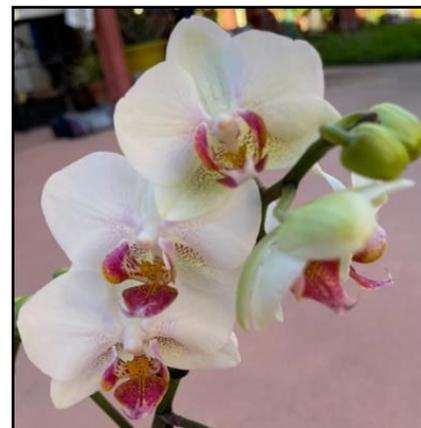
**Growing in sphagnum moss:**

Dig your finger down the inside edge of the pot (a couple of knuckles at least) and feel if it is still wet. When it begins to feel like it's getting dry, pour a few ounces of water on top of the moss. The moss acts like a sponge. You don't want to over saturate it and you don't want to let it dry out completely.

Orchids like humidity. If humidity is low, such as during a Santa Ana condition, you may need to water more frequently. If possible, misting the plants on dry days is also a good practice.

If you are not watering enough, Phalaenopsis leaves will not be smooth; they will appear dehydrated and sag. New leaves of Cymbidium, Oncidium, and Zygopetalums will have "accordion" folds in their leaves.

If you water too frequently, the roots will rot, and the plant will not take up water and nutrients sufficient for good growth and blooming.

**Phalaenopsis (indoors)**

**Watering don'ts:** Don't water in the late afternoon or evening. Don't let water sit in between the leaves at night. Watering in the morning provides enough time for any water sitting in between leaves to evaporate before nightfall. And don't fill up a bucket and dunk each of your orchids one after another. This is how you can spread viruses from one orchid to another and there is no cure (except the trash can) for an orchid virus.

Continued on next page

## DO YOU LOVE ORCHIDS? (continued from previous page)

**Zygopetalum (outdoors)**

When temperatures go up, particularly with low humidity, orchids can overheat. Keeping them in shade, misting, and good airflow will help to cool your plants. When temperatures reach 90° or above, start to watch more closely and start misting until the afternoon starts to cool down.

**Sunlight:** The indoor/outdoor groups have different light needs. The color of the leaves is a good indicator of proper light conditions. The color should be medium to light green (or yellow-green). Indoor (Phalaenopsis) need lower-light shade. This makes them perfect for windows with filtered light. The outdoor group likes brighter shade but can get sunburned if they get too much direct sun. Under a tree or the eaves of your house may work well. The north side of your home may not provide enough light. If Phalaenopsis do not get enough light, their leaves will be dark and new leaves will grow long and slender. If orchids do not get enough light, then they may never bloom.

**Temperature:** Orchids listed above are in two groups. The outdoor group can handle Southern California weather all year with few exceptions. It must be frost-free. These groups are generally OK with nighttime temperatures down to 40°F and lower for brief periods. Warm growers, such as Phalaenopsis are OK down to a nighttime low of about 55°F. Orchids shut down and stop growing when they get too cold. Then it's easy for bacteria to set in and finish off your beautiful orchid.

**Fertilizer:** Simple. Use a water-soluble "balanced" fertilizer. Look on the bottle or bag for numbers like 10-10-10 or 13-13-13. These numbers represent the three primary nutrients. Check the label for two other things (not essential, but good practice). The fertilizer should state that it contains "micronutrients." Next, check the nitrogen. It is best if the nitrogen is not (or mostly not) all urea nitrogen. Urea nitrogen is not as available a food as other types of nitrogen.

Forget what the manufacturer states as a mixing ratio. Orchids are very efficient feeders, and it is very easy to over fertilize which is not healthy for your orchids. We have a saying: "weakly weekly." In other words, fertilize with a weak solution every week. If you are growing in bark and using 10-10-10 or 13-13-13, use one teaspoon per gallon of water. If you are growing in moss, cut that in half. If you are using 20-20-20, use 1/2 teaspoon per gallon. Water your plant first and give it about 30 minutes to absorb a bit of water before you fertilize. Fertilizing first can burn their roots.

**Dendrobium (outdoors)**

**Airflow:** Orchids take in carbon dioxide and give back oxygen. Good airflow promotes this healthy exchange which benefits the plant and the environment. Airflow helps to reduce the plant's temperature on hot days. Good airflow also accelerates the evaporation of water sitting in the leaves which can invite bacteria that may cause rot. It also reduces problems with pests or insects like scale and mealy bugs. You likely have good airflow if your plants are outside under a tree. If your plants are inside, consider placing them near an open window or in a room with a fan.

Photo Credit: [Ellyn Meikle](#)

## NATIONAL ORCHID DAY IS APRIL 16!

According to <https://nationaltoday.com>, "National Orchid Day is held annually on April 16. Do you know orchids are one of the two largest families of flowering plants, with between 21,950 and 26,049 currently accepted species? They are colorful, beautiful, give off good fragrance, and grow in abundance across the world. The day is connected with honoring and cherishing the memory of loved ones, and it is indeed dear to our hearts."

To read more: <https://nationaltoday.com/national-orchid-day>

## 2025-2027 PRESIDENT'S PROJECT

## CULTIVATING THE ROOTS OF SUCCESS

ABRAXAS HIGH SCHOOL GARDEN — ABRAXAS ORCHARDBy Barbara Weiler, Chairman

Thanks to the generosity of our members, CGCI presented a \$14,000 check for the Abraxas Orchard expansion. To date, we have raised \$17,860 toward our \$30,000 goal.

Progress is underway in the orchard with the installation of a new irrigation controller, a necessary step before the fruit trees can be planted. A CAD landscape plan was approved, and trees and vines were selected for planting (see list below). Plans also include a small greenhouse for seed starting, a storage shed, and benches. The backstop on the old baseball field will be used as a trellis to grow hops.

Thank you to our recent donors: Al & Pat Claves, Bernardo Gardeners Club, Mission Hills Garden Club, Newman Garden Club, Southcoast Floral Designers, Southern California Garden Club (in Honor of Rita Desilets and Robin Pokorski), Stockton Garden Club, The Lodi Garden Club, Tuolumne County Garden Club, Vista Garden Club, and Humboldt District.



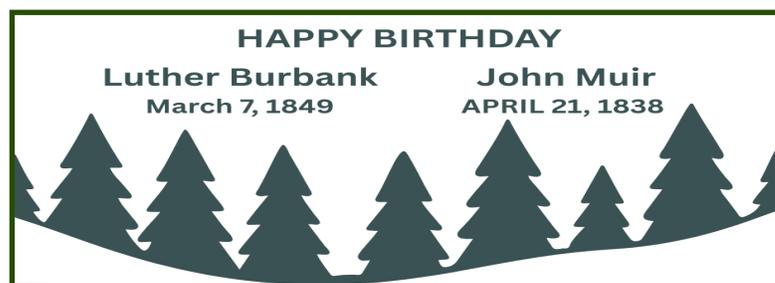
L to R: President Adele Kelly, Abraxas High School Biology Teacher Bob Lutticken, President's Project Chairman Barbara Weiler



New Irrigation System and Existing Fruit Trees

**Abraxas High School Orchard Plants:**

- Diospyros virginiana* (Persimmon)
- Passiflora edulis* (Passion Fruit vine)
- Persea americana* 'Lamb Haas' (Lamb Avocado)
- Persea americana* 'Sir Prize' (Avocado)
- Prunus avium* 'Royal Crimson' (Cherry)
- Pyrus communis* (Hood Pear)
- Prunus dulcis* (All-in-One Almond)
- Prunus persica* 'Mid Pride' (Peach)
- Prunus salicina* (Santa Rosa Plum)
- Pyrus Communis* 'Floridahome' (Florida Home Pear)
- Trachelospermum jasminoides* (Star Jasmine)



## LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

By [Linda Travis](#), Chairman

### Congratulations to our 2025 Life Membership Recipients:

**ARBORETUM DISTRICT**  
Year Around Garden Club  
Nancy Bird

San Pedro Garden Club  
Sipping Pappas  
Myrna Cabanban

Deborah Spang  
Mary Blume

Sunshine Garden Club  
Julie Harder  
Judith Burkhartsmeier  
West Valley Garden Club  
Judy Boylan

**BAY OCEAN DISTRICT**  
Woodside Hills Garden Club  
Kay Newby  
Sue Sweeney

**GOLDEN FOOTHILLS**  
Auburn Garden Club/Auburn  
Arrangers Guild  
Annette Choate

**PALOMAR DISTRICT**  
Dos Valles Garden Club  
Robyn Shultz

**CASCADE DISTRICT**  
Redding Wonderland Garden  
Club  
Diana Gifford-Tuggle

**LUTHER BURBANK DISTRICT**  
Petaluma Garden Club  
Kathie Ford  
Santa Rosa Garden Club  
Patty Gundry

**SACRAMENTO RIVER VALLEY**  
**DISTRICT**  
Folsom Garden Club  
Ron Byrd

**SEQUOIA FOOTHILLS**  
**DISTRICT**  
Hanford Garden Club  
Brenda Buford  
Valley Oak Garden Club  
Linda Groah  
Gail Sterling  
Janet Lange  
Francene Hill

**COSTA VERDE DISTRICT**  
Long Beach Garden Club  
Cindy Kovacs

**ORANGE COUNTY DISTRICT**  
San Clemente Garden Club  
Laura Bard

**SAN FERNANDO VALLEY**  
**DISTRICT**  
Southern California Garden  
Club  
Shelley Sparks

Eleven of twenty-eight districts (39%) and sixteen of two hundred eighty-eight clubs (7%) participated in the program during 2025. Interesting Note: All the Life Memberships requested were generated between January and July 2025. The 2025 total was twenty-four CGCI Life Memberships (versus the 2024 calendar year with twenty-six Life Memberships).

Thank you for your continued support of the scholarship fund through the CGCI Life Membership Program.

Life memberships may be purchased by individuals, organizations or districts to honor a member, or individuals may purchase their own. See the [CGCI website](#), under "Membership & Dues" for more information.

## MEMBERSHIP

### MEMBERS ONLY SECTION OF THE WEBSITE 2026-27 ANNUAL RENEWALS

By [Jane McKee](#), Website Advisor/Members Only Database Administrator

The Annual Renewal Notices will be sent on May 1, 2026. Effective this year, dues are due July 1, 2026 and **the deadline is July 15, 2026 — NOT October 1**. Dues submitted July 16 or after will incur a late fee of \$25. The late fee will automatically be added to the total amount due on forms submitted July 16 or later.

When submitting the Annual Renewal Dues Payment Form, the Primary/Billing Contact (usually the Treasurer) should review all information in the organization record and add new President(s) and/or Treasurer(s) or update information as necessary. This includes official information, e.g., mail or email address, website URL, meeting places, days/times, etc. The record is updated immediately upon submission of the online form.

To access the record, go to the login link on the [CGCI website home page](#):

**Members Only Login**

## GOLDEN LEGACY SOCIETY

By **George Perko**, Chairman

[The Golden Legacy Society](#) was established to honor members who are supporting CGCI financially through future bequests in their wills or trusts. A new national term has been introduced for this concept: Legacy Gifting. Legacy gifting is a form of charitable donations in which you leave a personal legacy by planning future gifts to CGCI from your assets.

There are several ways to make a legacy gift:

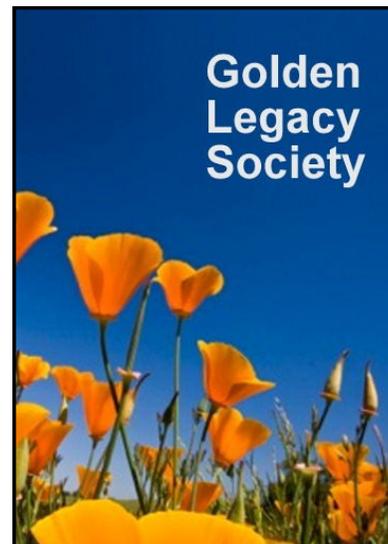
- 1) Bequests through your will or revocable trust.
- 2) Life insurance policies where CGCI is a named beneficiary.
- 3) Retirement plans, like IRAs, where CGCI is a named beneficiary.
- 4) A charitable trust that you establish that distributes assets to CGCI after your death.
- 5) Charitable gift annuities to which you make a large contribution, and CGCI pays you a fixed income for life.

Additionally, there are several ways to make current gifts:

- 1) Monetary donations—just write a check.
- 2) Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) from your IRA. If you are 70.5 or older, you can donate up to \$108,000 in 2026 directly from your traditional IRA. This donation is not tax-deductible, but the amount is excluded from your taxable income and can satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution.

CGCI is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and current gifts you make will normally be tax-deductible (depending on your personal tax situation).

For more information about the Golden Legacy Society, see the [CGCI Website](#) under “Projects.”



## CONVENTION & PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

By **Greg Pokorski**, Parliamentarian & Convention Credentials Chairman

**Attention: District Directors and Club Presidents**

### WHO ARE YOUR CLUBS SENDING TO CONVENTION?

The Call to the 2026 Annual Convention will be distributed (by email) to club presidents in March and will be posted on the CGCI website. Every garden club and associate plant society (APS) that is a member of CGCI is entitled to representation at the CGCI annual meeting (convention). This is your golden opportunity to participate in CGCI’s administration, as well as the opportunity to network with fellow garden club members from all over California, to learn from the workshops and programs provided, and to get ideas from other clubs. Member clubs and APSs are entitled to representation by their presidents (or the president’s alternate) AND by delegates (the number of official delegates is based on the size of the membership of each organization as specified in CGCI’s bylaws). The bylaws are contained in the *Yearbook, Manual & Roster* (pages 53-72) which is sent to all club presidents, and they are on the CGCI website ([About CGCI](#)). See Article XI – Annual Meetings in particular.

Club members cannot just submit registration forms designating themselves as delegates. Delegates should be elected by each club – or at the least, be appointed (usually by the president). For every registration form that indicates the attendee is a president, alternate or delegate, there needs to be a credentials form from that club verifying this information. See instructions on the Registration Form and in the Call and submit one online Credentials Form (by April 20), usually submitted by the club president on behalf of the club that is sending representatives. Delegates should be those who plan to attend convention business sessions where they have the opportunity to vote on behalf of their club.

Be involved in your parent organization. Attend the CGCI convention and take information and ideas back to your club. Let us know you are coming by submitting a credentials form.

Contact this chairman for more information.

## ARBOR DAY

### CELEBRATE ARBOR DAY: BECOME A TREE CITY USA

By [Patricia Holloway](#), Arbor Day Co-Chairman and Climate Awareness Chairman

In 2023, my city, San Clemente, applied to the National Arbor Day Foundation and became a Tree City USA. Communities that apply for this special designation receive information and guidance on expanding their urban forests. To qualify, a city must meet four standards:

- **Establish a Tree Board**
- **Enact a Tree Ordinance**
- **Budget for Tree Care**
- **Celebrate Arbor Day**

#### Establish a Tree Board

The purpose of a board is to oversee tree planting and maintenance on public property in your community. Oftentimes, the department that calls for planting trees is not the same as the one that performs maintenance, and a Tree Board can help coordinate between them. The board can be as simple as a three-person committee made up of a public works or planning director, an arborist/tree specialist, and a maintenance director. The board can also be the same as your Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, or even a subcommittee of these. The latter is desirable because it provides an opportunity for public input.

#### Enact a Tree Ordinance

Most communities already have an ordinance pertaining to trees. Sadly, many of them are skewed towards tree removal rather than preserving and expanding the urban forest. At a minimum, an ordinance should explain how citizens can plant trees in parks and along their streets, and how they can petition their city to remove diseased or damaging trees. Cities should take care not to remove healthy mature trees, typically worth \$10,000 or more, to remedy a cracked or lifted sidewalk that may cost thousands less to repair. Of course, trees removed should always be replaced at the same or another suitable location. In my community, public trees may be trimmed but not removed for the purpose of restoring views from private residences.

#### Budget for Tree Care

To become a Tree City, your community must budget \$2 per capita for tree planting and maintenance. Out of the four criteria, this was the one I was most concerned about satisfying. But it turned out to be the easiest to meet because my city already spent well above that on street and park tree maintenance, including trees at City Hall and other city-owned facilities. Tree City is also fairly generous about the types of expenditures that qualify. The key is to ensure your city budgets money for planting new trees, not just maintaining existing ones, because the goal is to **expand** your urban forest and reap all the beauti-



**Representatives from San Clemente Garden Club (with Patricia Holloway holding the plaque), San Clemente Rotary, and South Orange County Chapter of Citizens' Climate Education**

ful benefits. Also, beware of proposals to shift funds from tree maintenance to pay for tree planting. This may be okay as an interim measure, but it can become counterproductive, since every new tree will need maintenance in the future.

#### Celebrate Arbor Day

The final Tree City USA requirement is to celebrate Arbor Day. This is the fun part! The National Arbor Day Foundation recognizes Arbor Day as the last Friday in April. This year, it is April 24, 2026. My community now celebrates it on the last Saturday in April to make it easier for school children and working families to participate. You can begin by planting a single tree, or you can supplement what your city is able to provide through fundraising and tree donations from various community groups. Smaller 15-gallon size trees are more manageable for volunteers to plant on their own, while city maintenance crews, if available, are better equipped to plant larger 24" box trees and loosen hard ground. Besides acquiring one or more trees that grow well in your area, you will need shovels, gloves, tree stakes and ties, planting mix, mulch, hoses, and a water source.

So, make it official! Gather your friends and go to your city council to ask them to apply for Tree City USA status. Regale them with all the benefits of trees: beauty, shade, absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> and release of oxygen, groundwater retention, erosion control, wildlife habitat, increased property values, and improved human health. You will find that trees are universally popular, and that people of all backgrounds and persuasions agree that planting the right trees in the right place is a wonderful thing.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

### ARE YOU AN ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS AND SUPPORTIVE CONSUMER?

By [Cynthia Jackson](#), CGCI Environmental Schools Chairman



Rethink, repurpose, reuse, reduce, recycle is great overall guidance.

Observe what is in your trash can. What are you sending to the landfill each week? Can it be reduced? Observe with an eye toward zero waste. Nature does not generate waste, so I think that is something to emulate.

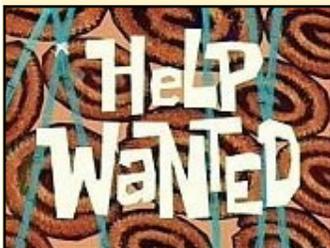
Find out what your environmental footprint is. There are many online surveys that will tell you and give you tips on how to improve it, within reason.

What are you putting on and in your body? Is it beneficial and nourishing or toxic? There are more and more studies now supporting the benefits to the environment, your health (and, of course, the animals) of a whole food plant-based (WFPB) diet over the standard American diet (SAD). The Environmental Working Group's website (<https://www.ewg.org>) is a great resource for the toxins in various substances.

What is in your mental and emotional environment? How do people, social media, mainstream news, etc., impact it? Are they beneficial and nourishing or toxic?

## AWARDS PROGRAM

By [Pat Clayes](#), Chairman



We are excited to announce a new position available on the Awards Committee: Blue Ribbon Certificate of Achievement Chairman.

by District, arranged in alphabetical order with accurate names according to the current *Yearbook, Manual, and Roster*.

4. Report the results to the Awards Chairman in a timely manner before the Convention, providing information for the Awards Excel sheet.

5. If possible, print the award certificates for distribution at the Convention.

Responsibilities of this position include:

1. Attend CGCI and Award Committee meetings, either in person or via Zoom.
2. Receive reports from District Directors regarding their results for Award #10 — The Blue Ribbon Certificate of Achievement — for each award year.
3. Keep an organized record of the clubs eligible for the award

Your involvement is crucial in recognizing the achievements of our clubs. We hope you will consider this opportunity!

Please contact President Adele Kelly or the Awards Chairman if you are interested in serving CGCI in this capacity.

## WELCOME NEW CLUBS

**Mother Lode Rose Society**, 37 members, Valley Lode District  
Martin Hooper, President, [martinhooper@gmail.com](mailto:martinhooper@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://motherloderose.com>

**Peardale Farm Community Garden**, 17 members, Golden Foothills District  
Robert Chase, President  
Website: <https://peardalefarmcommunitygarden.org>

**Coastal Bonsai Club**, 20 members, Orange County District  
Debra Mauzy-Melitz, President, [dmauzy@uci.edu](mailto:dmauzy@uci.edu)  
Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/coastal\\_bonsai\\_club\\_socal](https://www.instagram.com/coastal_bonsai_club_socal)





## PENNY PINES PROGRAM

By [Terry Sampson](#), Chairman

### PENNY PINES DONATIONS — FEBRUARY 2026 REPORT

2026 Donations to Date: \$4,896.00

H = In Honor  
M = In Memory

#### BAY BRIDGES DISTRICT

<b>Eden Garden Club</b>	
H: Martha Maxson	\$68
<b>Pinole Garden Club</b>	
H: Judie Marks	\$68

#### CASCADE DISTRICT

<b>Red Bluff Garden Club</b>	
M: Lin Mathews	\$68
M: Jackson Farm Siblings	\$68

#### CHANNEL ISLANDS DISTRICT

<b>Pleasant Valley Garden Club</b>	\$136
<b>Westlake Village Garden Club</b>	
H: Beverly Brune	\$68
M: Judy Doane	\$68

#### COSTA VERDE DISTRICT

<b>Long Beach Garden Club</b>	
M: Big Ed Brzezinski	\$68

#### DIABLO FOOTHILLS DISTRICT

<b>Blackhawk Bloomers Garden Club</b>	
H: Kim Modersbach	\$68
M: Matthew Modersbach	\$68
<b>Livermore-Amador Valley Garden Club</b>	
M: Claire Billingsley	\$68
M: Don Kvale	\$68

#### LUTHER BURBANK DISTRICT

<b>Petaluma Garden Club</b>	\$68
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#### PALMS TO PINES DISTRICT

"A" Garden Club of Big Bear Valley	
H: Ante Babich	\$68
H: Michelle Babich	\$68
H: Michael Ramirez	\$68
H: Jennifer Ramirez	\$68

H: Robert Libeau	\$68
H: Jayne Libeau	\$68
H: Alexia Egg	\$68
H: Jackson Egg	\$68
H: Shirley Libeau	\$68
H: Connie Swank	\$68
M: Greg Libeau	\$68

#### PALOMAR DISTRICT

<b>Chula Vista Garden Club</b>	
H: Marcia Rodriguez	\$68
<b>Fallbrook Garden Club</b>	
M: Christine Eastman	\$68
<b>La Jolla Garden Club</b>	
H: Claudia Chan-Shaffer	\$68
H: Pam Filley	\$68
H: Daniel Dameron	\$68
<b>Mission Hills Garden Club</b>	
M: Hiliary & Barry Hagar's Parents	\$68
M: Donald McNeal	\$68
<b>Poway Garden Club</b>	
M: Janet Perkin	\$68
<b>Temecula Valley Garden Club</b>	
H: Nancy Hurtienne	\$68
H: Ruth Lozano	\$68
H: Marlene Rivas	\$68
H: Sandy Qasem	\$68
H: Ashley Torres	\$68
H: Kate Ensign	\$68
H: Pam May	\$68
H: Judith Tobar	\$68
<b>Vista Garden Club</b>	\$408
M: Linda Johnson	\$68

#### ROADRUNNER DISTRICT

<b>Hesperia Garden Club</b>	
M: Viola Turner	\$68

#### SACRAMENTO RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT

<b>Fairfield Garden Club</b>	
H: Deanna Dupont	\$68
M: Gail Vincent	\$68
<b>Folsom Garden Club</b>	
H: Debi Carpenter	\$68
H: Mike Cohen	\$68
H: Diane Enkoji	\$68
H: Debra Field	\$68
H: Judi Graef	\$68
H: Julie Martinez	\$68
M: Kate Tudesko	\$68
M: Joyce Graham	\$68
M: Donald Zeigenfuss	\$68
M: Johnnie Ruth Ziegenfuss	\$68
<b>La Perita Garden Club</b>	
M: Marilyn Gill	\$68
M: Joan Hansen	\$68
M: Gale Hamatani	\$68
<b>River Valley Garden Club</b>	
M: Diann Swan	\$68

#### SAN FERNANDO VALLEY DISTRICT

<b>Cherry Blossom Garden Club</b>	
M: Cindy Temps	\$68
M: Connie Sparks	\$68
M: Harriet Uhl	\$68
<b>Southern California Garden Club</b>	
H: Mary Fleer	\$68

#### VALLEY LODGE DISTRICT

<b>Foothill Garden Club</b>	
M: Reno Maggiora	\$68
M: Gay Jacobs	\$68
M: Jon Ericson	\$68

### INFORMATION

### The Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)

According to [Calscape](#), "the *Pinus ponderosa*, commonly known as the Ponderosa Pine, Bull Pine, Blackjack Pine, or Western Yellow Pine, is a widespread and variable pine native to western North America. Like most western pines, the ponderosa is associated with mountainous topography. It is found on the Black Hills and on foothills and mid-height peaks of the northern, central and southern Rocky Mountains as well as the Cascades and Sierra Nevada. Modern forestry research identifies four different taxa of Ponderosa Pine, with differing botanical characters and adapted to different climatic conditions."



Photo Credit: Walter Siegmund

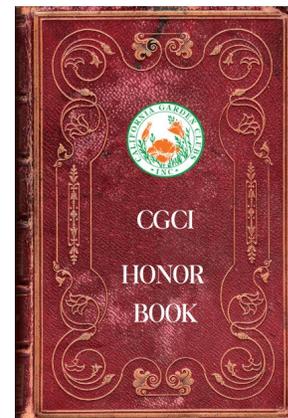
## THE HONOR BOOK

By [Bette Langford](#), Chairman

The Honor Book records recognition of outstanding service, contributions, and memorials. This Honor Book has evolved from the Green, Gold, and Copeland Fund Honor Books, which will be displayed at the 2026 Convention in San Diego.

The donated funds are used for any CGCI objective upon approval of the Board of Directors and also for the first-place winners of the Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest and a redwood tree per decade honoring former CGCI Presidents. Donations are encouraged.

Please use the Donation Form available on the [website](#) and make a check payable to CGCI and note "Honor Book" on the memo line and mail to: Bette Langford, 102 Calle Cuervo, San Clemente, CA 92672-2423. Honorees will receive a card, and an acknowledgement card will be sent to the donor. For a memorial, name the person in whose memory the gift is made, the name and address of the next of kin, and the name and address of the donor. A card will be sent to the next of kin.



Recently, Martha Smyser suggested to Cherie Oliver, President of the Chicago Park Garden Club, that she honor Carlotta Wixon-Welker, a thirty-year member of her garden club, by placing her name in the Honor Book. I was thrilled to receive Cherie's letter and check.

The Honor Book will be at the Convention in May. Please look for it on one of the display tables.

## GARDENING

### THE NARCISSUS FAMILY

By Jessica Lyle, Member of Fallbrook Garden Club

Everything has a native ancestor somewhere in the world. I want to share a plant family native to Southern Europe and Northern Africa. Its center of diversity is found on the Iberian Peninsula, a true Mediterranean plant. Let me introduce you to the Narcissus family.

The number of plants in this family is constantly debated, with numbers ranging from 34 distinct species to 300.

Narcissus tend to be long-lived bulbs that propagate by division and are also insect-pollinated, visited by bees, flies, moths, and butterflies.

Many have a very strong fragrance and are used in perfume. They have also been in cultivation for a long time. An early Greek botanist wrote about Narcissus in the 3rd century BCE, and a millennium earlier, in the 13th century BCE, depictions of Narcissus appeared in Egyptian wall art.

Narcissus have a long history of medicinal use in many cultures around the world, being mentioned by Hippocrates, Pliny the Elder, in Chinese medicine, and even in the Bible. Narcissus are poisonous -- cooked or raw -- and capable of causing rash, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions, paralysis, and death. Their



bulbs can be toxic to nearby plants. Even their cut stems can be toxic to the other flowers in the same vase, causing them to wilt sooner. The Narcissus itself makes an excellent cut flower, capable of lasting over a week.

This toxin does have its benefits. Narcissus are practically immune to predation from rabbits, squirrels, and gophers. And the ancient world was not completely off its rocker

when it came to using these plants for medicine. There are over 80 different chemical compounds found within the Narcissus family, some of which are used in pharmaceuticals today to treat ailments such as Alzheimer's Disease and cancer. That being said, without proper processing, these plants are more likely to make you sick than cure you. Do not eat them. Leave the chemistry to the chemists.

Lastly, these plants are very easy to grow, particularly the Paperwhite.

Grow indoors, outdoors, in the ground, or in a pot. These bulbs are a beginner's best friend.

## FROM OUR CLUBS

## A BIG HONOR FOR WINDSOR GARDEN CLUB

The Windsor Garden Club's Best Hope Pollinator Garden will be featured in the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership 2026 Eco-Friendly Garden Tour on Saturday, May 9, 2026.

The Eco-Friendly Garden Tour is a public outreach and education program that promotes sustainable landscaping practices by showcasing inspiring gardens throughout Sonoma and Marin Counties. The Tour highlights Russian River-Friendly and Bay-Friendly landscaping best practices and supports Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper certified professionals by featuring their personal or clients' gardens.

Windsor Garden Club's Best Hope Pollinator Garden is the result of a lot of hard work from the club's project leaders and other pollinator lovers. The group picked up shovels and hoes and transformed the grassy area just outside the Windsor Town Green Community Garden into a haven for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators, using only California native plants.

The Town of Windsor provided a small initial grant for soil and for permanent signs, including information about the garden. In addition to providing a bright spot for pollinators right next to the Town Hall Complex on Windsor Road, the Best Hope Garden is meant to serve as a model for Windsor residents looking for plants that support the environment.

Plantings include California poppies, Dutchman's Pipevine (food and nesting for the eggs of the California Pipevine Swallowtail butterfly), California Milkweed (food and nesting for Monarch Butterfly eggs), and other pollinator favorites.

In April and May, the garden will be in full flower. Signs by the plantings indicate flower and shrub names. To see photos of Windsor's Best Hope Pollinator Garden in full blossom during spring 2025, [CLICK HERE](#).

The garden takes its name from the book *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard* by renowned author and conservationist Douglas W. Tallamay.



**Best Hope Pollinator Garden**

## POINT LOMA GARDEN CLUB'S PETAL PUSHERS

Petal Pushers is a community service sub-committee of Point Loma Garden Club. The goal is to provide beautiful, fresh floral bouquets to community members who can benefit from an unexpected act of kindness. Petal Pusher members collect discarded fresh flowers and plants donated by Trader Joe's. These flowers are arranged into bouquets and delivered to individuals who may be feeling sad, lonely, forgotten, or unappreciated. One member said, "The best part is knowing that we have helped brighten someone's life and surroundings."



**Left: Members make a delivery to Cabrillo Elementary School.**

**Center & Right: Recipients at an assisted living facility and a senior wellness center are excited to receive buckets of bouquets.**

## FROM OUR CLUBS: BLUE STAR MEMORIALS

By [Carol Burns](#), President, Stockton Garden Club

### BLUE STAR MEMORIAL MARKER DEDICATION, UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC, STOCKTON

Stockton Garden Club proudly dedicated its fourth Blue Star Memorial Marker in Stockton on January 30, 2026, at the Military and Veteran Student Center of the University of the Pacific (UOP), Stockton. This marker dedication was the first event planned for our club's centennial year.

During the marker's dedication, CGCI President Adele Kelly spoke about its significance and the importance of its presence in our community, reminding us of those who protect our freedoms. CGCI Blue Star Memorial Marker Co-Chairman Maria Krenek and Valley Lode District Director Paula Elias also attended. They shared wonderful insights into the rich history of the Blue Star Markers, highlighting their enduring significance.

UPO President Christopher Callahan delivered the opening remarks and highlighted the University's longstanding support for military personnel and veterans since World War I.

The unveiling was performed by Gina Pittman, the daughter of a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient.

California's District 2 Supervisor Paul Canepa and a representative from U.S. Congressman Josh Harder (9th Congressional District) presented Certificates of Recognition to the UOP and the Stockton Garden Club.



L to R: Blue Star Memorials Co-Chairman Maria Krenek, Valley Lode District Director Paula Elias, CGCI President Adele Kelly, Stockton Garden Club President Carol Burns; and Modesto Garden Club President Nancy Robinson



L to R: UOP President Christopher Callahan, Gina Pittman, daughter of Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient, Stockton Garden Club President Carol Burns, and District 2 Supervisor Paul Canepa

The *Stockton Record* published an insightful article on the importance of the Blue Star Memorial Marker and its history. Additionally, UOP published a detailed article with photos in its *Pacific Newsletter*.

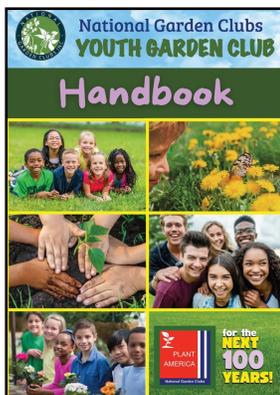
"As a Marine Corps combat veteran, the Blue Star installation is a momentous event for us," said USMC Veteran George Retana, a doctoral student in UOP's psychology program. "University of the Pacific serves a lot of veterans, so this highlights the work that veterans are doing in higher education and the different walks of life from veterans past and present. It's a big achievement to be able to have that here at Pacific. I don't know a lot of schools that have a Blue Star marker."





## NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

### NGC'S YOUTH GARDEN CLUB HANDBOOK



Download NGC's new twenty-seven-page **YOUTH GARDEN CLUB HANDBOOK**.

The Introduction includes a "Welcome" from the NGC President, information about National Garden Clubs and Plant America, the National Garden Clubs' Mission, Youth Policies & Guidelines, and an introduction to the Youth Garden Club Handbook.

Then there is information on forming an NGC youth club, why form an NGC Youth Club, who can form an NGC Youth Club, how to form an NGC Youth Club, Annual Youth Club registration, the Youth Club State registration form, how to find an NGC Youth Club, and funding ideas.

Finally, the handbook contains information about NGC Youth Club activities: Youth awards, grants and scholarships, annual NGC Youth contests, Youth participation in flower show, NGC Youth Club Checklist, Get Started Today, Children's picture and workbooks, Youth Club collaborations, fun tips, and NGC Youth Team.

[Click here](#) to download the handbook.



## PACIFIC REGION GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

### PRGC'S FIREWISE COMMUNITIES WEBINARS

Firewise Communities is the PRGC Director Tanja Swanson's special project. Tanja says, "I am thrilled to announce these webinars and hope that not only garden clubbers but anyone else will take advantage of this opportunity to get up-to-date information from these expert professionals. Director Tanja Swanson invites you to attend the Firewise Webinars — The one-hour webinars will help you reduce your risk of loss from wildfire, Please note that you need to register for each webinar separately.

Monday, March 9, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm, Firewise Webinar #2: Making Your Home Fire Resistant (Hardening Your Home). Laura Blaul, Senior Wildfire Fellow, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety. Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/x1bM1pB4RTiRkEz9BOQTQ>

Monday, April 13, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm, Firewise Webinar #3: Insurance Matters: Understanding and Renewing Your Insurance. Emily Rogan, United Policyholders. Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/d51CBVxwQaO6KN7PjB2ncw>

Monday, August 10, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm, Firewise Webinar #4: Personal and Family Preparedness Before a Disaster. Todd Lando, President, Fire Safe Marin and Central Marin Battalion Chief. Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ahABCgwzTfeTFpu1c-MzvA>

Monday, September 14, 2026, 2 pm - 3 pm. Firewise Webinar #5: Organizing Your Neighbors (Firewise Communities). Joele Frazier, Diablo Fire Safe Council, and Macy Cornell, Oakland's CABS Firewise Neighborhood. Register here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Hu32W-2nROmVkJZUH\\_3pPdw](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Hu32W-2nROmVkJZUH_3pPdw)

### PRGC CONVENTION — OCTOBER 12-14, 2026 — THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA

California has invited the Pacific Region members to "our house" for a party. Now we need to be sure "family" members are there to greet our guests! You are "family," so plan to attend and help. Has your club and district offered something for the swag bags? Offered place favors? Offered to help man the Registration Desk? Or be a host/hostess at meals? There is something for every "family" member to do at the Convention. Please come! Contact [Robin Pokorski](#) to see how you can help.

We think you'll be glad you came to enjoy our "Palm Trees n' Ocean Breeze." See YOU in October!

## ATTACHMENT A

*Carolyn A. Mayes, CPA*  
*Auditing and Consulting Services*

### INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REVIEW REPORT

To the Board of Directors of  
California Garden Clubs, Inc.  
San Fernando, California

I have reviewed the accompanying financial statements of California Garden Clubs, Inc. (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2025, and the related statement of activities, statement of revenues, expenses and changes in net assets, and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements. A review includes primarily applying analytical procedures to management's financial data and making inquiries of organization management. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, I do not express such an opinion.

#### **Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

#### **Accountant's Responsibility**

My responsibility is to conduct the review engagement in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the America Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Those standards require me to perform procedures to obtain limited assurance as a basis for reporting whether I am aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. I believe that the results of my procedures provide a reasonable basis for my conclusion.

I am required to be independent of California Garden Clubs, Inc. and to meet my other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to my review.

#### **Accountant's Conclusion**

Based on my review, I am not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

*Carolyn A Mayes, CPA*

Santa Rosa, California  
January 14, 2026

California Office: 465 Stony Point Road, #237  
Maine Office: P.O. Box 86

Santa Rosa, California 95401  
Friendship, Maine 04547

Tel: (707) 573-8892  
Tel (207) 832-7883

ATTACHMENT B



**WE WANT YOU!**

California Garden Clubs, Inc.  
94th Annual Convention

***Seeds of Liberty – Celebrating America's 250th Birthday***

Dates: May 11–14, 2026

Location: Handlery Hotel, 950 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108

- 
- Inspiring speakers
  - Marketplace
  - Design-Only Flower Show
  - Hands-On Craft Fair
  - Camaraderie and celebration

**Wear your Red, White & Blue as we honor  
America and the California Garden Clubs!**