

**DISTRICT IX FALL MEETING**  
October 17, 2023  
Embassy Suites Hotel, Estero  
Minutes

Call to Order at 10:00 am by Leslie Montwid, Director Pro Tem, FFGC District IX

Minutes recorded by Mary Yeomans, Recording Secretary, FFGC District IX

The Invocation was given by Ann Block, Garden Club of Cape Coral

Presentation of Colors by Navy JROTC, Estero High School

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Susan Fero, 1<sup>st</sup> VP of Fort Myers/Lee County Garden Council

Greeting was given by Jim Ward, Councilor, Town of Estero

A Welcome message was given by Sylvia Swartz, President, Fort Myers/Lee County Garden Council

Leslie Montwid responded.

The following appointments were made without objection:

Approval of Today's Minutes	Cathy Lambert of Lakeland Garden Club
	Ginger Hansill of Bartow Garden Club
	Lucy Wheeler of Sebring Garden Club
Timekeeper	Vinita Jones of Punta Gorda Garden Club
Teller	Janette Baggett, The Garden Club of Lakeland

The minutes of the Fall Meeting were approved by a committee headed by Sue Rood, Lake Placid Garden Club

Leslie Montwid introduced the following persons:

Head Table:

Sylvia Swartz, President of Fort Myers/Lee County Garden Council, District Awards Chair,  
Meeting Host  
Charlene Anderson, District Treasurer, Meeting Chair  
Paula Novander, District Corresponding Secretary  
Mary Yeomans, District Recording Secretary  
Libby Curnow, District Parliamentarian & Blue Star Chairman  
Leticia Gunn, FFGC 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
Mary Whisler, FFGC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Christie Linke, FFGC 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Tina Tuttle, FFGC President

State and District Chairs who have not previously been introduced:

- Brenda Leudeman – FFGC Tri-Council President/Liaison, FFGC Roadside Beautification & Paths of Sunshine Chair, District Facebook Chair, District Newsletter Chair
- Mercy Lagmay Abrams – District Floral Design Chair
- Sharon Ashton – District Coral Reef Foundation Chair, Penny Pines Chair
- Trudie Kirkland – District Birds, Bees, & Butterflies Chair, District Ways and Means Chair
- Ginger Hansill – District Youth/Wekiva Chair
- Carolyn Lowery- Nation - FFGC Parliamentarian

Paula Novander reported as the Corresponding Secretary of District IX.

Charlene Anderson presented the Financial Report, which was filed as distributed. (Report attached)

Libby Curnow presented the Credentials Report. Voting strength is 41. Credential report is adopted and attached.

Guests	5
Delegates	41
Alternates	5
FFGC Officers	1
FFGC Chairs	1
District Director	0
District Officers	5
District Chairmen	7
Former District Directors	2
Club Presidents	16
Council Presidents	1
Circle Presidents	2
Club Members	74

Gail Edgren, Chaplain of the Punta Gorda Garden Club, conducted a short memorial service for members who passed this past year.

Mary Yeomans read Article XXI(21) Districts, Section 3 Elections, A. District, of the FFGC Bylaws. Kimberly Porter, Susan Diaz, Sue Rood were nominated for the District Nominating Committee.

FFGC Officers gave a presentation of plans and opportunities for clubs for 2023-2025. Tina Tuttle cut a 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cake after awarding the district with a \$148 check.

BREAK

The blessing was given by Ann Block.

LUNCH

Meeting reconvened at 12:37 pm.

The Executive Board recommended the purchase of 50 tote bags for use at FFGC Wekiva Youth Camp for not more than \$100. Charlene Anderson will purchase bags.

The Executive Board recommended the reimbursement of the FFGC officers' lunches. Charlene Anderson will write the check.

Reports of State and District Chairman

Garden Therapy – Pat Shira (read by Leslie Montwid)

Wechiva – Ginger Hansill – report attached

Roadside Beautification and Sunshine Pathway, FFGC Tri-Council President/Liaison –Brenda Leudeman

Awards – Sylvia Swartz – handout attached

Mary Yeomans conducted a Roll Call of Clubs present. Total attendance is 83.

Bartow Garden Club	2
Bouquet Garden Club	2
Calusa Garden Club of Marco Island	4
Garden Club of Cape Coral	18
Gardenia Garden Club of Winter Haven	1
Gardens Out East	1
Gulf Coast Garden Club	3
Lake Placid Garden Club	8
The Garden Club of Lakeland	5
Naples Garden Club	1
Poinciana Garden Club	12
Port Charlotte Garden Club	8
Punta Gorda Garden Club	5
Royal Palm Garden Club	5
Sebring Garden Club	2
Garden Club of Winter Haven	2
TOTAL	74

Club Reports:

Calusa Garden Club of Marco Island – Kimberly Porter

Naples Garden Club – Mercy Lagmay Abrams – report attached

Punta Gorda – Mary Yeomans – report attached

Bouquet Garden Club of Winter Haven – Kitty Walker – report attached

Sylvia Swartz, Host of the meeting, recognized the Host Committee.

Sandy Rosch, President of Lake Placid Garden Club, invited the district to the Spring District IX Meeting on May 22, 2024 in the Government Town Center.

Announcements:

Mercy Lagmay Abrams announced the Creative Floral Arrangers of Americas Convention, Feb 22,-24, 2024 at the Orlando Marriott. [CreativeFloral.org](http://CreativeFloral.org) is their new website.

Sharon Ann Ashton, Penny Pines Chair, would like to set a goal of 100 acres of trees for the clubs of District IX. She will be communicating with club presidents about this.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:44 pm.

Financial Report for District IX  
May 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023

We filed our annual report with the State of Florida on May 24, 2023 to maintain our non-profit corporation status with the state.

Our 2022 taxes were filed on July 10, 2023.

We will be using a new invoice form this year that we will send out to each club and in addition to sending your \$1 per person membership fee, we would like to obtain information about your club such as your president's name, email and phone number along with how many members you have, and when you meet. This information is needed to keep our contact information up to date to insure that we can communicate with each club.

On the tables are copies of our fund report for the period May 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023.

Opening Balance 5/1/23	\$ 6,344.37
Deposits	\$ 2,548.35
Expenses	\$ 484.04
Closing balance 9/30/23	\$ 8,408.68

If anyone has any questions at all, please feel free to contact me.

Submitted:  
Charlene Anderson, Treasurer  
District IX

## **Wekiva Report**

I volunteered this summer at Camp Wekiva during the first Boys week along with my grandson. Unfortunately, the camp director and assistant director were out ill. Camp continued uninterrupted with Vegas as acting director and Eric as Assistant Director with Mary Whistler our FFGC Chairman.

This was my 10th year to volunteer (and I have the dog tags to prove it!)

The new infirmary building is state of the art and nicely decorated. I have several pictures if anyone would like to see the completed building.

Check out the Camp Wekiva Youth Camp website. There is a video of all the camp activities if you have never been to camp. Also on the right side is the "Wish List". If your club is thinking of making a donation, be sure to look at the list of needs. We found out this summer how much the old oven needed to be replaced when we had several meals prepared on an outside grill without the oven. A new one on the wish list would be \$9,500.

I visited our dear friend, "Mother Nature", Audry Swindal: I visited her last week and gave her a camp shirt for this year which celebrated the 50th anniversary of camp being at Wekiva Springs State Park. She is alert, for 95 years old, and loved the t-shirt and joked that she deserved dog tags for 47 years of volunteering at camp. Her eyesight is poor and she regrets not being able to use her computer. Family members are with her at all times.

Camp Wekiva chairman  
Ginger Hansill



## **APPLYING FOR A FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS AWARD**

Sylvia Swartz, District IX Awards Chair

It's that time of year again – awards season and I'd like to encourage all clubs to apply for at least one FFGC award. Take a long hard look at the projects your club has done in the past year and see if you can fit your project to an award description. All the awards are listed on the FFGC Awards website and there is lots of good advice there from state chair, Sandra Arnold, on how to apply. If you need any help or guidance regarding your application please contact me at 239-339-3778 or email me at [tamargal2@aol.com](mailto:tamargal2@aol.com) – I'm always happy to help and if I don't know the answer to your question I will research it for you.

Below you will find a step-by-step description of what to do:

- Begin the Process - usually carried out by the Club/Circle President or an Awards Committee.
- Review the entire list of Federation Awards at <https://ffgc.org/Award-Descriptions-&-Rules>
- Review the completed and ongoing projects in your Club against the list of awards.
  - Select a relevant award.
  - **Match** your project to the award **criteria**
  - Seek advice if required from District IX Awards Chair (Sylvia Swartz, 239-339-3778, [tamargal2@aol.com](mailto:tamargal2@aol.com)).
- President of club or club Committee consults and decides who will write the application.
- Person writing the award should:
  - Download the application form from the FFGC Awards site. (<https://ffgc.org/Awards>)
  - Read the description of the selected award and comply with any detailed instructions that may be contained in that award description.
  - Source and check the information required on the application form regarding Category, Class (if applicable) and name of Award, District Number, number of members in the Club, etc., start date, finish date, etc.

- Write the description of the project, remembering not to exceed a total of 3 pages including photos and ensuring to speak to the **criteria** of the award.
  
- Pointers:
  - When writing the project description, remember **you're telling a story**, which should have a beginning, middle and appropriate closing paragraphs.
  - Select; insert; and caption appropriate photos of the project.
  - Make the photos as large as you can to fill the space.
  - Assemble the application neatly – no more than 3 pages total - including application form.

Scan and Email your application to [FLawards2024@gmail.com](mailto:FLawards2024@gmail.com) to arrive by the due date (can vary but mostly Nov. 22 – notable **exception** Award #11: **Yearbook** which **is due Nov. 1** and is **SNAIL-MAILED** to FFGC 3<sup>rd</sup> VP, Letitia Gunn, , 8915 NE 9th Ave., Miami, FL 33138. Mail it with some form of tracking – Priority mail is best. Some awards , like several youth and school awards and the Nell Coe Award, are due in the New Year. If you have emailed your application, make sure you get an acknowledgement email from the Awards Chair. If you don't, email her to check she received it.

- Keep a file copy of your complete application and email or mail a copy to District IX Awards Chair, Sylvia Swartz, 4030 SW 9<sup>th</sup> Pl., Cape Coral, FL 33914 [tamargal2@aol.com](mailto:tamargal2@aol.com).

Good Luck to you all – let's see lots of applications from District IX clubs during this awards season – and lots of awards!





## **District IX Fall Meeting**

Bouquet Garden Club – Kitty Walker  
Winter Haven, Florida

Good morning. My name is Kitty Walker, and I am the new president of Bouquet Garden Club in Winter Haven. This is my first time to attend a District IX meeting and I am enjoying meeting everyone and learning more about what is happening at the district level.

Bouquet Garden Club is looking forward to an exciting year in 2023-24. Our club is 77 years young. We will have a variety of programs during this year including speakers about Butterflies as the Forgotten Pollinators, Succulents, and even Sky Writing. There will also be special luncheons and a Field Trip to Florida's Natural Grove House in Lake Wales and a Make and Take Flower Arrangement program by Kay Stefanski.

For many years Bouquet Garden Club sponsored a fall fashion show and meal as a fundraiser. As happened with many things, Covid changed that. In March of this year we had a very successful Spring Tea as a Fund Raiser. We will be having another Spring Tea in March of 2024. The Spring Tea will be on Thursday, March 14 at 2:00 pm at the Garden Center in Winter Haven. The tickets are \$30.00 each and there will be a Basket Auction and a Spring Hat Parade. We would love to have you join us. If you would like a ticket, please contact me at 863-326-5523 or at [wa2lk@hotmail.com](mailto:wa2lk@hotmail.com).

The Club is also looking forward to being a part of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. We are working with the other two Winter Haven Clubs and the City of Winter Haven in preparation for the planting of three trees – one per club - in the city of Winter Haven. We look forward to the FFGC Annual Meeting in the Spring and all of the pictures of tree plantings that will be on display from clubs across the state.

Bouquet is a hardworking, creative group of ladies with many gifts and talents. Our heritage is rich, and we continue to work toward the goals of education, conservation, beautification, and friendship. We are a BOUQUET of wonderful women who care about the community and each other.

Naples Garden Club report  
District IX Fall Meeting 10/17/2023

The Naples Garden Club has been celebrating its' 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. We have a wonderful lineup of presentations for our 2023- 2024 season.

In December 2023, Brian Watson from Fort Watson Beach will present "Florida Coastal Designs". Walter Vermeulen, director of Dianthus Miami will present a program featuring his modern Dutch style in February 2024. Walter takes inspiration from European-style floral arrangements when creating floral displays that pay homage to his Dutch heritage. In March 2024, Paula Pryke will present her cutting edge, innovative designs which have changed the face of British floristry. Presentation will be followed by a hands-on workshop the following day.

NGC will also be holding our annual House and Garden Tour on Saturday, February 3, 2024. This year's theme is "Blooming Delights".

Our annual Flower Show will be held April 5-6 at the Naples Botanical Garden. Our theme is "A World of Wonders".

We invite you to attend any and all of our events!

Respectfully submitted,

Mercy Abrams

## **Punta Gorda Garden Club Fall 2023 Report**

Although our club takes a summer hiatus as many others do, much has been taking place behind the scenes. The theme for the next two years is "Growing Together" and we have been working together to get things rolling!

Our first general meeting was held at a members' home so that we could tour her gardens and hear her talk about growing succulents in your home gardens. It was very well-attended and we all learned a lot! Plus, she gave away prizes!

The plans for the two-day Holly Days Home Tour are coming along. Last year Ian forced us to cancel the home tour since the homes were damaged but we did have a Holly Days Market instead. It will be nice to get back to our traditional fundraiser. The club is split into four teams and each decorates a home in the historic district of Punta Gorda using natural materials. We sell poinsettias and hand-crafted items too. The co-chairs have had their work cut out for them as we lost one home due to the owner's health issues but did manage to include another in its place. We do have tickets here if anyone is interested. They are \$20. It will be held on Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We have worked with students at Charlotte Preparatory Academy in the past on a butterfly garden and on pressed flower designs and floral arrangements for the flower show in March, but we are excited to have their choral group present a mini-concert at one of the homes during the home tour on the afternoon of Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Also, members will be presenting lessons on plants and botany at the school this year.

A Standard Flower Show is planned for March 26<sup>th</sup> at the Isles Yacht Club. The theme is "Name that Tune!" and I'm sure our members will make this one to remember with outstanding designs and horticulture displays. Claudia has made this an annual event that we all anxiously anticipate.

Our Monday morning gardening crew has continued to maintain five public gardens, visiting a different one each week of the month. Hurricane Idalia left a bit of a mess but nothing like Ian's mess last year.

Some of our gardeners have helped at Crossroads Hope Academy several times, working on starting a vegetable garden for the kitchen there and also planting and weeding planters to welcome visitors at the front of the building. Hope Academy is a residential facility that cares for boys who have "failed out" of the foster care system and it now has two campuses.

We participated in the International Coastal Cleanup again this year and financially support Keep Charlotte Beautiful, which organizes this event locally.

Several members helped a group at the Peace River Elementary School weed and prepare the school garden for planting vegetables.

We continue to place an interesting plant on the front counter at the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library each month. A description of the plant's origin and care is displayed and bookmarks are provided with information about our club and its meetings. We have received many compliments about the addition of the plants to the library.

Our Awards Chair has submitted a number of applications already and plans to finish a few more before the deadlines, and our Environmental Chair is planning for a tree planting on Arbor Day in January.

All of this has happened since May! Now, we are looking forward to two years of celebration between FFGC's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our club, we will be looking at the past and planning for the future - growing, working, and learning together!

Mary Yeomans  
President, Punta Gorda Garden Club