



## **2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Thanks to all who have donated to the PGI Green Thumbs, enabling our volunteers to keep the Punta Gorda Nature Park looking beautiful and inviting for the entire community to enjoy. More than meets the eye is required to achieve this, so we are sharing here our accomplishment highlights for the prior year of activity – 2024. (And yes - the list is lengthy!)**

### **PROVIDED A LANDSCAPED COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE**

o By landscaping and maintaining 5 of the park's 24 acres, the Green Thumbs provide a place where individuals and community groups can exercise and relax in a place that is a model of Florida Friendly Landscaping.

### **MAINTAINED PARK / HURRICANE RESTORATION**

o Every year requires updates to plantings: pruning, weeding, replacement plants, etc. Two hurricanes resulted in severe landscape damage, requiring removal of numerous trees and plants plus a major overhaul of the Bromeliad beds. Due to a first time ever major flooding of the entire park, many plants died from salt intrusion and excess moisture.

o Purchased new power tools as recommended by a committee of volunteers; new tools enhanced efficiency and reduced volunteer strain.

### **INVESTED OVER 3,000 VOLUNTEER WORK HOURS**

At the Florida minimum wage rate of \$13/hr. (increased in Sept.), that equates to over \$36,000 in contributed time.

### **COLLABORATED WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

o Ongoing collaboration with City of Punta Gorda, which owns the land and provides lawn mowing, waste pick-up and general oversight

o Developed relationship with newly designated city liaison - Danielle Berhel

o Partnership with Crossroads Hope Academy students who periodically join Green Thumb volunteers for heavy duty garden maintenance tasks

o Many Green Thumbs also volunteer for Punta Gorda in Bloom.

o Collaboration with the Congregation United Church of Christ, including mutual gardening assistance and participation in the church's annual Earth Day event.

Book clubs, yoga groups, plein air painters and more use the park as a meeting place.

### **PARTICIPATED IN GIVING CHALLENGE**

o This semi-annual community-wide fundraising event is our #1 source of ongoing funding. \$14,600 was raised in 2024. We were awarded a prize for our theme "Bee the One" using our mascot Petunia Bee. We will participate again when the Giving Challenge takes place in April 2026.

### **CONDUCTED A FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN FOR GIVING TUESDAY**

o Raised over \$500. on 12/3/24

**RECRUITED TWO NEW VOLUNTEERS FOR A TOTAL OF 28**

o New volunteers always welcome and have the opportunity to choose preferred tasks.

**EDUCATED COMMUNITY RESIDENTS VIA “TALKING PLANTS” SERIES**

o Three free community classes conducted in the park, each attended by an average of 20 people: Succulent Growing, Gardening for Pollinators, Orchid Growing Demystified. (New classes underway in 2025 – Adaptive Gardening: 1/10; Herb Growing: Feb. 14; Orchid Repotting: 3/14.)

**COMMUNICATED WITH VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS**

o Thirteen park updates and donation request emails sent to mailing list of almost 400 community members

**CONDUCTED BOARD AND SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE MEETINGS TO CONTINUALLY ASSESS RESULTS AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE**

**PROVIDED EDUCATION AND SOCIALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

o Two business meetings

o Two annual social get-togethers in the park

**ENHANCED SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE**

o [www.PGIGreenThumbs.org](http://www.PGIGreenThumbs.org)

o [www.Facebook.com/PGIGreenThumbs](https://www.facebook.com/PGIGreenThumbs)

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