

## PUNTA GORDA IS BLOOMING IN 2020!

Bloom Committee Chair Richard Polk reports in November on the completion of Hector Plaza landscaping and plans for future beautification, "The planters placed on Taylor Street at the corner of Olympia are doing very well. We have submitted plans to the city for the remainder of Taylor Street. Awaiting the final approval from Design Review Committee. The agreement with the county for the beautification of the County Courthouse is down to the last few dots and 't's."



"Punta Gorda in Bloom" (PGIB) is a local affiliate of the America in Bloom organization. The group was formed under the auspices of TEAM Punta Gorda along with the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce and the Punta Gorda Garden Club. The committee is composed of interested citizens, including some members of the PGI Green Thumbs, the Punta Gorda Garden Club, and TEAM Punta Gorda volunteers.



The group is dedicated to aiding in the beautification of downtown Punta Gorda. Richard Polk, long-time leader of the Green Thumbs, knew there was an opportunity to extend the work the group does in beautifying the Punta Gorda Nature Park. After witnessing what the America in Bloom program inspired in nearby Venice, FL, he brought the project to TEAM Punta Gorda for help moving it forward locally.

The nationwide America in Bloom (AIB) program provides member communities with education and shares examples of what can be accomplished by using flowers, plants, trees and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements to build community spirit. While initially focused on horticultural elements, AIB communities have found far broader benefits, including improved business vitality, heritage preservation and environmental enhancement – all forming economic drivers for their communities.

Initial funding for all materials needed has been generously donated by local resident and entrepreneur Alan Schulman. Future project phases are already envisioned. As the downtown beauty unfolds, the group hopes that merchants and citizens will want to participate via donations of funding, and that additional volunteers will join the current core group to assist with the ongoing revitalization of the specially selected, self-

watering planters. (*Volunteers pictured: Peggy Jensen, Joyce Laubach, Helen Cavanaugh, Richard Polk, Judi Beaumont and Elaine LaWell*)

Be on the lookout downtown as the installation proceeds. Anyone interested in finding out more or participating as a volunteer should contact Richard Polk via email at [richardpolk@comcast.net](mailto:richardpolk@comcast.net).

