



Come all! come celebrat

A MERRY

Join our Yuletide party



CHRISTMAS

Tuesday night December 10

TO YOU ALL

for feast, fun and revelry

T H E G A R D E N S P R A Y

Bulletin Of The Men's Garden Club Of Minneapolis
Member-Men's Garden Clubs Of America - Minnesota State Horticultural Society

December 1957
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G. "Vic" Lowrie, Editor

Associate Editors
Wm. Hull, Joe Witmer
Don Methven
N. W. Christopherson

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Date: Tuesday, December 10, 1957
Place: Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church
 Knox Ave. So. & West 50th St.
Time: 6:30 P.M.
Banquet: \$3.00 per person

OFFICERS

A. W. Koester	President
R. C. Adams	Vice President
W. H. Hull	Treasurer
N. W. Christopherson	Secretary
G. S. Titus	Past President

Office of the Secretary
N. W. Christopherson
6145 Clinton Avenue

Office of the Exchange Editor
G. Victor Lowrie
417 Essex Building

Looks like the boys have really gone all out on this year's Party. The turkeys are plumper, the menu is richer, the favors more catchy, the entertainment quite rollicking, the music much richer, the decorations real festive, with songs you all know and jokes you've never heard.

If you haven't yet sent in your reservations, please do so immediately — no later than December 4th.

Will the turkey carvers please bring long forks and sharp knives — the birds are so tender they would fall apart otherwise.

OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

By Bill Hull

Congratulations to Bill Brooks upon his election to the presidency of our Club. P. W. Young, Norm Christopherson and I (incoming Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively) will do our utmost to work with you, Bill, for a good year for the Club.

* * * *

Did you recently receive a personal invitation from the national president to become a National Member? You should have. May I suggest you drop a check for \$4.00 into the mail and send it along now to support your national organization. Actually you receive many things now for your \$1.00 a year to national (MEGA, membership cards, many services which are there for you, whether or not you take advantage of them). Drop a note sometime to the new Executive Secretary, George Spader, Morrisville, N. Y., or go by to see him on a trip.

* * * *

The idea of having individual members arise and give their name, or answer to a roll call, has met with many favorable comments. Does help us all to get better acquainted.

* * * *

Did you ever hear the expression, "What we need is fewer chiefs and more Indians"? Nothing personal, but a statement that is often applicable to many different groups.

* * * *

A dandy long letter from George Titus. An occasional fine card from Rene Dufourd. When you are gone for some time this winter, let us know of your travels for SPRAY. Or write the president or secretary; but do keep us all posted. You are important!

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Harold Wright is in a new home; an acre and a half. Beautiful place - bathrooms galore. Next spring he faces landscaping and beginnings of a new garden

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Bob Adams and Frank Vixo are also anxious for spring to come, according to the grapevine. Big plans for more flowers and shrubs. After that ten inch snowfall recently, we're probably all ready for spring - which is a long way off.

* * * *

Hint for P. W. Young or some future program chairman: What can a gardener do so even in winter a passerby will say "There's a gardener's home"?

* * * *

Keep bringing those unusual flowers, dried or fresh, seed pods, etc., to meetings. Good conversation pieces and we learn too. We need more than dirt under the fingernails to make us gardeners. Why not carry this idea further and have some potted plants in your office?

* * * *

Once again a member of our club is president of the Minnesota Horticultural Society. G. "Vic" Lowrie was just recently elected to that position and we all congratulate him for the honor; we also congratulate the organization for its wisdom in selecting Vic, and it looks like we have another member, Joe Witmer, coming up, he is the new Vice President of the Horticultural Society. Congratulations to you, too, Joe!

HATS OFF TO OUR 1958 OFFICERS

All unanimously elected at our November meeting to take office January 1, 1958

President	W. W. (Bill) Brooks
Vice President	P. W. ("PW") Young
Treasurer	W. H. (Bill) Hull
Secretary	N. W. (Chris) Christopherson

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING MADE EASY

Did you ever know a gardener who ever had enough tools or pieces of equipment? Who couldn't find room in his garden for another tree, shrub or unusual plant? Annuals, perennials, lily bulbs, flower or vegetable seeds, yes and even grass seed? Hose, garden furniture, outdoor cooking utensils, flower boxes or just plain plant stakes? Bird feeders or baths and last, but by no means least, books on gardening, landscaping or on his special gardening interest?

DUES — DUES — DUES

If you haven't mailed Bill Hull your four and one half bucks worth of Garden Club fun for 1958, drop it in the mail today while it is on your mind. Address: 6104 Oaklawn Avenue, Edina, Minnesota.

WINTER HOUSE PLANTS

The soil for house plants should be light, well-sifted, and damp (not wet) when plants are set. A well-balanced soil for most potted plants is made from 50% good garden loam, 25% humus or well-rotted leafmold, and 25% clean builder's sand. A little bonemeal or commercial fertilizer should be added — about one teaspoon for each five-inch pot. Most ferns and African violets should have a looser soil, with a higher percentage of leafmold or humus. Cacti do best in a grittier soil with pebbles and sand added to the loam.

NEW FRUIT BREEDING BULLETIN

A publication which tells the story of the development of fruit varieties for Minnesota was released by the University of Minnesota Experiment Station. It is Station Bulletin 441, FRUIT VARIETIES DEVELOPED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA FRUIT BREEDING FARM. Authors are W. H. Alderman, former Head of the Department of Horticulture and Superintendent of the Fruit Breeding Farm until his retirement in 1953; A. N. Wilcox, Professor of Horticulture in charge of the fruit breeding program; and T. S. Weir, Associate Professor and Assistant Superintendent of the Fruit Breeding Farm.

Since work in fruit breeding was started at the University's Fruit Breeding Farm near Excelsior 50 years ago, University horticulturists have developed and introduced 64 varieties of tree fruits and small fruits adapted to the severe climate of the upper Midwest. These varieties now constitute about 60% of all the fruit acreage in the state.

The original area of the Fruit Breeding Farm at Excelsior, 77.89 acres, has grown to approximately 230. On these 230 acres and in the greenhouses at the Fruit Breeding Farm, horticulturists have under observation 40,000 first-test seedlings and more than 2,000 fruit selections in advanced tests — indications of the continuing search for new and better fruit varieties for this region.

COMPOSTING

by P. W. Young

Quoting from an article entitled "More Humus is the Answer" from the November 1957 issue of Horticulture, Haydon Pearson of Greenfield, N. H. had this to say, "It is surprising that some thirty million of us work enthusiastically with home gardens each year, yet know so little about humus. Soils vary greatly in their humus content, but probably most soils range from two to three percent humus to six to eight. A typical loam soil may have about 45% inorganic or rock material, 5% humus, 30% air and 20% moisture.

The important point is that if we increase the humus content to 10, 12 or 15%, we will have better results".

Mr. Pearson with 40,000 square feet in experimental garden plots, equal to an area 100 feet by 400 feet, further states, "All results in my own garden plots indicate that the more humus in the soil, the better the flowers and crops. Better results will be obtained from the use of any fertilizer in a soil with a high humus content".

Now, as everyone know, well decomposed compost is pure humus, so why burn garden trash and leaves, then buy rotted manure. That's what is known as having money to burn.

There are, of course, many ways of making and handling compost, and the simplest way can be the most effective. Here is one way that does extremely well for me. I have a double box, each unit measuring 4 1/2 feet x 5 feet x 2 1/2 feet a total of approximately four cubic yards of fresh material which shrinks to about

two cubic yards after composition. The receptacle is made of very rough lumber. One side has removable, partly nailed, boards.

All through the year I throw leaves, seedless weeds and garden trash (trash that is not in any way diseased) until I have a "tramped down" layer about six inches deep. On this I sprinkle about a quart of Vigero and a pint of Activo, then cover with a half inch of soil or old compost.

I find it is a good idea to thoroughly soak each layer before adding a new layer. This is particularly necessary when composting marsh hay.

Layers are added, one on top of another, until the box is heaped as full as it will hold.

At present, I have one box completely filled and about a foot in the other. This material will be reasonably good to use next spring and fully decomposed by next fall — which is when I use most of it. Marsh hay and the leaves from my rose coverings will be used to fill the second box next spring and will be fully ready for use next fall.

Why the Vigero? Because in my opinion it helps to further decomposition and its chemical makeup makes the food value of the humus more readily available.

Why the Activo? Because it hastens decomposition.

Where do I get the leaves? From four of my neighbors. Yours will most likely be glad to have you take theirs.

As some of you know, six of us bought a compost grinder a year ago. The ground material, without question, makes a more readily available compost. The machine will grind most anything from your garden. Wet or dry. I do have to qualify that wet statement; it is difficult to do but it can be done. I have ground leaves so wet that the water dripped out of them.

I suggest that another group get together and buy a grinder. Not more than six in the group.

The cost of the grinder and trailer to each of the six was \$38.00. The cost of the trailer was extremely low, thanks to the scrounging for material by Eng Hoyme

How do I use the compost? Every time I spade a piece of ground — which is twice in four years — in my crop rotation program — I first cover the ground white with steamed bone meal, then I add about 3 inches of compost and spade it under.

I also use it as a mulch on all perennial beds by applying about 2 inches each fall. I rake off the rough part in the spring, leaving the fine compost for a summer mulch.

As I said earlier, everyone has his own way of making and handling compost. Archie Flack grinds his leaves and trash and applies it "Green" with an application of Nitrogen. Joe piles his up and lets nature take its course. Vic puts his in a pit and grinds it the next fall.

Do it any way you want to — BUT DO IT!