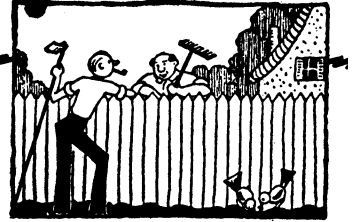




The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

Member--Men's Garden Clubs of America • Minnesota State Horticultural Society



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G. "Vic" Lowrie, Editor

Associate Editors:
Don Methven, Wm. Hull
N. W. Christopherson

A H A P P Y N E W Y E A R T O Y O U A L L

JANUARY MEETING

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 1956
Place: Mount Olivet Lutheran Church
Knox Ave. S. & West 50th St.
Time: 5:45 P.M. Sharp
Price: \$1.50

P R O G R A M

6:45 Business Meeting
Joe Witmer presiding.
Brief Annual Reports.
7:15 Installation of new officers.
President George Titus takes over.
Discussion of New Projects for the
coming year.
7:45 Showing of film of member's gardens
8:30 Questions and Answers

OFFICERS

George Titus	President
A. R. Blackburn	Vice-president
N. W. Christopherson	Secretary
Wm. H. Hull	Treasurer

Office of the Secretary
N. W. Christopherson
6145 Clinvon Ave. So.

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

This is our first meeting of the New Year when the retiring "Brass" submit their annual reports, budgets, recommendations and what-have-you and the newly elected "Bigwigs" start the ball rolling for 1956.

Pinky Pinkham, our new Program Chairman, promises to put on a good show so don't let anyone or anything keep you away from the gang that night. More importantly, if you have any pet project, program ideas, special activities you believe the club to be engaged in, this is the meeting to air your views. We'll be seeing you.

OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY

There have been many favorable comments on our Christmas Party. Everyone particularly enjoyed the many festive touches that were provided by the various committees which emphasized the Christmas theme. Mrs. Archie Flack played Christmas carols while we gathered around the fireplace before dinner, eyeing the tables which had been decorated by the newly formed Decorations and Arrangements Special Interest group. There was a most attractive Christmas tree which P. W. Young had decorated with flowers, each in its own water holder.

A carver had been appointed for each table and these men, led by Chief Carver Vice-President Heschmeyer, paraded around the room holding aloft beautiful browned turkeys. It was the introduction to a splendid dinner.

After dinner President Joe Witmer introduced many guests, among whom were at least a half dozen from many foreign countries. Rene Dufourd then introduced Glen Cerney who presented George Luxton with a framed certificate of honorary life membership in the club. Joe Witmer then presented a clock-barometer desk set to National President Herb Kahlert, and Rene presented Cortis Rice with the Bronze Medal for special services to the club. Bill Swain then presented Joe Witmer with the past president's pin and the president's rose. These presentations were most impressive and can only be a token recognition of the contributions these men have made to gardening in general and to our club in specific.

Mr. Whitney Eastman, ornithologist, recently retired vice-president of General Mills, then talked on his hobby of "bird watching" and gave us many interesting sidelights of this pursuit. He certainly stimulated interest in ornithology.

It was a most pleasant evening and a great deal of credit is due George Titus and his committee for the splendid preparations and planning.

SEEDS FOR DEMOCRACY

Many important health-giving, fresh vegetable SEEDS are needed in Asian countries.

For a small gift of money or seeds, you can help the school children, home gardeners and farmers in Asia to make themselves and their nation strong.

Democracy thrives when free people work together to help themselves and each other.

Send Contributions to "Seeds for Democracy", 21 Drumm Street, San Francisco 2, California.

Looks like a worthy cause for each of our members to contribute individually as well as the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis as a whole. I understand that all donations of money are spent exclusively for the purchase of fresh vegetable seeds. They are shipped to Burma, Ceylon, East Pakistan and the Philippines where they are distributed free of charge to civic and public service organizations.

OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

By Bill Hull

Did you know that a male wren fathers several broods, that each young wren eats his weight in insects, which can come from your garden if you encourage Mr. Wren to bring his harem into your yard? It's so, says Mr. Whitney Eastman, our Christmas banquet speaker.

Thanks, Greg Lucking, for evergreen boughs for club decorations. I also brought back a load in the trunk and atop the car from Northern Minnesota. The centerpieces were mostly made at a meeting of this special interest group at which we invited our ladies. But the men did an awful lot of work. Don't underestimate the ability of Harold Nelson, Rene Dufourd, Hank Elieff and Eng Hoyme. And, what's more, we had an evening of fun.

Isn't it about time you wax that snow-shovel so the snow won't stick to the shovel and make the work too hard for your wife?

I spent forty-five minutes the other day trying to get my big-name snow blower to start. In disgust and half-frozen, I pushed it back in the garage. The snow still isn't shovelled on the driveway and I think I'll keep packing it down with the car.

A question? What's wrong when birds never appear around your feeder even when you vary the feed, when there are no cats around, when it's not near the house or street? They also say birds like suet. Everybody knows that. My birds don't seem to know it. The snow freezes solid at my place and simply stays there all winter long.

Remember the fellow whose home address was used by a prankster who wrote a want ad, wanting old Christmas trees at \$1.00 each. He's the only fellow I know who uses pine needles to mulch everything and who burns two inches in his fireplace.

PARTICIPATION IN GARDEN SHOWS

By Bill Hull

What is normal participation in men's club garden shows and what percentage of clubs have shows? For some time I have been concerned about the answers to these questions, so recently I wrote to all clubs in certain midwestern states. Twenty-one clubs replied, 8 being from Illinois, 1 Indiana, 3 Michigan, 4 Minnesota and 5 Missouri. Each club was specifically asked the number of shows (if any) it held annually and the percentage of its active dues paying membership that participated.

The two most surprising facts are that only forty-three (43%) percent of the studied clubs have any type of garden show, and that of those clubs having shows, an average of only thirty-nine (39%) of their members enter those shows.

Also remarkable is that there appear to be very few Men's Garden clubs in cities over 100,000 which hold garden shows. Of the four metropolitan cities studied, only in Minneapolis, the smallest, does the Men's Garden Club hold a show; it is remarkable that it has the fourth highest percentage participation of all the clubs studied, since it seems to appear that the size city having the most successful show, based on participation only, is from 18,000 to 15,000 population.

PARTICIPATION IN GARDEN SHOWS (Cont.)

To what do the members of the 57% of our non-showing clubs, turn as a substitute for a competitive show? The older metropolitan clubs seem to act as parent organizations, furnishing speakers and judges and assisting all other garden clubs. One very large metropolitan club once held a show featuring eight truck loads of gladiola from one grower, 30,000 paid admissions, and great publicity. The presentation of such a show takes much organization and financial backing, of course.

The middle sized cities (50,000 down to 18,000) have various experiences as one might expect of any middle group. While one club annually awards a "President's Cup" based on points accumulated from monthly "program participations using specimens", while another club makes each meeting a substitute for a show, with no competition. The first club averages 28% participation, while the latter, without competition, averages 57%, almost double. Of course, many factors, such as the energy expended by the committee, could influence this percentage.

With smaller memberships, clubs in smaller cities (under 18,000) have special problems. One club invites every amateur in the area to join its show and has 33% participation; a second show jointly with the woman's club but only reaches 24% participation; a third dropped shows entirely because of lack of support or interest.

A metropolis and a city of 100,000 both emphasize garden tours and contests but have no shows. But neither seem to be more than reasonably successful; the metropolitan garden contest only had 15 of 115 members (13%) entering this year.

Where do we fit? How do we compare? We are the fourth largest city to be studied. We are the only city over 105,000 to have a show. With 30 of our 75 members showing at the last show (40%) we are fourth in percentage participation. With the average participation of all nine clubs holding shows being (39%), we are average in that respect.

Although we need not be ashamed of our average percentage of participation, neither have we cause for particular pride, unless we consider that the three other large cities studied, have long ago abandoned a men's club show.

We do need to take full advantage of the opportunities for camaraderie which our two shows provide. At no other club function, unless at the auction, is there quite the spirit of friendly association there is at our shows. Here we meet in an entertaining morning-preparation session, where every member should be present, not only to exhibit the results of his gardening, but to learn new varieties and techniques of culture. Here is a session that could be directed more and more toward an opportunity for exchanging experiences.

The new show committee is already functioning and planning its 1956 strategy. As the retiring chairman I urge you to plan during the next thirty days what you will show this year. Let's make 1956 the most successful year in our history.

1956 ST. LOUIS CONVENTION
May 15-16-17-18

A good time to plan your vacation, at least a week of it. How about chartering transportation so that a flock of us can go together? Can you imagine anything more fun - it will be truly summer in St. Louis about then.

ATTENTION SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
(Excerpts from the December 1955
Bulletin of the MGCA Secretary)

From the Office of the Secretary

1956 ST. LOUIS CONVENTION RELEASE NUMBER VII

MGC PROJECT EXHIBITS

This convention will provide a planned opportunity for people dedicated to worthy principles to exchange ideas thru exhibit of Men's Garden Club Projects. There will be a place in the main lounge of the Chase Hotel for these displays.

Here are some examples to serve as an invitation to those directly concerned and as a suggestion to others: Display of services rendered by national headquarters to local clubs. Depiction of the Johnny Appleseed Memorial Park at Ft. Wayne where certain people have devoted splendid efforts toward making this an MGCA shrine. Exhibit of the Detroit Club's Industrial Beautification Certificate Plan; the Grosse Point Club's awards for best kept grounds of Schools, Churches, Hospitals, Parks, etc.; Mobile's Garden Therapy for School Children; Rock Island's Boys Farm Project; Webster Grove's Shrub and Tree Labeling Activity; Sylacauga's Holly Trail; Jackson's Lawn of the Month; Portland's Plans for Fifty-Seven. Flower Shows; TV Shows; Programs for Shut-ins; Seed Exchanges and many other live-wire projects from coast to coast.

Even though your project may have been written up in MEGA, let's have it at the convention set up in such a way that it can be seen, studied, and discussed. Pictures, diagrams, clippings, samples, brief script, perhaps mounted on a display board attractively labeled, would be one way of doing it.

Write a brief description of the project your club wishes to display, stating how you plan to set up the exhibit, and the amount of space required. Mail this as soon as possible to Publicity Chairman Milton C. Oberjuerge, 724 W. Oak Drive, Glendale 22, Missouri.

All proposals will be given consideration by the committee, and, depending on the number and type submitted and total space limitations, selections will be made and you will be notified promptly.

These club projects can easily be the outstanding convention feature. "By their work ye shall know them." The public and our commercial exhibitors will know MGCA gets things done. Send your pet project description off to "Milt" NOW.

Clarence Barbre
National Director
Counselor to the Local
Executive Committee

From the Office of the Secretary
1827 Devine St., Jackson, Miss.

December 1955

This is the copy of a letter I sent TIME Magazine. Here is a project for the Men's Garden Clubs of America. Let's ask the directors to appoint a committee to force government action.

I quote:

"Your Veteran's Day set-piece, "A Stillness at Arlington" describes the care with which that cemetery is tended.

This is perhaps true of the purely mechanical functions, but certainly does not apply to the maintenance of plantings around the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Anyone with any knowledge of landscaping or gardening would feel a sense of shame when faced with the wretched condition of the trees and shrubs around the tomb itself and the amphitheatre.

Approaching the tomb, a double line of beeches has been planted on either side of the walk, perhaps symbolizing the beech forests of France among which the battles of World War I were fought.

These are in poor condition. Practically every tree is stag-heading, indicating bad nutrition and soil compaction. About every 10th tree is dead.

Boxwood nearby ranges in height from four feet down. There are many gaps where the plants have been entirely killed.

Japanese yew, certainly an inappropriate plant in this situation, has been substituted for one row of box and is completely out of proportion.

I feel that the surroundings of the Tomb are a disgrace, and some action should be taken to correct this situation as soon as possible. If this were a spot where only Americans (who are peruliarly insensitive to good landscaping and plant material) saw the effect, that would be bad enough. Unfortunately, practically every important visitor from abroad visits the Tomb, and our carelessness is known to the world."

Dr. Milton Carleton,
601 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois

Certainly our government can ill afford to allow this national shrine to become a wilderness of neglected and mistreated shrubery. I am sure we will all join Milt in a crusade to have the shrine replanted and properly cared for. Start it off by a resolution from your club to your congressman and senators. Mail a copy to this office. I am asking our Directors to adopt this as a crusade for the coming year. I am sure the Veteran's organizations will join forces with us.

Woodson K. Jones, Secretary

SOIL AND SOIL TESTING by Keith Boyer
Plant Food Specialist, Swift & Company

The use of rapid soil testing kits as a means of obtaining better garden results are available today. The rapid testing kits cost three dollars up to thousands.

The kits are designed for home use to determine the PH range of your soil, and generally the nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash levels. Normally the chemical reactions measure the amount of plant food that plants can obtain if needed.

The use of lime can be judged quite accurately with the PH test. Normally in this area we need to lime about each five years. It is generally advisable to use a colomitic limestone containing available magnesium as well as calcium carbonate in this valley. Magnesium can be a limiting growth factor in this area.

The test for nitrogen is accurate if the soil is sampled correctly. The level of nitrogen will change radically within hours due to moisture, temperature and baceterial action. Caution should be used in feeding moderate amounts of nitrogen frequently over the growing period for best results.

Soils have the ability to fix phosphorus and form insoluble compounds. Soil tests can determine the amount available but we have to feed an excess to take care of the soil and crop requirements. There is no known trouble from applying excess phosphorus. Lack of the element can reduce yields and growth seriously. Super-phosphorus is generally the best source of phosphorus for soils in this area.

The test for potash is accurate and quite useful. Potash is the regulator of plant use of nitrogen and water. Most gardening plants require high levels of potash for best results. The use of rapid soil testing kits will point this out very rapidly.

The use of soil analysis for testing the micro nutrients does not offer as clear a picture. Analysis and crop feeding results have not been too successful. It is wise to feed all growing plants moderate amounts of minor or trace elements. Swift and Company has been using them in such products as "Vigoro" for years. It can make considerable crop differences if they are lacking or deficient.

The type of soil has a part to play in using rapid soil test kits. All types of soil can be analyzed with equal accuracy provided they are sampled correctly. Normally the heavy soils require more phosphorus than the sandy types. The opposite is true of potash. Nitrogen will last longer and not leach out as fast if crops have not used it on heavier soils. The amount of organic matter in the ground will be measured when nitrogen is tested for. Frequent applications are best for long time gardening results of nitrogen.

From - PRACTICAL GARDENER, Rockford, Illinois.

Editor's Note: This article on Soil Testing and the article on Tree Planting were submitted for publication by the Secretary's Office of MGCA. A new service to club members.

PLANTING A LANDSCAPE TREE

- A. Hole large enough for the roots.
- B. Break subsoil if hard packed.
- C. Leave loose soil and mulch in the saucer.
- D. Pocket or saucer to catch water.
- E. Fill hole and tamp the soil around the roots.

THREE IMPORTANT OPERATIONS MAKE UP TRANSPLANTING A TREE

1. Pruning the top. This is necessary to make up for the loss of roots in digging. Remove 6 to 10 inches from the ends of the branches, but do not cut back the main leader stem. This retains the shape of the tree.
2. Planting the tree. The hole should be dug before the tree is purchased or dug from the woods. If soil is poor, remove it and replace with good soil from field where a crop has been grown. Dig the hole large enough to take care of the roots when they are spread out in natural position, and deep enough to set tree 2 inches deeper than it grew before moving. Now, fill the hole with water. After water has disappeared, fill hole to within 2 inches of top with good soil. Do not pack this soil. The "saucer" depression serves as reservoir for water. Place some well-decayed manure in the saucer, not in the hole.
3. Wrapping the trunk. Wrap trunk of tree with three or four thicknesses of newspaper or old burlap that has been cut into strips. Tie wrappings with string. Leave on until it rots away. This wrapping protects trunk from injurious effects of sun and wind.

By Henry J. Smith, Asst. Extension Horticulturist
Mississippi State College

FTC COMPLAINT HITS "INACCURATE" ADS

Grand Rapids, Michigan. A complaint charging the Michigan Bulb Co., local mail order house, with false and misleading advertising of package sales of nursery stock on the radio and in newspapers and magazines, has been issued by the Federal Trade Commission.

Named in the complaint also are Forrest and Louis Laug, and Gerald D. Laug, who are named as officers of the Michigan Bulb Co. In addition, the complaint notes that the company also trades under the names of Michigan Bulb importers, Rapid Specialties Co., Flower-of-the-Month Club and Garden Specialties. Another company is also cited as participating in Michigan Bulb Co's. business - Holland Bulb Co., the partnership name of Forrest and Louis Laug.

The parties have been granted 30 days to file an answer to the complaint. A hearing is scheduled February 6th here before an FTC hearing examiner.

The FTC complaint specifically points to 24 instances of alleged misrepresentation by the company. In one instance, the complaint says, the same kind of plant is advertised as two different items, the coralberry and the red snowberry.