

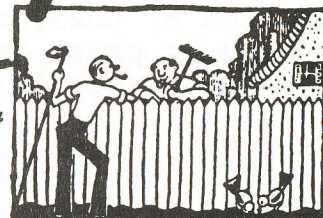


The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

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

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DON'T TOUCH YOUR LAWN --

Until you hear what Jack Kolb has to say about taking care of it at the April 10th MGCM meeting. He says that with this spring's late snow, you could seriously damage the turf if you get on it too early. Jack, an MGCM member, really knows what he's talking about. He's an agronomy graduate of the University of Minnesota who spent a few years with the Toro Company and then became a greenskeeper. When he found out the people who sold him turf supplies couldn't answer his questions he got into the business himself. In addition to selling turf supplies he also organizes and runs seminars for turf professionals. At our meeting he'll be talking about cleaning up, mowing, fertilizing and watering your lawn properly.

Our delegates, just back from the MGCA convention in Mobile, Alabama, should have stories to tell. They'll look for you at table at the Lake Harriet United Methodist Church, 49th Street at Chowen Avenue South, 6 P.M. Tuesday evening April 10th. (Dinner \$5.00, as usual).

Bring something for Show and Tell and some change to buy raffle tickets. Above all

DON'T FAIL TO RETURN YOUR RESERVATION CARD PROMPTLY!!

COMING TUESDAY MAY 15 (The 3rd Tuesday) ANNUAL PLANT AUCTION
No details available at press time.

A GENTLE REMINDER

One of the very special events on our 1984 calendar is the Flower and Vegetable Show. This event will be held on the Saturday and Sunday weekend of August 18th and 19th. It will be held at the Arboretum and is a Fun Get-Together.

With spring rapidly approaching, each of us is already planning his array of vegetables, flowers and plants for the coming season. We know that you have a secret love affair with one or several of these little friends. You feed, water, doctor them and coax them into blooming into all their glory and splendor. Then, what do you do when they've worked so hard to please you? You keep them hidden so that no one else can enjoy them. This is no way to treat your special little friends.

Here is what we would like you to do with these special favorites. This summer, your favorite pea, bean, tomato, cucumber, squash or any other vegetable or fruit who listens to and obeys you must be given the royal treatment. The same love and treatment must be given to your favorite plants and flowers. Talk to them, pet them and prescribe for their

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ailments and accede to their every wish. In your discussions with each of your favorites, insist that they must be in full splendor on the third weekend of August. Keep insisting.

Why? Because you are going to bring your lovely favorites out to the Arboretum and let the rest of us become acquainted with them. Some of those same beauties may even take home a ribbon to show them our appreciation of their splendor. The Show Committee will be contacting each of you by phone to make certain that this year you will let all of us meet your secret lovers.

Remember, the philosophy of the Men's Garden Clubs of America is "God talks to us through the flowers and plants." For Pete's sake, bring your friendly plants, flowers and vegetables out to the show and let the rest of us talk to them.

-- Your Flower and Vegetable Show Committee

OF MICE AND GARDENERS

The "Book" says a gardener should not mulch perennial bulbs in the garden until the ground freezes. This has created a problem for this gardener in about half of the past years. If we get an early snow, as we did this year, the soil around the bulbs may never freeze. At least, it may not freeze until mid-winter. In the meantime, the suspected culprit mice are free to tunnel under the snow and mulch if it was put down too early. Legend has it that they can enjoy hearty meals from the unsuspecting bulbs.

This year, we had two sizeable snow storms on either side of Thanksgiving. The combined total of some 18" of snow seemed to have no intention of leaving and on December 2nd, the soil in the unmulched lily and iris bed was as soft and moist as after a spring rain. I dutifully shoveled and brushed off the foot or more of settled snow and left the ground bare for the expected below zero temperature that night. The following morning, the ground was frozen to a depth of 1-1/2 inches and I then mulched the area with oak leaves saved for that purpose. The snow was then returned to its place atop the leaves.

I have been doing this as required for many years but I have often wondered if the mice would be as destructive as reported. I sometimes find tunnels under the leaves in the spring which I must attribute to the wily mouse. But, am I wasting my time in being so concerned about their presence? If any of you fellow gardeners have ever come face to face with a mouse in the bulb garden, or have suffered known damage from said mouse, please respond in the SPRAY. It may be that I can eliminate this concern and sit by the fire and dream of something besides mice. -- Chet Groger

Gardening in Minnetonka reports, "Few people would believe that on March 3 (one day ahead of a 10.6" snowfall) beets and carrots as crisp and good (or BETTER) than from the finest supermarket were dug from a Lake Minnetonka garden--with pictures to prove it! This wouldn't be true in EVERY Minnesota garden, but it happened at Rollie Maski's, with two other Lake Minnetonka Men's Garden Club members there to enjoy this very special event. True, Minnesota Winter '84 has brought little but unfavorable publicity, but it really has been a beautiful winter of clean, white beauty. And because of the little amount of frost in the ground--and the winter's total 80-inch blanket of snowfall which provided steady insulation, it was possible for vegetables to survive even through January's too great abundance of cold--just as they used to do in a root cellar. So--- just when the seed catalogues are getting a thorough going-over for this year's vegetables for PLANTING, Rollie is DIGGING up the beauties that resulted from last year's!"

TERRACE TALK



Yesterday I had the most delightful and educational morning. I attended the special interest group meeting on gardening under lights at Chet Grogers' house. We discussed methods and thoughts by different club members who were growing under lights -- soil mixes, fertilizers, lights spacing, results, etc. etc.

Having seen the interest created by the group, I strongly encourage all of the different special groups to get together. Some groups have a chairman some do not. If someone (you) from each group would however take it upon themselves to call a meeting, even if no chairman exists, I think each group could meet and learn. (Appoint a chairman at the meeting). The responsibility need not be on chairmen only. All it needs is a home to meet and discuss a subject. It is amazing how a group meeting like this works out.

I will bring the lists to the next meeting and if someone wants to join a group and is not already on a list he can sign up at that time. If you notice a chairman missing and you would like to volunteer at that time - great. Let me know and I will try to get the particulars of special interest group meetings in the SPRAY -- time and place.

Next week I will be leaving for a tour of the south and will take in the National Convention at Mobile. I will report back to the club on the goings on at the convention at the next meeting. I am anticipating a wonderful time.

I have talked to some of the committee chair-people relative to their programs. I will be getting in touch with the rest of you shortly. Obviously each committee will know the proper time to hold a meeting. If I can be of any assistance to the committees, please advise.

I am advised by the Fragrance Garden Committee that they will need more help than those already signed up. Anyone desiring to add their name to that committee is encouraged to do so. Anyone not serving on a committee now (new members or old members) if you have any inclination to do so please advise and we will add your names. The names as signed up now are in the front pages of the roster.

Looking out the window of the office today (my gardening has had to take second place because of a heavy work load) I still see snow. I did get up early this morning and transplanted a few cole crop vegetable seedlings, getting them ready for later transplanting to the garden (as soon as the weather warms a little). The greenhouse is full, and under lights is full, the weather is cold so I can't set the plants out -- I may be in trouble.

See you at the next meeting, until then good gardening.

Russell Smith
3-19-84

EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

HOUSTON'S The YARDNER notes "Awards Chairman, George Grifno, of the Fall Show wishes to thank the members who donated their old ribbons to the show: and asks that any member who doesn't want their ribbons they have on hand, to bring them to the next meeting." MGCM's Vern Carlson supports us the same way. When our show committee ran short of ribbons last fall I am told Vern dug up over 400 ribbons from his collection for their use. How long will it take to win them all back, Vern?

In the same issue the editor comments, "Over a period of a year or so I've read several articles concerning the hybridizing of vegetables to improve them but in doing so the vegetable has lost or changed its original taste. For one of these vegetables, the string bean or stringless bean, I tend to agree. It does seem the original bean has lost its flavor or some of it at least."

He continued by recommending Burpee's pinto bean as one still possessed of flavor. This brought back memories from the early forties and the government give-aways. At Sanford Junior High School we received a shipment of #10 cans of baked pinto beans--more than our cafeteria could possibly use in several years. I liked the taste; the kids didn't so they didn't move well. Consequently, the cans which had been stored in an unexcavated basement area rusted out before we could use up the beans.

Thought: Flavor and aroma of flowers, fruit, vegetables would make an excellent meeting discussion.

ENDOWMENT AND INVESTMENT FUND

The MGCA E and I FUND of which Sherm Pinkham was an ardent exponent and devoted custodian was formed several years ago and has grown to over \$165,000. The interest earned from this fund may be given to MGCA if needed, however the principal of the fund cannot be touched. If the fund gets big enough, National dues could be reduced or even eliminated. The E & I Fund receives its money from Life Memberships, gifts, memorials, and bequests. You can make a tax deductible gift to the fund or leave a bequest in your will. It is a worthwhile cause and will perpetuate interest in gardening for future generations.

OTHER CLUBS

The NITE CRAWLER of the Spokane Washington club reports: "Glen Ives keeps his weeds down by covering the ground between the rows with several layers of newspaper with the funnies down for the angleworms. He covers them with several inches of lawn clippings and rotovates everything under at seasons end --- John Stainer favors his back by scooping up pine cones with a gallon can nailed to a broom stick."

GREEN SPROUTS (Watchung Hills, N.J.) reports: "The Executive Committee has authorized the payment of \$340 from our Educational Fund. The money is being given to area public libraries for the purchase of much-needed horticultural books. The club expects to continue making grants next year to further the general interest in horticulture. Recommendations from members are encouraged."

WHERE CAN I BUY and is it hardy here? "Lily of the Valley Bush" (Pieris japonica var. variegata) - a member of the Heath Family?
I saw a photo of it in a book and pant for it. Can anyone help?
-Bill Hull