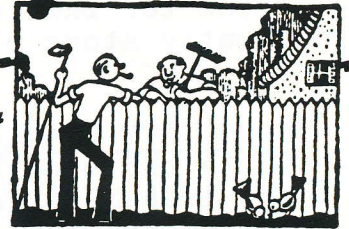




The Garden Spray

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

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



April 1987, Volume 45, Number 4

THE APRIL MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS MEETING WILL BE HELD
ON THE REGULAR MEETING DATE TUESDAY APRIL 14th, 1987 AT THE USUAL
TIME - 6 PM, AND PLACE LAKE HARRIET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,
FORTY NINTH STREET AND CHOWEN AVENUE SOUTH. COST: \$6.00

OUR MEETING WILL FEATURE "A JOURNEY THROUGH ALASKA"
SHIRLEY MAH KOOYMAN, a plant taxonomist and coordinator of the Arboretum's
tour and volunteer programs will take us on an 1800 mile trip through the
Alaskan interior and the Kenai peninsula.

Come see the variety of plants and geography of this vast state, from the
glaciers and fiords of the Kenai peninsula to the mountainous interior
regions. Denali National Park (formerly called MCKINLEY NATIONAL PARK)
and the highest mountain in North America, Mount McKinley, will be featured.

RETURN YOUR RESERVATION CARD TO RICK BONLENDER AT ONCE

If your name is Benson, Berg, Bonlender, Vern Carlson, Christianson, Culbert,
Deane, Drake, Glasoe, Groger, Gustafson, Dave Johnson, Kelley, Knoblauch,
LeBoutillier, O'Donnell, Jerry Olson, Bob Olson, Pearson, Peterson, Proctor,
Regan, Reynolds, Shannon, Russ Smith, Stepan, Stone or Vixo you did not
receive a card. That means you are on the PERMANENT RESERVATION LIST and
must telephone Rick Bonlender (729-5353) if you are not coming. If you
fail to call you will owe the club \$6.00.

ALSO AT THE APRIL MEETING

You heard Dan Carlson's great talk at the February meeting and read Andy
Marlow's fine coverage of it in the March SPRAY. Now through a contact
made by Dale Durst, for the club, Mr. Carlson has donated two of those
\$60 sets to be auctioned off at the April meeting, proceeds to go to the
1988 convention fund.

The material is all there. Along with instructions, you will find a pint
bottle of the highly concentrated nutrient, an audio tape, spray equipment,
etc. If you follow directions it appears it will be a very successful
growing technique. Hint, you may want to create a combine of two or three
users and have a bidding representative.

.nother hint: The kit contains enough nutrient to treat your garden, as
well as to use inside the house. But if you turn the audio music up to
maximum volume outside, expect overflying birds to veer away (that may not
be so bad) or, perhaps, to plummet to the ground. Now with Andy and Dale
and two new buyers using this system we should give it a good test.

COMING SATURDAY MAY 9th MGCM ARBOR DAY TREE PLANTING
See Jerry Shannon's article at bottom of this page.

COMING TUESDAY MAY 12th OUR ANNUAL COUNTRY STORE AND AUCTION

Tell your friends about the auction. Ask them to plan to attend. Look over your stuff under lights. You always have too much. Set some of it aside for the country store. If you have anything else saleable at the country store plan to bring that, too.

--Dave Johnson, chairman

COMMUNITY FRAGRANCE GARDEN, 19th and Aldrich South. Our goal this year is to add more fragrant flowers and herbs to the garden in preparation for the 1988 MGCA national convention in Minneapolis. The Park Board provides the annuals but we need more unusual annuals than they provide. If you have fragrant perennials or extra herbs that would bloom by July 4th we'd appreciate them.

I've talked to several people about plants to use but I need your ideas, too. I'd appreciate a call (824-0295) offering plants or advice.

--Duane Johnson, chairman

MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS' PROUD ARBOR DAY TRADITION

The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis has a proud history over the years of actively participating in the celebration of Arbor Day. Historically, in celebration of its 10th anniversary in 1951, members planted 50 flowering crab apple trees in a collection near the Lake Harriet Rose Garden in Minneapolis. Over the next 30 years, this collection bloomed each spring to create a horticultural spectacle.

More recently, in 1981, the Arbor Day planting took place at Fort Snelling National Cemetery, where members planted a specimen balled and burlaped pin oak, and dedicated it to all the veterans that had served in Vietnam.

In June of 1981, a devastating tornado touched down on the north end of Lake Harriet and destroyed the arboretum collection of the Minneapolis Park Board, including the MGCM flowering crab apple collection which had been a car stopper for 30 years.

Seeing a public service opportunity, the Board of MGCM dedicated a portion of its budget each year, to help the City of Minneapolis replant this unique arboretum-like setting.

Since Arbor Day 1982, MGCM members have planted close to \$1,800.00 worth of horticulturally unique tree specimens including 27 flowering crab apple trees of 7 different varieties in the same area that the original collection stood.

In recognition of its Arbor Day activities, the National Arbor Day Foundation selected the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis in 1983 to receive its prestigious National Arbor Day Award.

Jerald Shannon, Arbor Day chairman, traveled to Nebraska City, Nebraska on April 28, 1984 to accept the award.

This year, MGCM again will be planting additional tree specimens in and around the Lake Harriet Rose Gardens in order to reforest that which the 1981 tornado had taken away. For those members wishing to assist the Arbor Day Committee with this years planting, the date is May 9, at 10:00 a.m., at the area just north of the rose gardens. Hope we have a good turn out.

Note this is a change in the date of the planting due to the later arriving date of the trees.



"TELL THEM TO WAIT - I'M BUSY GARDENING"

- Bob Olson
President
Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis

Spring is coming soon, although this hasn't been much of a winter for snow and cold temperatures. It has been interesting to hear the range of opinions as to how the perennials are going to be affected by this unusual weather. By and large gardeners tend to be born pessimists - particularly the Rosarians. Here I thought this was a very mild winter and now Dave Johnson has me concerned because I didn't cover my tulips and Hostas. I had never really considered them tender perennials.

Dave told me of a new hazard experienced by "tulip coverers" - namely trying to decide when to remove the protective coverings. In early March one of his friends found tulips next to his house had penetrated through one inch styrofoam boards which had been placed as insulation over the bulbs.

Bob Churilla predicts disaster for gardeners unfortunate enough to have placed cones over their roses this year. Apparently these conditions can easily promote severe fungus problems in such an arrangement.

On the brighter side, the cost of maintaining a greenhouse and growing seedlings is way down this year. Some estimates are that commercial growers' heating costs are down more than 40% compared to 1986. Because of this the cost of bedding plants this Spring is going to be no more than last year.

I learned most of this from attending Dave Johnson's Plant Sale Group planning and brainstorming session. These guys really have their act together. They've gone over problems identified at last year's sale and are determined to even improve on last year's fine effort.

Dave, Charlie Proctor and Phil Peterson are already going to inspect the site to determine the best way to coordinate the activities. They are even down to discussing the fine points such as the location of the tables and the positioning of the cashiers.

The group will provide a great evening's entertainment. They can use some help from all of us, however. Each member is encouraged to bring some plant materials to the auction. When you are dividing those perennials this Spring, remember to save some for the auction. We are also encouraged to bring wives and friends to participate in the sale. The women are a positive influence on our sometimes tight-fisted members - they really get into the spirit of things.

* * * * *

Horticultural Society Seeking Site for Home/Display Garden

Jerry Shannon, Bob Churilla and I represented the MGCM at the February 21st meeting of the Executive Board of the State Horticultural Society. Several important decisions were made:

1. Dues for subscribing members and family members of the Horticultural Society will be raised next year to provide badly needed funds. Dues for garden club members which were raised last year will not be further increased.

(concluded over)

2. The State convention will be held August 21 through 23 in Duluth. A fine weekend full of educational and entertainment activities is planned. This includes a tour of mansions and gardens plus a lake front picnic dinner. There will be an address by the Governor. The total cost for meals, activities and lodging at UMD is \$100.00. This is a bargain rate.
3. The plan to acquire a Summit Avenue mansion (formerly owned by Weyerhaeuser) and build a world class garden on the adjacent property has been abandoned due to the opposition of neighborhood groups and the lack of support in the community. This was mentioned to Barbara Flannagan of the Star and Tribune. She put it in her column and Glenn Ray and Don Engebretsen received several calls offering prospective sites in the Metropolitan area. The three most promising have been offered by the Minneapolis Park Board:
 - a) 25 to 30 acres in the deer pen area by Minnehaha Falls.
 - b) a 5 acre plot on the North end of Nicollet Island.
 - c) a 10-20 acre site near downtown Minneapolis which was formerly the site of the B.F. Nelson Asphalt, Shingle and Tar Paper Company.

We will keep you apprised as more is learned and decisions have to be made.

NOTES ON THE MARCH BOARD MEETING

- The Lynhurst park building has been reserved for our May plant auction at no cost.
- Slides taken at the Dayton-Bachman meeting will be shown at the MGCA convention in Rockford, Illinois in June.
- A search for a new caterer for our monthly meetings was decided upon. Any suggestions, anyone?
- For other items see President Bob Olson's letter.

Stan Crist is highly commended for his services as tram driver/guide in the annual report of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. With all the practice Stan is getting he should be more than ready by next year to handle 1988 MGCA convention visitors the day we bring them to the arboretum.



Meanwhile, have you made plans to attend the convention in Rockford? By now if you have not already sent in your registration fee you will have missed the chance to register for \$140.00 but even at \$160.00 it is a bargain. The price has been higher than that most years. Besides, even if we don't have a bus Rockford is close enough to drive.

Speaking of conventions--A note from Bill Brooks at Christmas time said he is already thinking about coming up for the convention in 1988. Bill a former active MGCM member now lives in Fountain Hills, Arizona.

The Minneapolis STAR AND TRIBUNE for March 12, 1987 carried this item under the heading HURRY SPRING PLANTING:

Starting plants indoors is the smart gardener's way to hurry spring planting along and save money, too. Tomatoes, cabbage and many kinds of flowers are examples of easy plants to try. Master Gardener Archie Caple will show participants how from 7 to 9 p.m. next Thursday at Wood Lake Nature Center, 735 Lake Shore Dr., Richfield.

THE MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

by Rick Bonlender

As a new and relatively unheard from MGCM member, I would like to share the most exciting event to happen in my brief history as a gardener. The experience took place this January when I completed the Master Gardener training program. I've always been one to go for the gusto and get immersed in intensive learning experiences. I got into gardening through my job as a community garden project manager. Accumulating horticultural knowledge has been a slow process. The fifty hours of classroom training offered to Master Gardener recruits by the Extension Service and the University of Minnesota is a worldwind tour of the broad and complex life of plants. My gardening horizons have expanded by having the privilege of listening to the top instructors from the University speak about their lifelong research and special interests. Imagine having the benefit of several years of education without having to put in the long hours of work. Each lecture was a summary and selection of highlights from entire courses. The discussions were often supplemented with excellent slides and handouts. Although completing the Master Gardener training was both a challenge and a blessing there is much more to becoming a Master Gardener which I have not experienced. To learn what a Master Gardener truly is, one could ask two of our most distinguish MGCM members Archie Caple and Russ Smith.

Archie Caple (1975) has been a charter member of the Master Gardener program. No one could better describe the true significance of being a Master Gardener than Archie. He has been a model for the program during its first ten years and is currently the Chairperson for the Master Gardener Advisory Council. Archie sees the the most important part of the Master Gardener program happening *after* the extensive training program. For Archie, completing the required fifty hours volunteer time as a first year Master Gardener and staying in the program is the major significance of the program. Volunteering is more than a way to pay back the Extension Service for their investment in your education. You get the feeling that this is not a burdensome task when you talk with Archie about helping other gardeners. "As a Master Gardener you rub elbows with alot of other gardeners. You learn about gardening problems and new techniques." It is this time spent sharing your gardening knowledge which excites people like Archie Caple. "That's what gardening is all about. You don't learn it from a book. You learn it from people and by experiencing it."

Russ Smith (1980) is a recent Master Gardener from the class of '86. Russ feels that the volunteer work he puts in as a Master Gardener is "additional education". Russ volunteered over fifty hours his first year to meet the program requirements to become a certified Master Gardener. Russ conducted workshops for garden clubs and answered questions at local nurseries and at the Extension Service office. Russ's experience of organizing MGCM garden tours will come in handy as he has offered to help organize a tour to showcase Master Gardener's talents. One of the highlights of the program for Russ is working with "nice people who know alot about gardening."

(concluded over)

Learning by sharing is just one of the many benefits which are present in the MGCM and the Master Gardener program. There are probably many explanations for this close camaraderie. What brings gardeners together may be an outgrowth of the connection with the basic elements of life which are present in the garden. The close relationship a gardener has with the soil and with living, growing plant life is expressed among people through gardening friendships. Groups like the garden club and the Master Gardener program help to transfer a personal experience into a social one.

Being a Master Gardener and a MGCM member means many things to me. I am committed to a life of public service. Volunteering as a Master Gardener will allow me to provide a valuable service in an area that I enjoy. The backup support provided to Master Gardeners by the University and the Extension Service helps build courage in me to go out and encourage others to try gardening. It is because of role models like Archie Caple and Russ Smith that I have been led to pass on my new found enthusiasm and knowledge about gardening.

The common thread that I hear as a recently more active member of MGCM is the benefit one gets from sharing the joys and frustrations of gardening. Community gardeners feel this as do garden club members and Master Gardeners. To Archie Caple and Russ Smith the significance of the Master Gardener program comes from the sharing of the wealth of information available from the extension service and the years of personal experience and gardening lessons learned from others.

PRE-GERMINATED SEED...THIS MAY BE BETTER THAN SEED TAPES

Commercial growers use this method. You can, too. The seed is placed on an absorbent paper towel that is kept constantly moist. Carrot and beet seed are soaked for three days. Cucumber, melon and lettuce are soaked for two days. When the shoots and roots are visible to the naked eye the pre-germinated seed is placed in a protective gel. (The pre-germinated seed is vulnerable to drying out or to physical damage.)

Prepare the gel by mixing 2 to 3 tablespoons of corn starch into a pint of warm water. Bring this mixture to a full boil stirring constantly to avoid lumps. Then remove the gel from the heat and allow it to cool. (A writer in the SPADE, the Greater Cleveland MGC's bulletin, says, "wall-paper paste and water has worked well for me.")

Place several ounces of the cooled gel in a Baggie and add the pre-germinated seed. Stir the seeds gently to suspend them in the gel. Now move into the garden and prepare a seeding furrow. Cut a small opening in the corner of the bag and squeeze out the seeds suspended in gel into the furrow. Cover the seeds and gel with soil, and then water the area.

Just received From Bill Brooks -- A newspaper column about a Hong Kong park designed for use by the blind....The 21,500 square foot garden in Victoria Park has 80 varieties of trees, flowers and shrubs, selected either for their distinctive fragrances or for unique tactile features, such as coarse bark or unusually shaped leaves....The listening experience is enhanced by a small brook and a spot where locals hang cages of songbirds on sunny afternoons.

THE (PLANT) DOCTOR'S ADVICE
by Chuck Levine

CRABGRASS CONTROL

If crabgrass has been a problem in your lawn, April 1 is the time to act. Crabgrass is an annual grass introduced from Europe and ranks as one of our most pesky lawn weeds.

Crabgrass germinates from seed on the lawn in mid-spring and late summer. It will set seed on lawns cut as low as one-fourth inch. Lawns cut about 1- $\frac{1}{4}$ inches will retard the growth of crabgrass as it cannot tolerate shade.

Crabgrass may grow in clumps up to four feet, though usually they are shorter and creeping at the base. Each leaf is about three to six inches long and about one-fourth inch wide. The stems grow along the surface of the ground and send down roots when they contact the soil or wet grass.

To control crabgrass you need to apply a pre-emergent herbicide before the seeds germinate early in the spring. Generally, we recommend applying the herbicide before April 7, or two weeks "before the Forsythia bloom". Good chemical controls are those which contain BENEFIN as an active ingredient.

If crabgrass has already germinated, it can be controlled by hand weeding or by using a post-emergent crabgrass killer which contains DSMA or MSMA as their active ingredients. For best results these chemicals should be applied when the plants are still small. Please read the label and follow directions carefully when using any garden chemical.

SIX YEARS OLD BUT STILL GOOD

The PLANT HEALTH HANDBOOK with its generic looking cover starts out with a very excellent section on "How Plants Grow and Function". The book is written at an easy-to-follow, understandable level and anyone from novice gardener to professional would find it a handy and reliable reference. The book would certainly be a great guide on maintaining healthy vigorous plants and the author seems to have successfully combined in one book what otherwise would occupy several volumes. That in itself makes this a potential standard reference for the home gardener, student or professional.

Perhaps the greatest strength in the book is the many charts and illustrations, some originals and many reproduced from various Agricultural Extension Service publications. A weakness, perhaps, is the limited references to organic pest control and possibly the lack of color photographs. The book highlights many general maintenance tips on seemingly all areas of plant protection and culture. The descriptions of plant problems and their control measures should be cross-referenced with other publications as they are brief and may vary with locality.

PLANT HEALTH HANDBOOK by Louis Ryenson, (AVI Publishing Company, Inc., Westport, CT, 1981. \$19.50).

TOO LATE TO MAKE DIRECTORY

NEW MEMBER

Grande, Denis 925-0320
4510 Moorland Ave.
Edina, MN. 55424

Stanley, James 938-2268
135 - 19 Ave. S.
Hopkins, MN. 55343

FACT &
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By Sing
YOUR PRI
FOUR PAYMENTS
EACH ONLY

DRIFT FROM THE SPRAYER
by Ed Culbert

Luffa must have been rediscovered. Shortly after I commented on my experience with it in a DRIFT column the mail brought me one of those highly colored advertising broadsides full of extravagant phrases and promised bargains. A full half page was devoted to luffa.

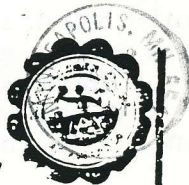
"Delicious Fruits Turn into Bathroom Sponges--INCREDIBLE LUFFA SPONGES - Decorative Climbing Vines covered with Hibiscus-Like Flowers....Sells in fancy department stores for up to \$20.00 A SPONGE.....lush tropical looking vine....spectacular lemon yellow flowers....slender zucchini-like fruits....delicious to eat when young---Dried and shucked of seeds they become INSTANT sponges.....Luffa sponges 6 for \$4.98."

J. W. Jung Seed Company's catalog is more informative.
"0423--(110 Day)--The luffa is an ancient plant that has recently become popular as a bath sponge or kitchen scraper. Related to squash and gourds, the vine is easy to grow since it is tolerant to many pests, but it requires a long growing season. The fruit are 12 to 18 in. long, and grow on a delicate vine. Harvest fruit just before killing frost. After drying, soak the fruit in water so the skin will peel easily and not damage the fibers."--but I still doubt the wisdom of sending them 75¢ for a packet of seeds.

The Sunday March 1 issue of the ARIZONA REPUBLIC featured with color pictures, the Phoenix, Valley of the Sun, MGC's gardening project involving 4, 5 and 6 grade pupils from Mountain View elementary school. The program has been so successful that Mountain View received a national gardening grant after the first year. The grant consisted of tools, teaching materials, \$350 worth of seeds and an award plaque.



Return to
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