

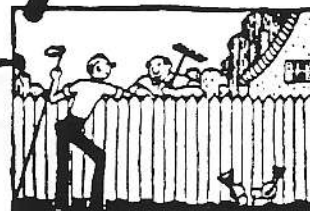


The Garden Spray

Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

February 1999, Volume 57, Number 2



February Dinner meeting... The Rainbow Flower by Lloyd and Patti Weber

The Iris is the one of the oldest cultivated plants in the world and was brought to Egypt from Syria, circa 1500 BC. At that time in Egypt it symbolized eloquence which is no different today. In France it is considered to be the origin of the fleur-de-lis.

Lloyd and Patti have been gardening throughout their lives and recently merged their gardening talents when they became husband and wife. They live in Fridley and have a large suburban garden—a work in progress. The garden contains over 500 perennials and many annuals. They both claim iris is their favorite flower and their garden is full of iris, over 200 cultivars and increasing each year.

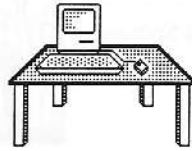
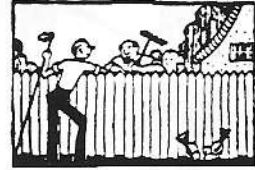
Last May they traveled to the Pacific Northwest and visited the major iris growers display gardens. Their program will cover iris classification, iris culture, and many slides of the "Rainbow Flower".

Date: Tuesday February 9, 1998
Place: Lake Harriet United Methodist Church
49th and Chowen Avenue South
Dinner: 6:30 p.m.
Business: 7:00 p.m.
Program: 7:30 p.m.
Cost: \$7.50 if reserved in advance
\$8.50 at the door if extra meals are available



Important Note about Reservations

The 1999 permanent reservation list will be in effect for this meeting. Check your mailing label. If it has a "p" or "pp" (one or two reservations) you are on the permanent list. If there is no "p" on your label, you are not on the permanent reservation list and must notify Kay Wolfe by Friday, February 5, to be assured a place at dinner. If you are on the permanent list and will not attend, you must notify Kay by the same deadline or risk being responsible for the cost of your dinner. Kay can be reached at 922-0762. Leave a message on her voice mail if you can't reach her in person or send her an e-mail at opperwolfe@worldnet.att.net. If you have reserved a dinner and on Monday or Tuesday you have an emergency where you find you can't attend, call Howard Berg. If the reservation can be sold to late-comers or drop-ins, you will not be billed.



The Editor's Desk

Chuck Carlson
Managing Editor

The MGCM member directory for 1999 is now available. Take time to look through it and keep it for reference. Inside the cover are all the general meeting dates for the whole year. It is a good time to load up your calendar so you don't miss anything. Take specific notice of the March and May meetings, the August tour and the Flower, Food and Foto Show. These are not on the second Tuesday, our normal meeting date.

Further inside are lists of all the committee members. I would suggest that committee chairs create a plan for the year and let their members know of those plans. Committees are where I have learned a lot and made some good friends. Many times committee meetings have allowed me a look at members' gardens prior to the meeting.

There is another page that I feel is underused. This is the listing of the mentor and Master gardeners. Its purpose is to provide all members with specific contacts for questions they may have—gardening questions, that is. Call them or seek them out at a meetings. In fact, nearly any member is usually willing to give you advice or point you to a person who knows the subject in question.

Thus, I recommend you take part in as many activities you can, work on the committees, go on the tours and, by all means, ask questions. If you are too bashful to ask in person, send your questions to me and I will get someone to answer it in the *Garden Spray*. I would love to have a column called *Ask the Gardener*.

Coming Attractions

Tuesday, February 2, 7:30 p. m.

Board of Directors meeting
Ritchie Miller's house

Tuesday, February 9, 6:30 p. m.

MGCM Dinner Meeting
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church
49th & Chowen Avenue South

Tuesday, March 2, 7:30 p. m.

Board of Directors meeting
Margaret Hibberd's house

Tuesday, March 23, 6:30 p. m.

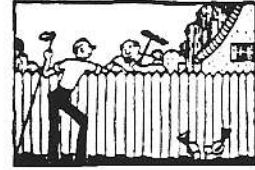
MGCM Dinner Meeting
(Dayton's-Bachman's Flower Show)
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church
49th & Chowen Avenue South

Saturday, April 10

Conference of the
MidAmerica Region
Mason City, Iowa

The Garden Spray is published monthly by the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc., for its members and friends. The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis is a not-for-profit, equal opportunity organization.

Managing Editor Chuck Carlson
Production Manager ... Andy Marlow
The committee H.. Berg, M. Brummer, S. Curry, D. Hendel, M. Maynard, R. Olson, and R. Van Sickle



Overall In The Garden

by Eldon Hugelen, President MGCM

Some friends from warmer climates asked, "How can you garden with summers so hot and winter so cold?" The cold part is getting my attention right now. We

could ask a counter question; "How can you garden without a complete break in the seasons, such as our distinctive Minnesota winter?"

This year you can mention the words Green and Moss to an avid gardener and they'll think of the Minnesota Vikings professional football team.

Right now I can't even see my garden which is covered with snow. (No complaints. It is so cold, I wouldn't go out there anyway.) It will be a month and a half before the snow crocuses will bloom.

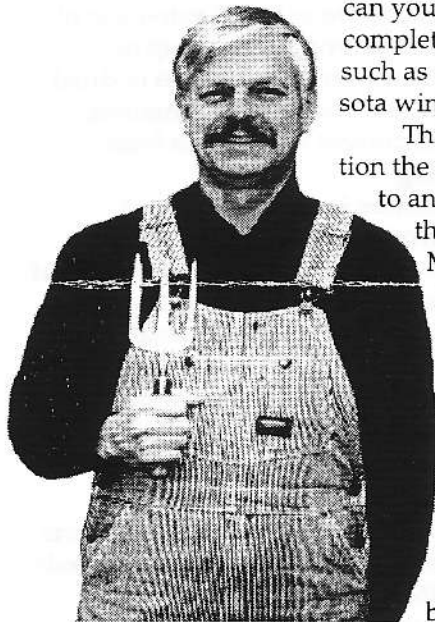
In this natural break, I can review what happened last year in the garden and make plans to improve this year. Some of these improvements are inspired by members of this club. Did you notice the front garden planting of Rudbeckia 'Indian Summer' at Len Brenny's last August? I could use that clear and showy yellow in my garden. Carole Ann Brekke shared seeds of a beautiful purple flowering grass she grew last summer. Seeds are always a challenge for me. Bob Voigt shared a seedling of the annual vine, Cardinal Climber. It was a sensation that

needs to be repeated. This year a cutting of an upright Coreopsis should bloom. This interesting perennial came from Mike Mikkelson's garden.

This may be the year I grow Four-O'Clock (Mirabilis jalapa). Former member Don Nybo grew splendid three foot bushes of them. He lifted the tubers each fall after the hard frost and stored them in a dry frost-free place. In the spring he planted them out again. This has to be the year I find and plant the beautiful native Round Leaved Dogwood (Cornus rugosa). Ever since I saw clusters of mother-of-pearl white berries on this handsome dark green shrub on the North Shore, I've intended to grow it.

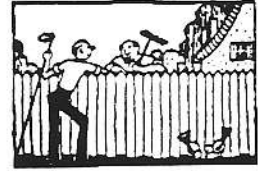
And then I think of all the seeds I've ordered that need to be germinated in their individual way.

How do gardeners manage without this break from their garden?



Directory Changes

- Page 9
Marty Anderson's address
5105 William Avenue South
Edina MN 55436
- Page 10
Brekke e-mail
douglas.brekke@gte.net
- Page 12
Groos e-mail groos001@tc.umn.edu
- Page 18
Brenda Reeves' street is Sunset
- Page 22
An additional TGOA e-mail address
for Judy is tgoa.mgca.ja@juno.com
The Minnesota State Horticultural
Society number is 651-643-3601



Monthly Program Report

by Tim McCauley

Teresa Wolfe deserves double kudos for her poise at the January Dinner Meeting. Her talk on herbal remedies (cut short by what had to be the longest business meeting in recent history) was presented to an audience somewhat distracted by the disaffiliation vote and maybe a little skeptical of the program topic. Herbalists aren't always accepted by the medical community and are sometimes distrustful of medical science. Some are also proponents of home remedies made out of who knows what. Ms. Wolfe quickly eased my personal misgivings by explaining that, as an educated scientist, she has studied the chemical makeup of many of the plants she uses. Her program, Nature's Healing Gifts, was divided into three main sections:

Rules of Thumb

- Use organic, chemical free plants only.
- Harvest plants at their peak energy level:
 - (1) leaves before the plant blossoms
 - (2) flowers just as they are opening
 - (3) seeds when they are ripe
 - (4) roots before leaves have formed or after leaves have dropped in the fall
- Harvest mid-morning, after the dew has evaporated, but before the heat of the day.
- For tea, herbs must be dried and stored in airtight containers away

from high heat and sunlight. Shelf life is about a year.

- For tinctures or medicinal oils, fresh herbs should be wilted out of the sun for 4-6 hours. Process by combining with alcohol or glycerin (tinctures) or oil (salves). Herbal oils and salves retain their peak medicinal value for about a year. The life of alcohol extracts is almost indefinite.

Teas, Tinctures and Salves

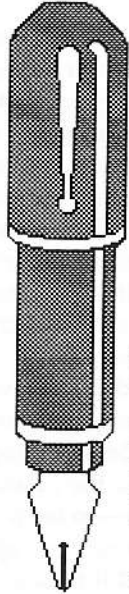
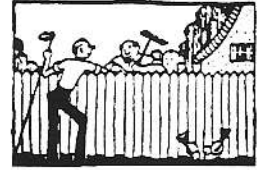
A tea is a water based extraction of the plant made by pouring a cup of boiling water over one teaspoon of dried plant material. Steep for 5-10 minutes, covered to prevent volatile oils from evaporating.

A tincture is an alcohol-based extraction of the plants nutrients and medicinal properties. One half teaspoon of tincture is equivalent to one cup of tea. It may be used internally or externally as a wash or bath. A salve is made by combining the oil based extract with beeswax. They are used externally only.

Medicinal Uses of Common Plants

- Purple coneflower, (*Echinacea purpurea*, *E. angustifolia*) - All parts of this herb are used to help the body rid itself of microbial and viral infections.
- Feverfew (*Chrysanthemum parthenium*) - Leaves are used to help circulation, the nervous system, skin and urinary organs. Many other uses.
- Peppermint (*mentha piperita*) - Many uses - rich in vitamins A and B complex. High in calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, and iron.
- St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) - Used for liver and nervous system.

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Board Meeting Summary

Margaret Hibberd, Secretary

January 5, 1999

Present: Howard Berg, Chuck Carlson, Dave Johnson (Fridley), Margaret Hibberd Eldon Hugelen, Mary Maynard, Tim McCauley, Ritchie Miller, and Kay Wolfe.

The meeting was called to order by President Eldon Hugelen. Secretary's and

Treasurer's reports were presented and approved.

The Vice President reported that the March meeting will be the Dayton's-Bachman's Flower Show on March 23.

Committee Reports

- Awards: Jackie Overom will receive Rookie of the Year. This and Green Thumb awards will be given at the January meeting.
- Cleanup: Volunteers are needed to set up tables during the day of the dinner meeting or we will have to pay \$85 per meeting.
- Holiday Party: An excellent party. Concerns: It ran a deficit of \$759.00 Also the bill indicated that a gratuity was expected. Kay will contact Duane and see how the \$8/person for the caterer was arrived at and whether there was any mention of a gratuity.
- *Spray*: Andy Marlow wants to end his duties with the *Spray* at the end of 1999, so a production editor will be needed.

Old Business:

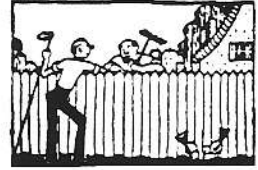
- MSHS Representative: Roger Sefelt will be the representative, with Margaret Hibberd as alternate.
- Arboretum Fair, April 17, 1999: Barb Berosik will chair this again.

New Business:

- Club History: Bill Hull has nothing on the computer but wants help. Eldon will contact Russ Smith to see if he will pick a couple people to work with him to get started.
- Home and Garden Show, March 3-7: We will get a block of time to work as a group and will circulate a sign-up sheet at the January meeting.
- New Member: application from Alvin K. Holmbeck was approved (see below).
- Miscellaneous Money Matters: The board authorized Howard to pay \$400 deposit to Westwood Lutheran Church for space for the auction. Howard said we should think about raising dues for 2000 or increase the meal price to cover true meal costs.
- MidAmerica Region Seminar: This will be held April 10 in Mason City, Iowa.

New Member

Alvin K. Holmbeck lives with his wife, Nancy, at 15110 Williston Lane, Minnetonka MN 55345. Alvin is a retired sales manager for an engineering company. He joined the club to help improve his garden. Welcome, Alvin!



Confessions of a Lazy Gardener

By Mary Maynard

Building a seed starting box.

As you know, warmth speeds seed germination. These days, the best way to get heat to your plants is using a heat mat on which you set your seedling trays. Back in the Pleistocene Age, when I was starting out, those mats seemed kind of an expensive and “sissy” way to go. So, I built a seed starting box with a heating cable buried in sand. I still use it extensively each spring. Based on my experience, pretty much anybody can build one of these if there’s enough old plywood and scrap lumber lying around. Here’s what I did:

First, I needed a strong table, since I wanted this to be at working level. It just so happened that the previous owners of our house left a huge old workshop table in the garage, and it was definitely strong enough to hold a big box of sand. It is quite ugly, which fits into the general decorating scheme in our basement. (If it had been made of orange velour, it would have fit in perfectly, but we can’t have everything in life.)

Next, I needed to figure out the dimensions of this box. Most people would do this by deciding how many shop lights to use and determining the optimum illumination pattern, or figure out how many 10x20 trays they’d like to start at once. I chose another path: I had an old piece of plywood that was about 3.5’ x 4’, so that’s what the dimensions of the box turned out to be. I used that for the base, then found some boards that had

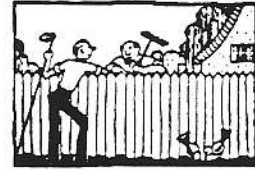
been used in a mistaken attempt to remodel the windows in the house (they were painted lime green or turquoise, except for the ones that had been covered with plaid wallpaper). I think they are just standard 1x4 boards. I cut them to fit the length and width of the plywood. To join all the pieces together, I used little angle iron braces from the hardware store. No fancy mitered joints or anything like that. It’s ugly, but it works.

Then, I lined the box with heavy plastic—with enough on the sides to overlap the outside. For people with more solidly built boxes, the plastic is primarily a moisture barrier—to keep water from leaking all over when you spill. In my case, I also needed it to hold the sand in the box. Then, I put about an inch of sand in the bottom of the box. **Note:** it is important to have the box in its final location before you start putting sand in it! Even mild mannered husbands get a little cranky when they get roped into projects involving lifting sand filled boxes up onto shop tables. Especially if all the sand shifts to their end, and they’re standing perilously close to the cat’s litter box.

After this, one needs to arrange a 48” heating cable in the sand, without having it twist or cross over itself. At first glance, it seems impossible, and it nearly is, but it can be done. Turning on the cable and letting it warm up helps it to behave a little better. Or, if you were a snake charmer in a former life, you might have an advantage. When the cable is all arranged, cover everything with another inch of sand. Make sure all of the cable is buried, especially the little thermostat unit.

Finally, you hang some shop lights above this contraption, and you’re basically done. I put down 10x20 trays without holes directly on the sand, then put smaller seedling containers in the trays

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Future Plans of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

By Howard Berg

The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum (MLA) would like to accomplish many changes in the next ten years. These are all included in a master plan amended July 6, 1998. The following is a summary of the plan:

The Mission

The mission of the MLA as part of the University of Minnesota is to act as a community and national resource for horticultural and environmental information, research and public education; to develop and evaluate plants and horticultural practices for cold climates; and to delight all visitors.

The master plan develops a conceptual plan which includes existing and proposed land acquisitions, and allocates space to meet current and future needs while still give the visitor the best experience possible.

Goals and Objectives

- Determine the best possible experience for visitors.
- Develop programs and facilities to carry it out.
- Identify land need for long term growth and for the preservation of land and water.
- Create an improved visitor access and orientation to MLA and

workable traffic flow that serves all.

- Enhance the visitors awareness of the arboretum and its research and accomplishments.
- Provide the necessary space and organizations to allow future growth and development of quality gardens and collections while enhancing both the visitor experience and the reputation of MLA as a leading arboretum.

Recommendations

Acquisition of all land bounded by Highways 5 and 41 on the east and north, West 82nd Street on the south and Bavaria Road on the west. This takes in most of the MLA Watershed and adds land for growth. This will give better land use for research, entry gardens, model landscapes, conservation areas, display gardens, collections and a science based school.

Upgrade the access to MLA drive from Highway 5 by working with the MNDOT as improvements to Highway 5 come on line. Install a new entry road at Minnewashta Parkway and lobby for traffic lights at both entrances.

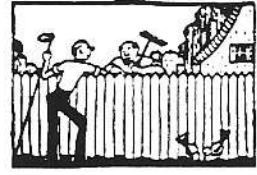
With new land acquisitions, three mile drive could be expanded and changed. Walking paths should improved, with parking, restrooms, and drinking water at key locations.

Provide accessibility for the disabled and expanded use of the trams.

Provide a new visitor center to become the hub of the MLA and for all activities. It would contain a new tea room, gift shop, and an auditorium to seat 400, which could be divided into four smaller rooms. It would be located just west of the present Snyder Building.

The Snyder Building should return to it's original function as an educational resource center and administrative center.

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Ideas From the Garden

Yellow Peppers

Mary Maynard

Jung's 'Yellow Belle' pepper is the best! Seeds are available from Jung's (Randolph, WI). Peppers are yellow from the very beginning, and turn a very nice orange/red when they ripen. The fruits are not that large, but plants are very prolific. Blue Ribbon winner at our Flower, Food and Foto Show.

Chickens

I guess we all have to start raising chickens. One of the suggestions from the table gleanings at the last dinner meeting was to eliminate slugs in your garden by having free range chickens. An anonymous writer said chickens just love slugs. *Editors note: Maybe that's why, when I had two pet free ranging chickens as a child, I never did see a slug in our garden..*

Table Gleanings.

At each dinner meeting there will be a card at your table for you to write down a question, or give us a few lines on your favorite plant, your favorite garden, a garden experiment that worked or didn't work, a garden tip, a garden joke, a garden saying, or whatever is pertinent. These will end up in the *Spray*. This is President Eldon Hugelen's idea. It's a good idea but not enough people used it. We will keep bugging you until you perform and there is no known insecticide that will kill this bug.

A Tip

Give dogs a tablespoon of tomato juice per day to eliminate brown spots on your lawn.

Hillside Gardening

By Joe Stenger

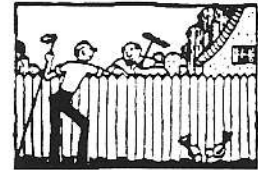
In 1960 my wife Velma, our son and daughter, and I lived in New Orleans, Louisiana. There we were bothered by the three H's—heat, humidity and hurricanes. One of these, a hurricane called *Hilda*, left water and mud in our home, and left us devastated and discouraged. About that time I had a chance to transfer to Minneapolis. We were glad to take it. After being here for several months, we found our home at 5421 Girard Avenue and have lived there ever since. Our home is on a hillside with the back of the lot being 50 feet higher than the front, which is at street level.

In July 1961 we met Otto Nelson and Chet Groger, who lived on our block. Otto's backyard, like ours, was very hilly. On July 22, 1961, the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune* showed a full page spread on hillside gardening at Otto's place.

The previous owner of our home liked Colorado Blue Spruce and planted several. In time they became monsters. After two or three of them were hit by lightning, we had several removed. This created a hillside in full sun.

For the first few years we mowed this sun filled hillside with a rotary push mower which I pulled up and down with a rope. This became a task I shouldn't do, so Velma took over the hill and planted flowers, bushes and shrubs. She has gradually been changing it to a perennial garden favoring lilies, asters, daisies, hostas and sedum. We have been well pleased with the change, but one should realize that one of the factors with a

(continued on page 11)



TGOA/MGCA and Regional News

The national office in Iowa has been eager to know about our election results. Below is an e-mail note I received from Judy Anderson after I relayed the results.

"Thanks for responding. I'm REALLY happy. The vote sounds encouraging as well. That's a pretty sound margin of victory. Your club is so vibrant, interesting and so visible, you actually could be a model for many clubs.

Please congratulate them for me, personally; I send them my gratitude as well. I

guess in the long run, it's always better to get issues out in the open, to reaffirm why you're doing what you're doing there in the first place. Here's hoping this confirms your purpose and gives you ALL new energy to continue on your marvelous journey of sharing

your love of gardening and creativity with your community. Am so pleased I will still be getting your newsletter. I ALWAYS look forward to hearing from you."

For those of you who don't know Judy, she is one of two full time members of the TGOA /MGCA office staff. She is also the editor of *The Gardener* magazine. In my opinion, great improvements have been made since she took over. She also is aware that many things in the magazine do not apply to us in the cold north and she begs us to respond with articles applicable to northern gardening.

One last note: Mark your calendar

for April 10. This is the date for the MidAmerica regional one day conference in Mason City, Iowa. More detailed information will be in next month's *Spray*. Maybe we can get a few carloads to go over the border. It would make President Hugelen proud since he is a transplanted Iowan. Just being in Iowa might give us a clue to his department and tremendous gardening ability.

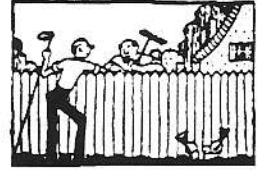
Scholarship Applications for 1999

The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis (MGCM) will be awarding \$1,000 scholarships to students of horticulture in 1999. Students interested in a career in horticulture, landscaping, or a related professional area are encouraged to apply. MGCM is a group of men and women interested in home gardening and landscaping and improving the communities in which we live.

Over the last seven years we have awarded a total of \$19,000.00 for student scholarships. These scholarships are awarded to students whose career goals are consistent with the interests of the gardener members of MGCM. Recipients must be residents of and attend school in Minnesota. Application forms are available from the Scholarship Committee. Call or see Kent Petterson for details. Club members are urged to pass the word to relatives, friends or any other possible recipient.

The deadline for the application is May 1, 1999.





Flower of the Month

By Chuck Carlson

The flower of the month is Salvia. One reason for the selection is that the National Garden Bureau has designated 1999 as The Year of Salvia.

The genus contains over 900 species, many of which are hybrids. They can be perennials, annuals and biennials. They are found on almost every continent and were first written about in the first century AD.

Most Salvias were grown in early times for their believed healing powers. The belief in their medicinal power proliferated in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Even today some believe in its power to heal. English and European gardeners have brought scores of new varieties from Mexico, China and Africa. One of these was a wild Salvia, coccinea. After many selective germinations, this turned out to be the 1992 All American Selection (AAS) 'Lady in Red'.

Another, Salvia splendens, with a red spiked flower, was bred and selections made that culminated in 1991 as the 'Sizzler' series. This series is available in many colors. A Salvia farinacea also distinguished itself via breeding and became an AAS winner in 1996. This was called 'Strata' and was the first bicolor salvia hybrid.

All salvias are members of the mint family and all are sages. They are identified by square stems and opposite pairs of leaves which are usually velvety or hairy.

Here in the north, we grow many salvias, most them treated as annuals. They are started from seed or purchased as growing plants at garden centers. In general they like full sun, ordinary to poor

soil and, like most herbs, tolerate dry conditions.

Below I have listed a few you might want to consider growing.

- Salvia, coccinea – 'Coral Nymph' and 'Lady in Red'
- Salvia, farinacea – 'Strata' and 'Victoria'
- Salvia, horminum – 'Claryssa' (a variety of S. scarea commonly called Clary)
- Salvia, officinales – Common garden sage and 'Tricolor' (both used in the kitchen)
- Salvia, elegans – common name Pineapple Sage
- Salvia, argentea – Common name Silver Sage (Has very large decorative leaves—good for garden texture)

Confessions

(continued from page 6)

and water from the bottom. It really does work pretty well.

The main problem I've had with this system over the years is my cat. No, she doesn't see this as a second litter box (thankfully), but she does like to sleep on that nice warm sand under the blinding fluorescence. I have no problem with this unless she ends up sleeping on top of a whole flat of Celosia. Which has happened.

Would I do this again? No. I'd buy a mat. But since I have it and it works just fine, I'll keep it until something major fails. Not sure what that would be, since there aren't any "major" components! And it would be a real pain to empty all that sand out!

Next time: Seed germination the lazy gardener's way.

A Little Gossip

By Flavus Baptisia

I hope you saw Dave and Delores Johnson's garden on the Rebecca Kohl's TV program. The segment aired on January 30 at 6:30 a.m. Also, Dave and Delores have just returned from a trip to India and Thailand. They must have some interesting gardens to tell about.

Eldon sent in this question: What club member was once our new Governor Jesse Ventura's accountant? He said he would tell us next month. If you want to know earlier, maybe a bribe will loosen his tongue.

We must congratulate Bob Stepan. By now he will have completed the Master Gardener's course. Ask him a lot of questions or, better yet, send me your questions and I will get him to answer them in the *Spray*.

If you know any good gossip send it to me, Flavus, in care of "CJ" the editor.

Program

(continued from page 4)

- Rose (*Rosa* spp.), Rose hips (*Rosa canina*) - Many uses - high in vitamins.
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) - The aerial (above ground) parts of this herb are used for acute complaints - colds, flu, fever, wounds, etc. Many other uses.
- Other plants of with varied uses- Raspberry (*Rubus idaeus* and *R. strigosus*), Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*), Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia* and *L. officinalis*), Borage (*Borago officinalis*), and Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*).



For more information, make sure to consult literature on the medical use of herbs. For serious health conditions, get a professional diagnosis.

Arboretum

(continued from page 7)

The Library would gain space it has given up for other activities and staff would not have to work in closets and hallways. A glass conservatory is planned for the future to enjoy during the winter months.

This new mission will take the effort of many to get it accomplished. The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis was instrumental in getting the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum organized in January 1951 by five of our past members who could see to the future. Can we help see to the future of MLA?

I am willing to be the go between from our club to the Arboretum on this project, and I am sure Marilyn Brummer, our Arboretum Liaison, would be also. Contact either of us for more information. I also have two copies of the draft executive summary, which I will share with any one who is interested.

Reference: *Minnesota Landscape Arboretum Master Plan, Executive Summary Dated June 11, 1998*
Architects Ellerbe Becket and consultant Warren Byrd

Hillside

(continued from page 8)

hillside garden is that it is twice the work as a garden on level ground. This is largely due to the fact that if you go up to the top to work you will always need a tool that is at the bottom.

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