

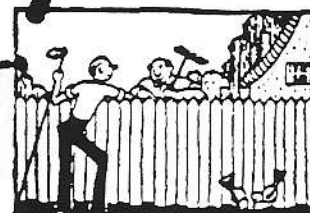


# The Garden Spray

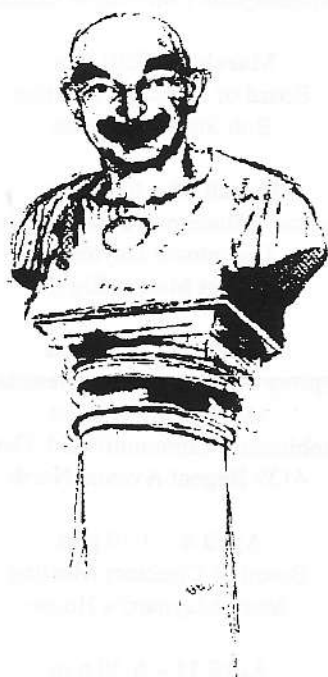
Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

March 1995, Volume 53, Number 3



March MGCM Dinner Meeting at the



## Dayton's- Bachman's Spring Flower Show *Tivoli Gardens*

Tuesday March 14 - 6:30 p.m.  
Sky Room - Dayton's Downtown  
Eighth and Nicollet Mall  
\$12.00 per person

Spouses and guests are invited to attend this event. The permanent reservation list is not in effect. Please mail the clip-out form below to Treasurer Howard Berg by Friday March 10. Please include a check for \$12.00 for each person attending with the form.

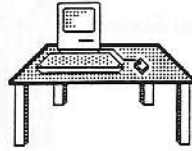
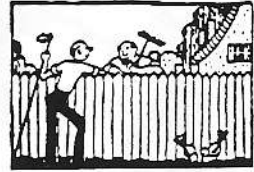
Please reserve dinner for my guest(s) and me at  
the Dayton's-Bachman's Flower Show dinner on March 14

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \_\_\_\_\_ dinners @ \$12.00 for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Return by March 10 to: Howard Berg, Treasurer, MGCM,  
10107 Lakeview Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55305



### The Editor's Desk

Andy Marlow

When President Voigt needed the dates of previous national conventions hosted by MGCM, I was off on a journey through a quarter of century of *Garden Sprays*. Eventually I found that MGCM has hosted three national conventions, in 1949, 1967 and 1988. My research led me to the conclusion that there are a couple of things to keep in mind as we think about the possibility of hosting another.

Number one, it would serve us well to look at the timing. About 20 years passed between these events. Having been President during one of the four years of planning that led up to the '88 convention, I'm convinced you need at least 20 years for everyone to forget how darn much work they are.

Number two, the main ingredient for a successful convention is an individual who is willing to put aside work and family, and proceed with dogged determination toward the goal. This rare individual must also inspire others to work nearly as hard. Bill Hull was that rare individual in both '67 and '88.

It's nice that we have a nest egg left from 1988 to use as a starting point for another convention. But let's not base a decision on the fact that we have the money. We need to ask ourselves questions such as: Is the timing right? Is there a person in our club who possesses the necessary qualities and willingness to take on the leadership role? Are there able lieutenants ready to assist? If we can answer "yes" to each of these questions, then we can proceed. If we have any doubts, we should let the idea rest a while.

## Coming Attractions

### March 1 thru 5

Spring Home and Garden Show  
Minneapolis Convention Center

### March 7 - 7:30 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting  
Bob Stepan's House

### March 14 - 6:30 p.m.

Dayton's-Bachman's Flower Show  
Downtown Dayton's  
Nicollet Mall at Eighth

### March 25 - 8:30 a.m.

Spring Fling Gardening Seminar  
MSHS Fifth District  
Robbinsdale Community Ed. Center  
4139 Regent Avenue North

### April 4 - 7:30 p.m.

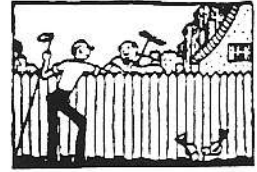
Board of Directors Meeting  
Mary Maynard's House

### April 11 - 6:30 p.m.

MGCM Dinner Meeting  
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church

*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.

Editor.....Andrew J. Marlow  
Staff.....Ed Biren, Chuck Carlson, Dale Fisher, Carolyn Hayward, Mary Maynard, Derrill Pankow, Merle Pulley



# Cuttings

by Bob Voigt, President, MGCM

Our January and February meeting speakers—

Chuck Carlson, Bob Olson and Dave Johnson—have shown once again that our members are a tremendous source of ideas and information. We are honored to have them share their experiences with us. Thanks again to each of you.

Because there is such a wealth of experience among the members, it seems appropriate that we find a way to share more. That is the basis of starting the question/answer part of each meeting. We will try to schedule more time, somehow, to cover them all each time. Andy Marlow has suggested we include a few in the *Spray* each month. I hope we can meet your needs for information about your gardening concerns. Please share with me any suggestions you have on how we can make our activities more beneficial.

I believe each member has experiences to share with other members, and I encourage everyone to consider writing for the *Garden Spray*. Your input could be as short as a recommendation for the best tomato variety you have grown. Or, if you have more to share, consider writing from 150 to 300 words about your subject.

Last fall I brought four tubs of geraniums into the house. The plants were originally purchased at last May's MGCM Plant Sale and Auction. We have had beautiful flowering geraniums all winter long. Our south windows afford the necessary sun, and we provide the encouragement. We also brought several pots of herbs indoors that have continued to provide garnishes for our salads, etc. These small successes have made the season more enjoyable.

MGCM was host to the National Convention of the Mens' Garden Clubs of America in 1949, 1967 and 1988. Bill Hull chaired the committees that organized and hosted the latter two events. They were successful because Bill and the committees worked hard to make them notable events. Several MGCM members have expressed interest in the club considering doing this again. Other clubs nationally have committed to hosting annual conventions through the year 2000. If anyone would like to join a committee to consider and plan for the year 2001 or beyond, please let me know. MGCM does have a financial reserve available as seed money for such an event. Bill Hull and Russ Smith will attend the National Convention in May in Dallas and could formally start the process for us.

It's scholarship time again. Kent Petterson will be notifying the appropriate departments at the U of M and area votech schools that MGCM will again consider applications from individuals majoring in qualified horticultural and landscape architectural programs. If you have any referrals, contact Kent for information and applications.

The Tour Committee, chaired by Kay Wolfe, is looking into the idea of several informal Saturday *open house* type tours this year. Time is a real constraint when we try to go on an organized bus tour to several members gardens. If any of you would like to offer your garden on a Saturday (date set in advance at your convenience) for members to come on their own, please talk with Kay. Members of the committee will work with you to coordinate the details.

Happy gardening!



# Monthly Program Report

by Andy Marlow

February's MGCM meeting featured a double header. The main presentation by Dr. Bob Olson was followed Dave Johnson sharing his secrets for propagating plants from cuttings.

## Bob Olson

Many gardeners are in some way addicted to their avocations. We all know the rose people who have several hundred bushes in their back yards. Or the ones who turn every inch of their lot into a blooming paradise. Bob is not afraid to admit his addiction to hostas. Bob is the current President of the American Hosta Society, edits the newsletter for the Midwest Regional Hosta Society and is a member of the Minnesota Hosta Society. He's also a Past President and current member of MGCM.

Bob noted that many people start with hostas as a border, growing familiar varieties such as h. lancifolia and h. 'Decorata'. The grower is impressed by these tough, hardy, drought resistant perennials. Then he or she begins to get an idea of the wide variety of colors, textures, leaf shapes and plant habits available. Soon they have the disease—you see one, you gotta have it!

Bob Olson caught the disease from Bob Savory. After having his interest stimulated, Olson made a pilgrimage to Savory's Greenhouse in Edina. There he saw the most magnificent plant he had ever seen, h. 'Montana Aeromarginata', a huge mound of green and cream leaves that seemed to glow in the twilight. Olson

paid \$40 for a little one-leaf division, took it home and planted it. The next morning a rabbit had eaten it to the ground. But as hostas will, two week later two shoots (now safely protected from rabbits) emerged from the ground. The hook was in deep now.

That was several hundred hostas ago. Olson prefers small ones now, such as h. 'Blue Moon' and h. 'Baby Bunting', a Savory introduction. He divides and trades hostas with experts and novices alike. A few years ago, Savory convinced Olson to start hybridizing hostas. Though he has yet to register his own introduction, Olson is convinced the best hostas are the ones you grow yourself.

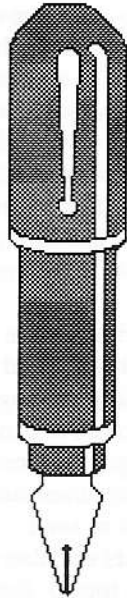
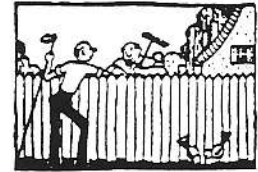
For about an hour, Olson entertained MGCM members with slides of magnificent plants, and a funny account of the American Hosta Society Convention held in Minneapolis and his persistent efforts to get his own garden in shape for a tour.

Hostas are extremely easy to grow, requiring little in the way of fertilizer. Slugs are the only known insect pest. Olson, as a physician, uses chemotherapy when slugs strike. The other threat is frost heaves that result from an open winter. Olson cleans his beds completely in the fall and covers them with bags of leaves. Drip irrigation from a soaker hose keeps the plants healthy all summer long.

## Dave Johnson

Some plants lend themselves to propagation by cuttings. Coleus, impatiens, geraniums and others can be cloned readily. It's an inexpensive way to double the number of plants at minimum expense. Some varieties are too expensive or difficult to grow from seed. Dave said one year he started snapdragons too early and they got very leggy under the lights. He cut off the tops and rooted them. Not only did he double the number of plants, but

*(continued on page 7)*



# Board Minutes

Mary Maynard  
Secretary, MGCM

Tuesday, February 7, 1995

Present: Howard Berg,  
Chuck Carlson, Bill Jepson,  
Mary Maynard, Henry Orfield,  
Bob Stepan, Clyde Thompson,  
Bob Voigt, Kay Wolfe.

Bob Voigt called the meeting to order at 7:35.

Minutes from the January meeting were approved. Motion by Chuck, seconded by Howard.

Treasurer's report. January treasurer's report approved. Motion by Bob Stepan, seconded by Mary.

In conjunction with the Treasurer's report, there was some discussion on the use of the \$4,500 in CDs that is reserved for a bond in the event that MGCM hosts another national convention. Annual conventions are booked through the year 2000, so we need to plan far in advance if we want to host another national convention in Minneapolis. Since planning a convention is a long-term commitment, the board decided to take the question of whether or not to work toward another national convention to the general membership.

If there were a decision not to campaign for another national convention, the Club would need to decide what to do with the reserved funds.

## Committees

Arbor Day: Chuck Benson received a letter from Mary Lehrman of the Minneapolis Park Board suggesting planting trees near the station at Minnehaha Park. Final decision is up to the committee.

Community Gardens. The plan for this year is put together, plants are ordered and calendar and schedule are set up for the year.

Food, Flower and Foto Show. First committee meeting is planned for early next month.

Tours. Kay is interested in all ideas about tours this summer. Many interesting possibilities. First committee meeting planned for end of February or early March.

Plant Auction. Clyde is organizing an executive committee and starting to visit growers, etc. First meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 16.

Hospitality. The Board agreed that we should have a liaison with the Hospitality Committee to make sure it is up to date on any events going on during the month.

Membership. Mary will invite Marty and Joane Anderson to the next Board meeting to discuss ideas about new member packets, guest packets, and general care and feeding of new and prospective members.

## New Business

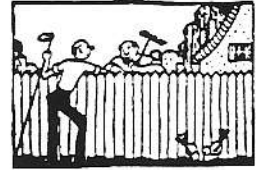
New Members. Two new members were approved (motion by Clyde, second by Kay): Penny A. Peterson and Robert H. Rathje.

Memorials. The Board approved donations to the Arboretum in memory of Floyd Ashley and Bob Savory. \$100 each, designated for the Andersen Library and Hosta Glade respectively. Money to come from the Miscellaneous line item in the budget. Mary will send notes to Mrs. Ashley and Mrs. Savory.

In the future, the Board recommends setting up a perpetual fund for memorials. (Motion by Clyde, second Henry.)

Church rental. Lake Harriet Methodist increased its rent by \$10.25 per

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# Chuck's Chestnuts

by Chuck Carlson

1995 has been designated as the year of the onion and the impatiens by the National Garden Bureau. This month I'll look at onions and next month impatiens.

The cultivated onion is believed to have originated in central Asia. 5000 years ago Egypt elevated the onion to a deity. In the Middle Ages, its popularity grew with the belief it had healing properties. We now know that onions will lower serum cholesterol, reduce blood sugar and may help prevent heart attacks and some forms of cancer.

The onion is part of the lily family, *Amaryllidaceae* and is in the genus *Allium*. It is a perennial herb which includes garden onions, garlic, chives, shallots, potato onions, bunching onions, Egyptian onions and leeks, plus the flowering non-edible varieties. Our common garden onions are called *Allium cepa*.

The *Bermuda* is the granddaddy of the modern fresh or sweet onion. Speaking of sweet onions, experts have concluded that soils containing sulfur grow onions with a more pungent flavor. Thus when you fertilize stay away from products containing sulfur.

Onions are sensitive to the hours of daylight they receive. In Minnesota we should plant those varieties adaptable to long days or those listed as favoring intermediate length days. This is probably why I failed last year with Georgia's famous 'Vadelia'.

Onions should be grown in well drained soil having a pH of 5.6 to 6.5. Dig in well rotted manure or compost, and work in a sulfur free fertilizer high in

phosphorus. You can grow onions from seed but will have better luck if they are started inside 10-12 weeks before the frost free date. Plant the seeds no more than a quarter inch deep in a soilless mix and germinate them between 70 to 75 degrees F. Space 2 inches apart when transplanting and thin to 4 inches by using some for green onions. Do not plant deeper than 1 inch.

Some gardeners use *sets*, which are small dormant bulbs ready for outside planting. The disadvantages of sets is that the variety is unknown and sweet "fresh" onions are not grown from sets. Since garden onions are biennials, set grown onions may bolt to seed.

Transplants are also sold and specific varieties can be found. Remember, do not plant too deep.

Onions require an inch of water per week. The size of mature onions depends on the number of green leaves. Each green leaf is a ring on the onion bulb. A perfect onion will have 13 rings.

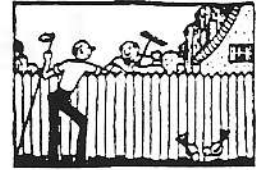
When 25% to 50% of the green leaves have fallen over, bend the rest of them down to hasten ripening. When ripened, dig the whole plant and dry in full sun. Store in a cool dry place. Never put them in a plastic bag.

The biggest pest is the onion maggot. Prevention by covering the row with a fine mesh screen is the most effective treatment.

Onions are high in vitamin C and the green tops are loaded with vitamin A.

## The Tip

Grow and eat onions for your health and your enjoyment. Don't worry about other people. If you do worry, chew a little parsley to freshen your breath. Remember—an onion a day will keep the doctor away. Okay, eat an apple, too. Yes, some greens and maybe even a banana will also help. Next month, impatiens.



## Meeting Report

(continued from page 4)

the ones that had been cut bushed out nicely.

Dave, ably assisted by spouse and fellow MGCM member Delores Johnson, provided a true-to-life demonstration. Coleus and impatiens were cut, trimmed of leaves and potted in vermiculite to grow new roots.

Dave said vermiculite is a good starting medium, but a mix of two parts peat moss and one part perlite can also be used. Dave takes a 2-3" cutting from the tip of a stem. He strips off all but the a few terminal leaves and inserts them in holes made by a pencil. He grows six cuttings per pack. The packs are put in flats and covered with clear plastic greenhouse-type tops that hold in the humidity. Dave puts them 10-12" under lights that are on for 10 hours a day. In a couple of weeks, new roots have developed and the covers can come off.



Rudbeckia  
hirta  
Indian Summer



## Board Minutes

(continued from page 5)

month to cover expense of cleaning towels, etc. The Board approved this increase.

Software for *Spray*. Andy Marlow requested 50% reimbursement for CD-ROMs containing graphics and clip art that will be used to illustrate the *Spray*. Total cost was \$57.45. On a motion by Chuck, seconded by Henry, the Board decided to reimburse Andy for the full cost of the CDs, payment to come from the budget line for the *Spray*.

Education. We had a lively discussion of different ways to provide educational opportunities to members, especially those new to the Club. Among the ideas: Have more articles in the *Spray* from Club experts; tables on various subjects set up before the monthly meetings; mechanism to get Stump the Expert questions; set up an education committee. The Board welcomes members' ideas on ways to continue and increase our education outreach within the Club.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m. on a motion by Chuck, second by Bill.

## New Members

Penny A. Peterson  
319 - 5th Street S.E.  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
Home Phone: 378-2900

Robert H. Rathje  
9100 Colfax Avenue South  
Bloomington, MN 55420  
Home Phone: 888-2974

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## MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

### CLUB OFFICERS:

**President:** Bob Voigt  
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**Vice-President:** Bob Stepan  
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**Secretary:** Mary J. Maynard  
4375 Dart Ave. So., St. Louis Park, MN 55424  
**Treasurer:** Howard H. Berg  
10107 Lakeview Dr., Minnetonka, MN 55305  
**Past President:** Clyde Thompson  
4429 Dunham Drive, Edina, MN 55435

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Bill Jepson  
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Henry Orfield  
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# The Garden Spray

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