



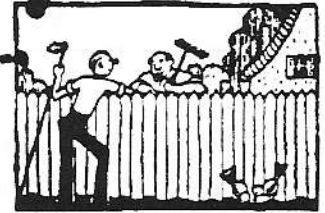
# The Garden Spray



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

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

May 1992, Volume 50, Number 5



## Plant Sale and Auction

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 12, 1992

**WHERE:** Lynnhurst Community Center  
50th Street and Humboldt Avenue South  
Minneapolis

**WHAT:** Plant Sale and Auction

Country Store Opens at 5 p.m.  
Club Member may donate plants to sell

Dinner at 5:40 p.m. (\$6.50)

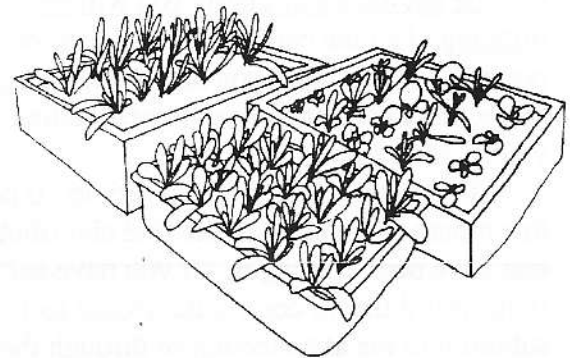
Auction at 6:30 p.m.  
A great opportunity to buy quality plants for your garden  
from the same supplier as last year

**WHO:** Members, spouses, prospective  
members, guests: all invited

**WHY:** To raise funds for Club events and  
to benefit the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

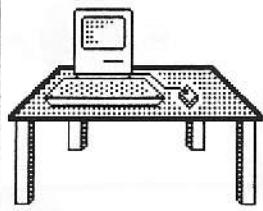
**TO HELP:** To volunteer to help, phone Dave Johnson, 544-0111

**BE THERE:** All members please return the reservation card and include names of your guests!



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**The Editor's Desk**  
Andy Marlow

Those of you who are on the permanent reservation list for dinner meetings may think you've uncovered a mistake. There is a reservation card with your issue of the Spray! IT IS NOT A MISTAKE. Because the Plant Sale and Auction Committee needs an accurate count on who is planning to attend, we are asking each of you to send back a card and include the names of guests you will be bringing. Get the card in the mail as soon as possible to make sure you have a name tag, a bid number and, of course, dinner waiting for you on May 12.

The Spray has expanded back to 10 pages this month because of all the fine contributions that have been coming in. If you have something you'd like to contribute, please feel free to submit it to me at a meeting or through the mail. I like to get stuff type written or, even better, on a Macintosh computer disk if possible, but handwritten is just fine. Ideas and content are more important than the form it comes in. Many thanks to Mary Maynard, Terry Robertson, Bill Hull, Chuck Carlson and Bob Voight for this month's issue.

We haven't had room this issue or last for the headlines from 1942 that we had been running to see what the world was like in our charter year as a garden club. They may not return at all, as I have not heard a great outcry from the masses. If you liked this feature, or like or dislike anything else about the Spray, let me know. This is, after all, YOUR Club bulletin.

# Plant Sale and Auction Details

by Bob Voight

Dave Johnson is once again organizing an event that promises to help make your garden a showcase for years to come; the annual Plant Sale and Auction, set for May 12 at Lynnhurst Community Center.

The event is one of the highlights of the year — don't miss it! Come and bid on beautiful plants grown by the same suppliers as last year. And bring some plants, bulbs or related garden items of your own to donate to the Country Store. It is a great way to share your own favorites and to benefit from other members' talents. Bring friends and prospective members, too.

The Country Store opens at 5:00 p.m. Dinner is at 5:40 p.m., with the auction beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Committee members working with Dave share the fun and the challenge of identifying annuals and perennials on Club members' "want list," ordering them, picking them up and making the arrangements for a great evening. They include Mel Anderson, Todd Bachman, Bob Churilla, Chuck Cutter, Leo Grebner, Walt Gustafson, Jack Kolb, George McCollough, Carleton Nelson, Charlie Proctor, Joe Stenger, Bob Stepan, Frank Vixo and Bob Voight.

Be sure to mail back your reservation card and include the names of the guests you are bringing. SEE YOU THERE!

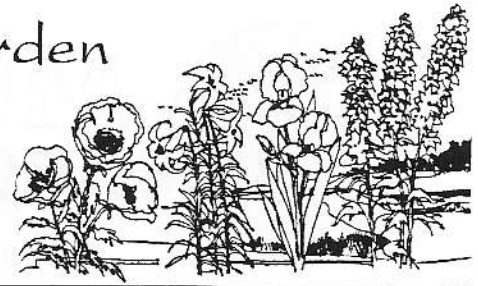
The Garden Spray is published monthly by the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc., for its members and friends. The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis is a not-for-profit, equal opportunity organization.

Editor.....Andrew J. Marlow  
Staff.....Mary Maynard,  
Robert C. Olson, Terry Robertson



# The Freedom Garden

Gregory P. Smith  
President, MGCM



The 1992 calendar of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis is overflowing with new and exciting events to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> year as a Club. All the committees are up and running with lots of fresh faces and ideas, along with the wisdom and knowledge of senior members. This is shaping up to be a year to remember in our Club's glorious history.

May signals the start of the major planting season in Minnesota, and what better way to get off on the right foot than to attend the annual Plant Sale and Auction at Lynnhurst Community Center on May 12. This event, organized by Dave Johnson and committee, is the major fund raising event for the Club, so grab a friend or neighbor, along with your sweetheart or loved one, and enjoy the evening as you buy that special plant or stock up for that new bed you've been planning to build.

June brings a special change to our regular Tuesday night dinner meeting. Instead of the basement of the Church, Program Chair Lee Gilligan has arranged for dinner and a tram tour at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Arboretum Director and MGCM member Peter Olin extended the invitation to us for all our support over the years. This event is also open

to everyone who loves gardening.

July 11 and 12, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee has a garden tour event which offers opportunities for both a driving tour and a bus tour to five members' gardens. Get your own tickets now — and grab some extras to sell. Proceeds from the tours will be used to fund horticulture and landscape scholarships.

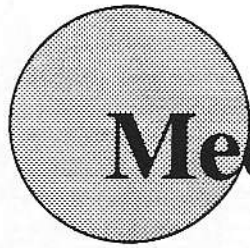
August 8 and 9 is our annual Flower and Vegetable Show, along with another garden tour. Both Kent Petterson and Lee Gilligan are active with their committees planning a "bigger and better" weekend of displaying our gardens and gardening talents.

That's not all! Jerry Shannon and the Arbor Day Committee are busy planting trees, Chuck Carlson and committee are working in the Community Fragrance Garden and, as a Club, we are all working with the Stevens House and its garden of period plantings.

The summer looks full for gardeners of all types. I hope to see you as we enjoy these exciting events. However, don't forget to spend some time in your own garden, for the quiet time we have alone with nature is one of God's gifts to mankind.

*Remember*  
*MGCM Arbor Day Planting*  
*Saturday, May 9, 9:30 a.m.*  
*Lake Harriet Rose Garden Area*  
**Bring A Shovel!**





# MGCM Meeting Report

by Mary Maynard

## DAHLIAS!

Our speaker this month was Larry Bagge, who gave us an extremely informative slide presentation/hands-on demonstration on dahlias. Here are some of the highlights of Larry's talk:

**Tuber storage.** Dahlia tubers may be stored in sawdust, wood chips, peat moss, sand or some other medium that works for you. They must be kept cool, cooler than many basements. Larry keeps his tubers in an old (working) refrigerator. Other people seek out well-pits or other cool spots.

If storing tubers is not practical for you, you can still grow dahlias — just treat as annuals, buying a few tubers each spring to enjoy in your garden.

**Tubers selection and preparation.** Tubers come in many shapes and sizes. Many times, the smaller tubers flourish, producing more active, vigorous plants than larger tubers.

Catalog sources:

- Alpen Gardens (Kalispell, Montana)
- Homestead Gardens (Kalispell, Montana)
- Wilson's Dahlias (Elmira, Oregon)
- Connell's (Tacoma, Washington)
- AVRI Dahlias (Dallas, Texas)
- Ferncliff Gardens (Mission, British Columbia)

Most growers sell cut flowers in the summer, tubers in the winter.

One of the biggest mistakes inexperienced dahlia growers make is planting tubers without dividing them. Tubers must be divided before

planting, and every division needs an active eye.

If buying tubers, by this time of year, don't buy anything without good signs of active growth.

To prepare for planting, Larry takes his tubers out of his refrigerator and places them under a pine tree for two to three weeks to get them started. (Marking tubers with a permanent marking pen before planting is helpful, in case labels get lost.)

**Planting.** The ideal planting location is one where the plants will get morning sun and afternoon shade to protect blooms from hot afternoon sun and strong winds. (A few dahlias at the back of the border can be very effective midsummer specimens.) Soil should be well-drained and rich in compost.

Stakes should be set out before planting — allowing 2.5 to 3 feet per plant. Stakes may be up to eight feet tall, depending on variety.

Dig a hole about six inches deep, and add bone meal (especially if you are planning to keep the tuber over the next winter). Plant the tuber about an inch and a half below the surface of the ground, and about an inch and a half from the south side of the stake. When planting, tip the tuber 45 degrees (the same way it was growing the previous fall).

**Growing.** When young plants have 4-5 sets of leaves, the center should be pinched out to promote branching and flower development. Flower buds will appear in groups of three. When the lateral buds are large enough to differentiate, pick them off, along with the

*(Continued on page 5)*



## April Meeting Report

(continued from page 4)

immediate sets of lateral branches. If going for show flowers, pick off more leaves and branches than for display in the garden.

Train plants early. Tie the plant to the stake as soon as possible — when it is 8-10 inches tall. Lateral branches should also be tied to the stake as early as possible. Balance the plant around the stake, using binder twine (inexpensive, compostable) to tie the plant.

From the time dahlias start setting buds, they need about an inch of water per week.

It's possible to time blooms. It takes 20 - 22 days from a pea-size bud to full bloom. If we can see color on the buds, it's about a week until the bloom is open.

Soil should be covered with some sort of mulch by mid-July to prevent the upper layer of soil from drying and to keep the soil cool. Dahlias like cool moist conditions during bloom time.

**Showing.** A show bloom has at least two sets of side branches pinched off. The more foliage you have, the less you can see the flowers, so keep it trimmed back.

The first four blooms are the biggest. The following ones are smaller.

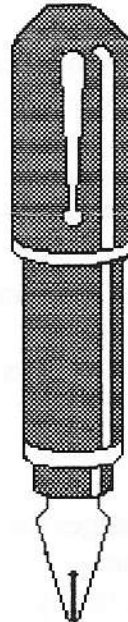
Many growers use umbrellas to protect their show dahlias from sun and rain. A big bloom can hold up to a cup of water, and the weight of all that water can snap a bloom right off.

**Harvesting tubers.** Leave the plant in the garden for a week after the first killing frost. Then cut the plant off, dig up the tubers, wash and store.

Dahlias come in a wide variety of sizes and

colors. There are excellent examples of new varieties at the trial garden at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. And the Dahlia Society holds its annual show at the State Fair, on the last two days of the fair.

Larry concluded his presentation with a barrage of slides showing the variety to be found in these flowers. Beautiful indeed. Enough to get even the Slothful enthused!



## Meeting Notes

### April Membership Meeting

**Plant Auction:** If anyone has any special requests for plants to be sold at the annual sale and auction, they should let Dave know right away.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tours** Members at the meeting received packets of tickets for the self-guided version of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tour in July. Self-guided tour tickets are \$7.00.

Proceeds will be used to sponsor scholarships in horticulture.

**Fragrance Garden:** Rock garden and rose areas in the garden need some regeneration. We have a volunteer to take a look at the rose situation. If interested in advising the committee on the rock garden, please get in touch with Chuck Carlson or Eldon Hugelen.

**Coming Events:** On the same day as our

(continued on page 9)

# Russ Backes on Shade Gardening

by Terry Robertson

Russ Backes, our shade flower Mentor Gardener, shared with me his method of overwintering Impatiens, Busy Lizzies and Patient Lucys. Okay, so they are all the same plant. Much of what Russ practices is very similar to what Lee Gilligan presented at a meeting a couple of months ago. But there were a few differences worth writing about.

In the fall, before the killing frosts have taken their toll, Russ brings in his Impatiens. Instead of bringing in cuttings, Russ brings in potted plants. After spraying for bugs and pruning out the dead vegetation, Russ enjoys his Impatiens as indoor plants with their abundance of blossoms.

In January, Russ begins taking cuttings to increase his stock for spring planting. After pinching off the tips of growth, Russ dips them in Orthene and roots them much as Lee Gilligan showed us at the meeting. By planting time, Russ has as many as four or five hundred plants ready to fill his garden with a rainbow of color. And, he still has his parent plants which have been overwintered nicely.

As his parent plants age, Russ changes the complexion of his potted plants with new varieties "borrowed" from friends and family. He likes to plant one or more varieties in a ten or twelve inch clay pot. Russ prefers to grow from cuttings. Growing from seed takes a lot of time and patience. And you don't always know what you will end up with.

If you are looking for some mounds of color for a shady spot in your garden, give Russ a call. He may be able to show you something you will like.

If you have any fancy Impatiens you would like to share, like cherry blossoms or apple blossoms or doubles, cut a few and pass them on to Russ. I'm sure he can find a spot in his new landscape for a new variety or two.

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## Seeds from the Past

by Terry Robertson

In the newspaper a couple of weeks ago, there was an article on preserving historical varieties of vegetable and flower seeds. The article went on to describe the efforts of the staff at the Oliver H. Kelley Historical Farm in Elk River, Minnesota. They have been hard at work these last several years researching and propagating large quantities of a few very special fruits and vegetables. The Minnesota Historical Society has been putting together a package for the backyard farmer to grow his own supply of these historical plants. I ordered a kit and received it in the mail in two weeks as promised. Some of the varieties are long season plants that I casually planted on April 15 while the rest of you were frantically scratching out your tax forms. If the list below excites you, give them a call. It's not too late to order for some of the short season varieties. They may be able to tell you where you can pick up a kit, if you can't wait two weeks. Inside each packet of seeds is a small leaflet that describes how and

*(continued on page 7)*

## Historic Seeds

*(Continued from page 6)*

when to plant the seeds. And on the other side of the leaflet are directions for saving seed for next year.

### MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Oliver H. Kelley Farm  
Elk River MN  
(612) 441-6896

### SOWING IN TIME HISTORICAL SEED KIT

Cost: \$19.95 + tax, \$1.50 Postage

Delivery: 2 weeks

Includes: 14 varieties of seeds, 36 page booklet

### LETTUCE

Early Curled Simpson - Fine for forcing and early sowing; a mass of loose, tender beautifully crimped leaves; heads large. 43 to 50 days.

### BEAN

Maine Yellow Eye - Highly prized by New Englanders for its rich cooking qualities; fast becoming popular. 92 days.

### CUCUMBER

Early Russian Black Spine - Fruit 4 inches long, 2 inches in diameter generally in pairs; flesh tender, crisp, and well-flavored. Hardy, extremely early great productiveness. 52 to 58 days.

### PUMPKIN

Connecticut Field - Large, yellow field variety averaging 14 inches long and 12 inches in diameter; prolific; fair esculent; one of best for agricultural purposes. 115 days.

### RADISH

Early Scarlet Turnip White Tip - Bulb spherical; skin deep scarlet; flesh rose-colored, crisp, mild, and pleasant. Fit for use about 20 days after sowing.

### BEET

Early Blood - Round, half-flattened root; flesh of fine red sometimes circled with paler red, sweet and tender. Early to table; when sown late, keeps well. 48 to 60 days.

### CORN

Tuscarora - Plant 5 to 6 feet high; 8-rowed ears of remarkable size; largest of all kernels for table; white, rounded, flattened. 70 days.

### PEPPER

Bullnose or Large Bell - Stocky plant, two feet high; pods 4 inches deep and 3 inches in diameter; early, sweet, less acrid; brilliant, glossy, coral-red when mature. 55 to 80 days.

### CABBAGE

Early Jersey Wakefield - Medium-size head, generally somewhat conical but sometimes nearly round; compact, leaves glaucous green; stalk small. A fine early variety. 95 days.

### SQUASH

Green Hubbard - Irregular oval fruit about 9 inches long, 8 to 10 inches in diameter; 8 to 9 pounds; hard, dense shell usually a deep olive-green; rich salmon-yellow, fine-grained, sweet, dry flesh. 100 to 110 days.

*(continued on page 9)*

# Fragrance Garden Update

by Chuck Carlson, Committee Chair

Spring has brought much progress at the Community Fragrance Garden. We did tree trimming and general clean up on April 25th. May 23rd at 8:00 a.m. has been set aside for planting. We hope to see as many MGCM members there as possible!

The summer maintenance schedule is listed below, but we still need a few volunteers. Weekly maintenance consists of weeding, watering, removal of dead plant material, dead-heading spent blooms, hoeing, trimming grass along the fence and any other general maintenance. The Minneapolis Society for the Blind will supply the water and do the mowing. Those doing maintenance must bring their own tools and watering attachments. A hose will be at the site.

The Winabar Garden Club of Edina will be touring the garden on August 20th and Chet Groger has volunteered to give a brief history of the garden. Let's make it a pleasing place for Chet to show them!

<u>Week</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>
5/23-29	Duane Reynolds	537-6512
5/30-6/5	Bob Redman	822-4109
	Norm ter Steeg	822-0371
6/6-12	Glenn Bartsch	927-5966
	Kent Petterson	332-1821
6/13-19	Larry Bagge	445-2438
	Kevin Gormley	724-9203
6/20-26	Mary Maynard	926-7506
	Jim Nelson	729-0409
6/27-7/3	Keith Monjak	724-8774
	Lloyd Wittstock	623-7735
7/4-10	John Moon	861-5745
	John Groos	823-8620

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## Coming Attractions

May 9 9:30 a.m.  
**MGCM Arbor Day Planting**  
 Lake Harriet Rose Garden area

May 11 7:00 p.m.  
**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Meeting**  
 Christ Presbyterian Church

May 12 1:00 p.m.  
**Stevens House Garden Clean-up**

May 12 5:40p.m.  
**MGCM Plant Auction**  
 Lynhurst Community Center

May 23 8:00 a.m.  
**Fragrance Garden Planting**

June 2 7:30 p.m.  
**MGCM Board Meeting**

June 6 10:00 a.m.  
**Garden Planting at Stevens House**

June 9 6:00 p.m.  
**MGCM Dinner Meeting and Tram Tour**  
 Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

June 12-15  
**Gardeners of America National Covention**  
 Fort Wayne, Indiana

July 7 7:30 p.m.  
**MGCM Board Meeting**

July 11 & 12  
**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Garden Tours**



## Fragrance Garden

(continued from page 8)

7/11-17	Dick Arnevik	561-3944
	Robert Kean	827-7216
7/18-24	Joe Stenger	822-5305
	Duane Johnson	824-0295
7/25-31	Don Powell	938-7357
8/1-7	Phil Peterson	869-3730
	Len Brenny	
8/8-14	Eldon Hugelin	431-3114
8/15-21	Charles Benson	944-1083
	Chuck Carlson	571-0463
8/22-28	Carleton Nelson	831-8764
8/29-9/4	Chet Groger	922-6411
	Mel Anderson	727-3015
9/5-11	Keith Monjak	724-8774
9/12-18	Lee Gilligan	536-9858
	Henry Orfield	920-7018
9/19-25	Dan Weatherman	588-2048
9/26-10/2	OPEN	
10/3-9	OPEN	
10/10-16	OPEN	

FALL CLEAN-UP OCTOBER 24.

## Meeting Report

(continued from page 5)

plant auction (May 12), there will be a survey of the Steven's House gardens to determine whether anything needs to be replaced or augmented. Actual planting will be done in June.

The June MGCM meeting will be at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Activities will include a meal (soup, sandwich, dessert) and the tram tour. Cost is \$9.50, and guests and family members are welcome.

We hope to hold the August garden tour in conjunction with our Flower and Vegetable

show. We are working on a new location for the Flower and Vegetable show, since Riverplace (where we had it last year) is in the process of becoming a rather different sort of establishment, where a Flower and Vegetable Show might not exactly fit in.

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## Historic Seeds

(continued from page 7)

### SQUASH

Early Bush Summer Crookneck - Bushy plant 2 1/2 feet high; fruit very bright yellow; average specimens 6 to 8 inches long when ready for eating; palatable, nutritious food. 42 to 60 days

### TOMATO

Yellow Plum - Hardy variety of red plum, remarkable for its symmetry; solid fruit 1 1/2 inches high, 1 inch in diameter, well-flavored, mild, yields abundant. Preserve or use for salad. 75 days.

### ONION

Red Wethersfield - Standard red; handsome American variety; smooth, clean-skinned bulb; almost spherical or slightly flattened at ends; one of best keepers. 100 to 115 days.

### MELON

Nutmeg - Medium, branching plant; oval, almost pear-shaped fruit; pale green, thickly netted skin; thin rind; light green, rich, sweet, melting, perfumed flesh. 89 days.

# You Would Have Liked...

## Vic Lowrie

by Bill Hull, MGCM Historian



50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Feature

G. Victor Lowrie was an outstanding member of our Club. In many ways Vic epitomized the type of successful business and professional man who steered MGCM and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society to greater heights.

He was the second editor of The Garden Spray, after Jack Cohen, and eventually turned the job over to me. Head of a large Chicago advertising agency, Vic was brought to Minneapolis by Jack Cohen to take leadership of the Postgraduate Medical journal. Thus he became my boss. He initiated some superb developments and was a publishing leader.

In our Club, he was promoted to President in 1952, later received our Gold Medal and

became President of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society. He was instrumental in raising funds for the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

As my supervisor, he encouraged and assisted my growth in the company and gave strong support to my MGCA activities, which eventually led to my becoming national President. He could have objected to such activities, but instead encouraged them.

Vic was a pleasant, very particular man, who loved his roses and grew them very well at three different homes in the Minneapolis area. We lost him a few years ago at the age of ninety. Another good man. I liked him and know you would have, too.

Return to:

The Garden Spray of MGCM, Inc.

Andrew J. Marlow, Editor

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