

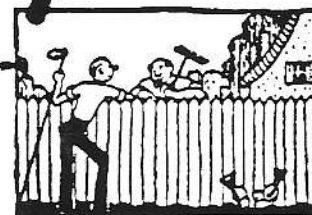


# The Garden Spray

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

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

May 1995, Volume 53, Number 5



## Open Gardens May 13 & 20

Spring is here and the Garden Tour Committee has three exciting gardens to visit in May!

**Saturday, May 13 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

Garden of Barbara Steincamp

4912 Payton Court, Edina

Barbara has a beautiful display of spring bulbs. Even though she's not an MGCM member she kindly agreed, at the request of Harold and Phyllis Gulde, to let us visit her garden! Exit off Highway 100 at West 70th Street. Go east on 70th to the frontage road and then north (one way). She is on the north corner at Payton Court.

**Saturday, May 20 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Garden of Kent Petterson

908 East River Terrace, Minneapolis

Kent specializes in spring bulbs, vegetable gardening and composting. Coming from west of the Mississippi River, take I-94 to the Riverside-25th Avenue exit. Go south on Riverside to Franklin, turn east and cross the river. Coming from the east side of the river, take I-94 to Highway 280. Take the Franklin Avenue exit and go west. East River Terrace is the second street east of East River Road. Turn south. Kent's is the third house on the right.

**Saturday, May 20 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Garden of Jerry and Lee Shannon

1847 Eleanor Avenue, St. Paul

Shannons will be featuring rock gardens! Plants that will be blooming include wildflowers, primula, late spring bulbs, crabapples and even a magnolia! Shannon's house is on Eleanor Avenue six houses west of Fairview Avenue. Eleanor is one block north of Highland Parkway. The best exit from I-94 is Snelling. Go south to Eleanor and then west. Or, Jerry suggested, visit Kent's first and ask him for directions.

## Plant Sale and Auction May 9

**Place:** Lynhurst Community Center  
50th Street and Humboldt Avenue South  
Minneapolis

(Same place as last year)

**When:** Tuesday, May 9, 1995

**Time:** 4:30 Country Store opens

5:30 Dinner

6:00 Auction

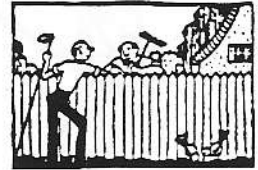
Check the Country Store this year. You will find many affordable perennials. The Auction Committee has picked up plants from Shady Oak Nursery, Borbeletas, Ambergate Gardens, Dooley Gardens and Savory's. Look for the baby hostas and new Dooley's chrysanthemums.

The auction materials looks great, too. In addition to the dependable "Tango" and Boogy" geraniums there will be some new ones. "Ambassador" begonias, "Super Elfin" impatiens and others will be on the block. Looking for lisianthus? You'll find them here, besides the new and interesting plants from the Arboretum.

Take advantage of this opportunity to buy many outstanding plants for your garden. Invite your friends and neighbors.

The permanent reservation list is not in effect for this event. Everyone needs to mail back a reservation card to confirm their attendance. Please make sure to include the names of your guests.

This is the one fund raising event that supports other MGCM activities throughout the year. Come and join us!



# Summer Attractions

**May 2** - 7:30 p.m.  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Howard Berg's House

**May 6** - 9:00 a.m.  
Arbor Day Planting and  
Stevens House Garden Cleanup  
Minnehaha Park

**May 8** - 7:30 p.m.  
MN Dahlia Society  
Annual Tuber Sale  
Edina Morningside Church  
4201 Morningside Road  
Edina

**May 9** - 6:00 p.m.  
MGCM Plant Sale and Auction  
Lynnhurst Community Center  
1345 W. Minnehaha Pkwy.

**May 13** - 10:00 a.m.  
Open Garden  
Garden of Barbara Steincamp

**May 20** - 9:00 a.m.  
Garden Planting  
MGCM Fragrance Garden  
19th and Aldrich  
Minneapolis

**May 20** - 11:00 a.m.  
Open Gardens  
Petterson and Shannon Gardens

**June 6** - 7:30 p.m.  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Chuck Carlson's House

**June 13** - 6:30 p.m.  
MGCM Dinner Meeting  
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church  
49th and Chowen Ave. So.

**June 15**  
Deadline for Entries  
1995 MGCM Foto Contest

**July 8 & 9**  
Flower, Food and Foto Show  
Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

**July 5** - 7:30 p.m.  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Bill Jepson's House

*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

How many members gardens did you visit last year? Did you learn something you can apply to your own garden? Did you share ideas? Did you give away or trade any plants? How many members gardens are you planning to visit this year?

Visiting members gardens is always high on my "to do" list, but often ends up low on my "have done" list. This year will be different for several reasons! I'm marking time on my calendar to see some of the member's gardens I have missed in the past. And the Garden Tour Committee is organizing informal visits to member's gardens. Open gardens for May are listed on page one. These special opportunities are in addition to the regular garden tours.

Our members have a lot to share with one another. The "question cards" that Bill Jepson has organized for monthly meetings provide a good example. I believe that the mentor gardeners and Master Gardeners listed in the Club directory are available to help any time. There are many good books, journals and references available, but my vote goes to asking someone who has local experience and can offer some practical advice.

Do you ever feel as if gardening is taking over your life? I have! And I haven't learned from past experience, either. Fifteen years ago Mavis and I bought part of a farm on the St. Croix south of Afton. I was going to be Minnesota's answer to Ernest and Julio Gallo, planting 2000 grape vines. I still have a few, but just enough for making jelly.

My focus turned to reforestation, planting over 10,000 trees in eight years

(pine, spruce, walnut, oak, chestnut, etc.), about 12 acres in all.

With the tress on their own, I turned to flowers and vegetables. In the last three years, we've developed about 4,000 square feet of borders and gardens. We grow flowering shrubs, perennials and lots of annuals. This year we'll add another 1,500 square feet of new borders.

Along the way I learned to ask other how they have planted and cared for grapes, apples, trees, vegetables, flowers and everything else. People have shared their experiences and recommendations generously. One thing I had to learn on my own was how much time and energy to required to take care of things. That's one lesson learned only by doing.

If you would like to visit our Saint Croix Botanical Garden later this summer, let me know and I'll give you a map of how to get there. In the meantime, keep sharing ideas and information with your gardening friends—and happy gardening!

\*\*\*\*\*

## Fragrance Garden Planting

Come one—come all

Anyone is welcome

Saturday May 20

Starting at 9 AM

19th & Aldrich Ave. So.

Bring a hand trowel and plant. All you need to know is green side up

We will be finished by noon

if you show up

\*\*\*\*\*



# Monthly Program Report

by Merle Thomas Pulley

The toxic effect of plants was the topic of discussion at the April MGCM Dinner Meeting. The speaker, Carl Hornfeldt, is a pharmacist and toxicologist with fifteen years of experience at the



Carl Hornfeldt  
Photo by  
Jim Perrin

Hennepin Regional Poison Center. His presentation included slides of some common poisonous plants in this area.

Last year over 26,000 human exposure calls were handled by the Center. Plants accounted for over 8% of the calls. In contrast, nearly half the

calls involved over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs or household chemicals.

Most of us know the effects of poison oak, stinging nettles and sumac. After that, the discussion of toxic plants is complicated because some plants are all toxic and others have only parts that are harmful. Plants can also be harmful in several different ways, including ingestion, touching, inhaling smoke or fumes, or second-hand exposure (such as spreading poison ivy from gloves, boots or even pets that have come in contact with the plant). Hornfeldt cautioned against the use of "barrier creams", saying the effectiveness of these products is doubtful.

Harmful ingestion includes eating the toxic organism (such as poisonous

mushrooms) or drinking "teas" made from parts of such as leaves, flowers, fruits, stems, berries, seeds, roots or bulbs of certain harmful plants. For example, bulbs from iris, amaryllis and daffodil are toxic if eaten. However, the leaves of these plants seem to be non-toxic. Rhubarb leaves contain oxalic acid and should not be eaten, but it is okay to compost the leaves. Other harmful leaves to avoid are tomato, potato (all green parts, in fact), Lily of the Valley and nightshade.

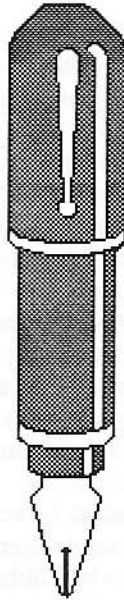
Nightshade is a common weed that can cause problems to children who are attracted to the blossoms and then eat the berries. Nightshade can be identified by its small purple blossoms that are on the plant at the same time as the "ripe" red berries.

Also avoid Jack in the Pulpit, Virginia Creeper (both leaves and berries), Buckthorn berries and Japanese Yew berries.

Avoid all parts of peach, plum, apricot and apple trees except, of course, the fruit. Foxglove, a European native characterized by drooping tubular white or purple flowers, has harmful leaves (containing digitalis which is used as medicine in proper doses). Stay away, too, from all parts of rhododendrons and deciduous azaleas. The roots of Water Hemlock, sometimes mistaken as "wild turnips", should not be eaten, as the reaction can be severe.

Hornfeldt said it is a good idea to identify all your plants with the correct botanical name. That way the Poison Center can give you better information on how to deal with a problem. It is often difficult to identify a plant over the phone.

For more information or a printed *Plant Guide*, call the Hennepin Regional Poison Center at 347-3141.



# Board Meeting Notes

Minutes (edited)  
April 7, 1995

All officers and directors were present.

The meeting was called to order by Bob Stepan at 7:32.

**Secretary's report:** Minutes from the March meeting were approved. Motion by Clyde, seconded by Kay.

**Treasurer's report:**

Treasurer's report approved. Motion by Mary, seconded by Chuck. The remaining material from the Floyd Ashley bequest will be available for sale at the May auction.

**Vice President's report:** Programs for the next few months are as follows:

May : Auction

June : Eldon Hugelen on garden/  
landscape design.

July and August: Tours

**Committees:**

**Arbor Day.** Planting scheduled for May 6th. May do Stevens House garden on same day.

**Community Gardens.** Spring cleanup on last weekend of April. Planting day is May 20. More volunteers still needed for maintenance.

**Food, Flower and Foto Show.** Brochures are out. A lot of new perennials and annuals for both July and September show.

**Plant Auction.** Eldon has gotten some really good perennials for the auction. Profit goal for auction is \$2400.

**Tours.** Planning continues. Still haven't

selected picnic site for August meeting.

**Education.** We will continue to pass question cards at members meetings.

Much discussion on best way to enlist aid and experience of mentor gardeners.

**Scholarship.** Announcement of this year's scholarship program was in March *Spray*.

**New Business:**

**National Convention.** Bill Hull and Russ Smith will be representing MGCM at the National Convention in Dallas.

**Gardeners of America.** Chuck Carlson wrote a letter to our national organization asking for information on services, etc. available to local clubs. He received a lot of information from the national organization, and will be working on ways to get this information out to the membership.

We have submitted the *Spray* in the newsletter competition at the national level.

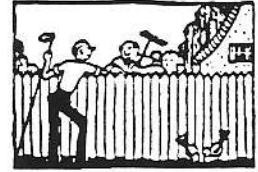
**Arboretum.** Many MGCM members received a "Call for Action" brochure from the Arboretum. Bill J. has a call in to Peter Olin about what MGCM could do in response to this brochure. Peter will be invited to speak on this issue at the April meeting.

**MSHS.** Bob V. received a list of Society-certified judges. MSHS plant show is at the State Fair in August. Duane Reynolds is chair.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned upon motion by Chuck, second by Howard.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Maynard, Secretary





# Chuck's Chestnuts

by Chuck Carlson

## The Chestnut

Why do seeds fail to germinate? It may be because the seeds have a delay mechanism. Delays are built into the process so the seeds don't germinate in the plant's capsule or the fruit, and never get dispersed.

In order to induce germination with success you must know something about these delays, in order to combat them.

Some of the important conditions and facts are : (1) The physical mechanism is nearly always an impervious seed coat. (2) Members of the same family or the same genus may have different mechanisms for delaying germination. (3) Most species have at least two delay mechanisms, with one being a chemical time clock. (4) Many plants use a delay mechanism that is destroyed by drying (dry storage). (5) Supplying moist conditions will destroy some inhibitors. (6) Some delay mechanisms are destroyed by light. (7) Certain temperatures and temperature cycles (stratification) can destroy the mechanism. (8) Some seeds germinate at low temperatures (35-40 degrees).

With these facts and some knowledge of the plant's natural climatic conditions, you can begin to figure out how to activate germination.

Here are some of the methods:

**Drying:** The inhibitors of most garden annuals and vegetables are destroyed by drying the seeds at 70 degrees. The time period ranges from days to 6 months; 3 months is a typical time. Generally you don't have to do anything. Seeds you buy have already

had this drying time.

**Physical Mechanisms:** One solution is to scarify. This is no more than nicking or filing through the seed cover. For larger seeds use sandpaper. All that is needed is a hole in the cover. A few examples of seeds that need scarification are: Canna, Mallow, and Morning Glory.

**Photo effects:** Some seeds require light to germinate and others are inhibited from germination by light. For example, snapdragon, arabis, impatiens, and Edelweiss need light for germination; cyclamen, delphinium, phlox and sweet pea need darkness.

**Chemical Effects:** There are a number of seeds that are stimulated into germination by Gibberellic Acid-3. This is made naturally by a fungus acting on leaf mold. It can also be purchased but to date I haven't found a local source.

**Cool Temperatures:** Some seeds will not germinate unless they are held at 45 to 55 degrees. Examples are: California Poppy, Candytuff, Edelweiss, Thyme, and Rosemary.

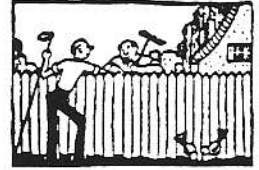
**Multiple Treatments:** Some seeds require multiple treatments to break the seed's dormancy. But usually only one treatment is required.

If you want to know more read *Seed Germination Theory and Practice* by Norman C Deno. Another book is *Parks Success with Seeds* by Ann Reilly. Both books were used as the basis for this article.

## The Tip

Learn and use scarification, dry storage, light, darkness, warmth, cold, Gibberilic Acid-3, or a combination of these. Your diligence will result in increased germination of those viable little seeds. Try it. You may like it and become addicted to starting your own plants from seed.

Remember, to germinate a seed is an act of conservation.



# Foto Contest Rules

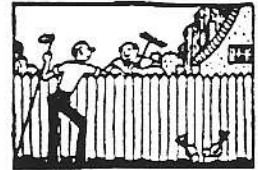
## MGCM's Third Annual Foto Contest

This competition is to encourage good horticulture photography. The photos will be exhibited on July 8 & 9, 1995 at the Flower, Food and Foto Show at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

### RULES

1. Anyone is eligible to enter.
  2. Deadline for entries is June 15, 1995
  3. Up to twenty (20) entries in each section may be submitted with no more than five (5) in any class. A series (see note 7) will be considered as one (1) entry. It is suggested but not required that the slide be submitted in a 20 pocket (8-1/2 "x 11") plastic filling sheet.
  4. All entries must be submitted with a typed or hand printed list of the entries submitted, their section, class and a description of the subject such as plants identified by kind and variety. It should also include your name and address.
  5. One must also comply with the following requirements:
    - a. Slides must be 2" x 2" mounts and must work in a 140 Kodak Slide Carousel.
    - b. Place a round dot on the lower left corner of the slide when looking through the slide and seeing the correct subject orientation. The side toward the screen should be on the non-dotted side.
    - c. Each slide or print must have the class and your name. Also, each slide or print shall be titled. Title with the kind of plants and variety whenever possible. Test your writing media so it does not bleed through the photo.
  - d. Photos previously winning MGCM awards can not be entered.
  - e. We suggest all prints be 5 x 7. They may be smaller but not larger. They shall be unmounted.
  - f. Duplicate slides may be submitted to avoid losing originals.
  - g. Entries shall be mailed or delivered to Lloyd Wittstock at 913 19th Ave. SE Mpls. MN 55414. They must be postmarked or delivered by June 15th, 1995. At the finish of the contest, photos to be may be picked up at one of the monthly meetings or by other arrangements.
  - h. Photos submitted may be from any year but must be taken by the submitter.
  - i. Photos with no horticultural content will be disqualified.
6. Ribbons will be awarded for 1st, 2nd & 3rd places in each class. Special ribbons awarded for the best print, best slide and for best of show. A traveling trophy will be awarded for the MGCM member which has the best overall showing. This will be based on total points amassed. Points are awarded as follows:
- 4 points for any first
  - 2 points for any second
  - 1 point for any third
  - 4 points for best of show
  - 2 points for best of class
7. A series of photos is defined as 2 to 6 exposures showing the development of a subject. This will count as one entry.
8. Slides and prints will be judged separately.

*(continued on page 8)*



## Contest Rules

(continued from page 7)

### Classifications

#### Section A (Slides)

- Class 1. Annuals
- Class 2. Perennials
- Class 3. Roses
- Class 4. Bulbous Flowers
- Class 5. Container Grown Plants
- Class 6. Trees, Shrubs, & Woody Vines
- Class 7. Vegetables
- Class 8. Club Activities
- Class 9. Landscapes
- Class 10. Groups of Cultivated Plants  
(This includes gardens)
- Class 11. Wildflowers
- Class 12. Misc., Educational or a series

#### Section B (Prints)

- Class 1. Annuals
- Class 2. Perennials
- Class 3. Roses
- Class 4. Bulbous Flowers
- Class 5. Container Grown Plants
- Class 6. Trees, Shrubs, & Woody Vines
- Class 7. Vegetables
- Class 8. Club Activities
- Class 9. Landscapes
- Class 10. Groups of Cultivated Plants.  
(This includes gardens)
- Class 11. Wildflowers
- Class 12. Misc., Educational or a series.

Judges may subdivide any class depending on the number of entries.

## Jottings

The May issue of the *Minnesota Horticulturist* has an excellent article on roses by Bob and Lorraine Churilla. Another article features a beautiful picture of Dave and Delores Johnson's garden arbor. And Fred Glasoe has his usual informative column. Kudos to all!



The *Horticulturist* also lists many plant sales by garden clubs and plant societies. Many of them come after the MGCM Plants Sale and Auction on May 9. Check out the list in the MSHS events calendar, but not before you have purchased most of your plants from MGCM.



Bill Hull and Russ Smith will be representing MGCM at the National Convention of TGOA/MGCA in Dallas at the end of May. Bill is looking for someone who can water his plants while he is gone. If you can volunteer, give Bill a call at 926-1327.



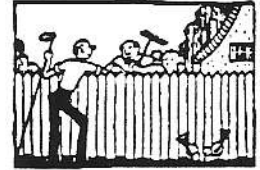
Chet Groger sent your editor a copy of the photo directory from the 1967 National Convention hosted by MGCM. That convention was chaired by Dwight Stone, with able assistance from members who are still part of the Club. Some of their pictures will be published in a later issue of the *Spray* and you'll have a chance to see how many of them you recognize.

### May 6 – MGCM Arbor Day

MGCM's Arbor Day celebration takes place May 6 at 9:00 a.m. Members will meet at the old railroad station (the orange one) in Minnehaha Park. We'll be planting 13 Pagoda Dogwood and 30 Snowberry.

Please plan to join with the Committee and make this an easy task; bring a spade!





## A Note From Phil Smith

*(Ed.'s note: This is an edited version of a letter from MGCM member Phil Smith which he asked me to share with you. I will bring the complete letter to the June meeting for anyone who wants to get the whole story.)*

I want to tell you about my retirement and gardening activities in Montana. Winters here are not nearly as cold as in Minnesota, but we have a lot more snow and a very short growing season—at least where we live.

We live in a very beautiful area, in the heart of the Big Sky Ski and Summer Resort. It's about 20 miles from the northwest corner of Yellowstone Park and about half way between West Yellowstone and Bozeman, MT. We have 33 acres located across from the golf course, with about half a mile of frontage on both sides of the West Fork of the Gallatin River.

When we moved out here in the fall of 1993, I brought two pick-up loads of potted perennials from our garden in Golden Valley; about 200 plants. Amazingly, nearly all the plants survived despite being confined to pots for the first winter up until about July 1, 1994. I had to plant the hostas in a sunny area and they have burned from the intense summer sun at this elevation (6,600 ft.), but have so far survived.

Last summer I built a long stone retaining wall adjacent to our house for our first garden. In it I planted all the perennials we brought from Minnesota, some we bought locally and more we grew from seed under lights.

We learned a lot about gardening in this climate. Many perennials do quite well here, but tender annuals such as impatiens do not make it. We have plenty of hot sun, quite cold nights and a short growing season. We can have frost any month. It nearly always frosts up until the

end of June and again by the end of August. When it doesn't frost, nights are cool—35° to 38° even in July and August. The native wildflowers (such as delphinium, lupin, geranium, and campanula) are really beautiful and seem to thrive in this climate.

I think the answer for gardening is selecting appropriate varieties and then finding the right combination of fertilizer and water. Our major problem last year was over fertilization. We had a nice garden, but I fed the garden as I would in Minnesota and some of the plants burned from too much nitrogen.

Plant growth is slow (I don't think the plant's growing mechanism wakes up until about noon after the chilly nights) but strong. Not much staking is required. Plants that would bloom in Minnesota by the end of June don't bloom here until mid August. Obviously, late varieties which bloom in August in Minnesota will never make it here.

Despite killing frosts in late August, we had several plants bloom through late September. Alyssum, dianthus and lupins bloomed even after temperatures had dipped to 25°. I think the plants have some type of built-in antifreeze at this elevation. I have seen wild delphiniums blooming at 9,000 feet in 6 inches of snow when the temperature the night before had to be 20°. But when you hike up there the next noon with the temperature 75°, the plants seem happy with no apparent frost burn. I don't know for sure what happens, but I hope to learn what I can.

I am sure that after I mail this I will remember something else I wanted to mention. I have a good memory, it is just short! Anyway, it would be good to have any of you visit anytime you may be in this area. Have a good gardening year!

# Inside:

Page 2/	Summer Events
Page 3/	President's Column
Page 4/	April Program Report
Page 5/	Chuck's Chestnut
Page 6/	April Board Minutes
Page 7/	Foto Contest Rules
Page 8/	Jottings
Page 9/	A Note from Phil Smith

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# The Garden Spray

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