

Celebrating Our 55th Year

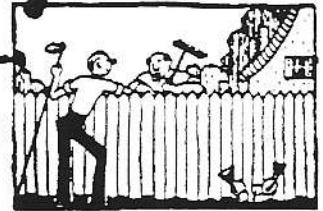


# The Garden Spray

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

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

May 1997, Volume 55, Number 5



Spring is finally here—we've all been waiting for it. The skies are sunny and blue, the air is fresh, buds are exploding, and the birds are making their presence known.

## MGCM Plant Auction!

What better way to salute the season than to attend the Plant Auction Tuesday, May 6? The auction provides a fun, exciting atmosphere for you and your invited guests to purchase plants and raise funds for the club.

Enjoy a meal with your gardening friends and neighbors, size up the plant material and relish the camaraderie of the night.

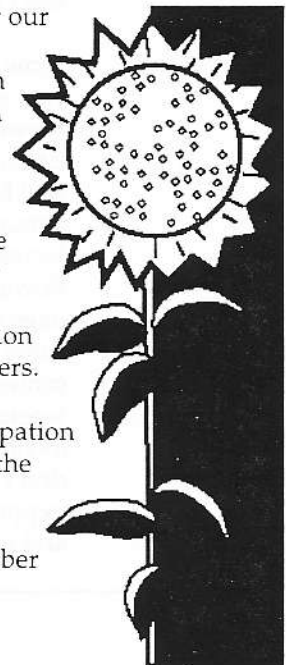
Doors open at 4:30 p.m. for this year's MGCM Plant Auction in a new location. The event will be held at the Westwood Lutheran Church (9001 Cedar Lake Road). The site is easily accessed from Highway 169 going east on Cedar Lake Road in St. Louis Park. Activities start immediately with a Silent Auction and the Country Store. The Silent Auction is a new part of the auction for our members. Each plant and garden article will be displayed with a bidding card, including a suggested minimum amount as a starting point for bids. Members can post their bids on specified plants during a given time period. The highest written amount on each item at the end of the bidding time will purchase the plant.

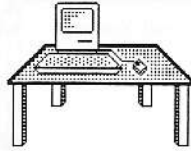
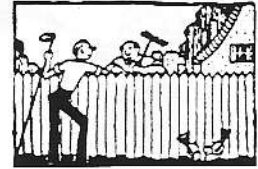
The Country Store consists of purchased plant materials and donated perennials from MGCM members on display for over-the-counter purchase. After dinner, the Plant Auction opens. In order to make a bid, individuals must show their bidding number and be acknowledged by the auctioneer. In addition, raffle tickets will be available for purchase on select items during the night. Be sure to pick up an auction number since door prizes will be awarded via random drawings of auction numbers.

The Plant Auction Committee wants to whet MGCM members' appetites in anticipation of the auction; therefore, a few of the new plant selections offered for sale during the auction are listed below:

- 'Visions' Astilbe
- Iberis (Candytuff) – variety which blooms in spring and reblooms in September
- 'Nora Leigh' Phlox – variety with a variegated leaf
- 'Magic Carpet' Spiraea – a shrub with more intense red blooms
- 'Snow Angel' Heuchera (Coral Bell) – variety with a white, variegated leaf

(continued on page 7)





### The Editor's Desk

Andy Marlow

Minnesotans have been at their best over the last several weeks as they fought floods in their home towns—or turned out to help others fight the floods. The outpouring of voluntary help has been almost as amazing as the flood waters have been deep. It may be too early to pat ourselves on the backs yet, as a lot of cleanup work remains to be done in a less-than-crisis atmosphere. But I have faith we will continue to help our less fortunate neighbors in every way possible.

Volunteerism in a less heroic context is the hallmark of MGCM. The events and projects we undertake each year are done exclusively by volunteers. Arbor Day, the community gardens, the scholarship program and our tours all contribute to the greater good of our community. Our officers and directors are all volunteers, too. They keep the club running smoothly to help make possible the other opportunities I mentioned.

Last month Chuck Carlson provided some great information on peppers, this year's National Award vegetable for our Flower, Food and Foto Show. In the June issue, FFF Show cochair Mel Anderson will follow up with some information about showing peppers. This month, Mel focuses on salvia, the National Award flower for this year. His article begins on page 8. If you haven't already started some salvia and peppers, the garden center should be getting them in a few weeks. Maybe there will even be a few available at the Plant Sale on May 6. I don't think I have enough sun for the peppers, but I plan to put in some salvia and try for that fancy pink ribbon!

## Coming Attractions

**Tuesday, April 29—7:30 pm**  
Board of Directors' Meeting  
Howard Berg's House

**Tuesday, May 6—4:30 pm**  
Plant Auction  
Westwood Lutheran Church  
9001 Cedar Lake Road  
St. Louis Park

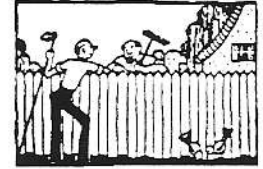
**Thursday, May 8—10:00 am to 7:00 pm**  
Edina Garden Council Plant Sale  
Arneson Acres Park  
State Highway 100 at 70th Street

**Monday, May 12—7:00 pm**  
MN Dahlia Society Tuber Sale  
Edina Morningside Church, 4201  
Morningside Road

**May 16-18**  
North American Rock Garden Society  
National Convention  
Sheraton Inn Airport  
Bloomington, MN

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Editor.....Andrew J. Marlow  
Staff.....Chuck Carlson,  
Richard Coldren, Sher Curry and  
Robert Olson



# Maury's Musings

by Maury Lindblom, President, MGCM

Spring is not supposed to be very far behind winter, according to Shakespeare,



Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

but this year we don't seem to be able to get rid of winter ! I don't recall a season with more frost damage in the Spring. Many of the tulips are a total loss and many, though alive, will not bloom. Daffodils seem to have done better in general. Even tough perennials like *Campanula*

*Glomerata* have sustained damage, though not death. We are probably out of the woods now, and perhaps we'll have a good summer growing season. If there is one lesson we can learn from observation of nature it is that there is a vital life-force that keeps fighting hardship and perseveres and brings energy and growth to the

earth each spring. There is that intense drive for growth and renewal that we gardeners depend upon. In life as well as in nature, youth, energy and growth are the forces that propel us toward better things.

So let's not be discouraged by the recent disturbances of climate. Our gardens will prosper, (although later than usual), fruit trees will bloom and bear fruit and by fall we may have forgotten about the hardships of Spring! Remember after the Mount St. Helens eruption how everyone predicted crop failures? That year the crops were actually better! The "disaster" of the volcanic dust actually was fertilizer for the fields. While we go about our spring tasks in our gardens, let us remember those folks in northwestern Minnesota and North Dakota who have had devastating floods. We would pray that they will find the courage and resolve to regain their lives.

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## Reservation Form for Plant Auction and Sale

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

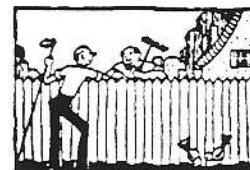
Dinner cost is \$7.00 per person. Make check payable to MGCM.

Total dinner reservations: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Kay Wolfe  
2740 Florida Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55426

Deadline: Reservation must be received by **Friday, May 2**





# Monthly Program Report

by Andy Marlow

There are some simple rules to use in developing a landscape design, according to April MGCM dinner speaker Andrea Fiterman. Her first rule is "don't be afraid to break the rules".

Andrea is a residential landscape designer and the owner of Andrea Fiterman Landscape Design. She has a degree in Landscape Design from the University of Minnesota, Waseca, and is a Hennepin County Master Gardener. Her talk was illustrated with slides showing some successful designs of her own and other designers. She said she tries to concentrate on good examples rather than criticize bad ones.

Ms. Fiterman urged gardeners to take a chance on something new, but to try to find ways for it to blend into its surroundings. For instance, she recommended submerging rocks in the soil and softening their edges with plants, rather than just dropping them on the lawn.

The entryway in the most important landscape area of the residential yard, she said. Creating an entryway by use of a courtyard is a solid concept. It creates a welcoming atmosphere with emphasis on the front door. It makes a pleasant transition from the public area of the street to the private area of the front door.

Andrea showed an example of a front courtyard formed by a low fence. She likes to use fences to enclose areas and form a background for plants. But she prefers low fencing to keep the vista open to view.

In fact, she said, while walls and fences may provide a good backdrop or support for plants, the wall/fence should not be the focal point. They are a natural anchor for the garden, but emphasize the plants by developing a theme, be it through color, shape or fragrance. One of her favorite themes uses the color blue, which she finds very soothing.

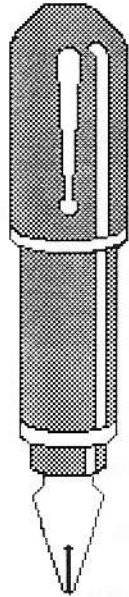
Straight lines do not play a major role in her designs. Curves, particularly on walkways, are more natural and inviting. The only danger is making them too curvy, so that people take short cuts rather than follow the path.

Fiterman believes people should not have to "do tricks" or go the elaborate lengths to get their landscape plants to survive. Use plants that are adapted to the soil, moisture and other conditions of the planting site.

She urged listeners to decide on the size and shape of the plant needed in a particular area—then pick the variety or cultivar that fills the bill.

One of her favorite plants is 'Primrose Beauty' potentilla. It is a soft silver gray. It does need to be cut back every two or three years to maintain its look, but fits nicely in a home landscape.

Not so the arborvitae. One of her pet peeves is an arborvitae planted on the corner of the house, which quickly outgrows its site. She called it "a trend whose time has come and gone."



## Board Meeting Minutes

Walt Muehlegger, Secretary

April 1, 1997

The meeting was called to order by President Lindblom at 7:35 p.m. Present were Howard Berg, Chuck Carlson, Bill Jepson, Maury Lindblom, Mary Maynard, Walt Muehlegger and Bob Stepan. Charles Benson and Kay Wolfe were absent.

**Secretary's Report:** The Minutes of the March Board meeting were approved on a motion by Mary, second by Howard.

**Treasurer's Report:** The report was approved as presented on a motion by Bob, second by Check Carlson.

**Vice President's Report:** possible program topics include preparing to show flowers and vegetables and fall lawn care.

### Committee Reports

**Arbor Day:** Planting set for May 10 at 9:00 a.m. at Lyndale Park.

**Flower, Food and Foto Show:** Set for August 9 and 10 at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. National Flower Award will be for the best salvia and the National Vegetable Award for the best pepper.

**Demonstration Garden:** (See Chuck's Chestnuts on page 6.)

### Old Business

Howard has purchased six dozen water glasses and donated them to the Church on behalf of MGCM.

### New Business

It was decided to appoint a chairman to find an editor of the *Garden Spray* to replace Andy Marlow who retires at the end of the year.

Howard Berg has seeds for the giant sunflower and giant pumpkin contests.

A motion to pay for names tags was approved, moved by Mary and seconded by Chuck.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. on a motion by Bill, second by Bob.

The next Board of Director's meeting is April 20 at 7:30 p.m. at Howard Berg's.

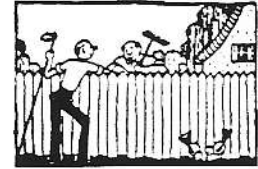
## Tour Opportunity

Saturday June 7 at 12 Noon

The River Glen Garden  
Near Little Sauk (West of St Cloud)

Have you ever been to a 75 acre private garden? Ron Weinholtz opens his garden every other year and this is the year. It is a garden in the forest, abounding with hardwoods and conifers of all kinds. It has a pool, a creek and other natural habitat. It also has an acid garden, perennial gardens, a wild rose garden, a Japanese garden and an Alpine garden. Ron is a collector of old buildings and artifacts. He lives in a Japanese house which he built himself.

This will be a drive yourself tour. If you don't drive we will try to match you up with someone who does. Ron collects a fee of \$3 per person to cover his insurance etc. . A detailed map on how to get there will be supplied. Call or see Chuck Carlson (571-0463) for questions or to show your interest.



# Chuck's Chestnuts

by Chuck Carlson

At our last dinner meeting there were quite a number of questions about the perennial trial garden, so I thought I would summarize what has previously been reported and update what has transpired since that time.

This garden is a joint venture between the University of Minnesota, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis. See the April *Spray* for the responsibilities of each group. MGCM's tasks are to help in the design and do the planting and maintenance of the garden.

The garden is located in Lyndale Park next to Lake Harriet. It runs parallel to the Lakewood Cemetery just in front of a line of deciduous and evergreen trees. It is east of the rock garden and west of Kings Highway.

The history of the area where the garden will be is interesting. It began in 1925 as a perennial display area, and perennials were there until the 1960's when the border was abandoned. It was replaced with a perennial garden adjacent to the rose garden. Theodore Wirth originally thought of this as an area for as testing and research. This trial garden will finally make his thoughts come to fruition.

The last report listed 24 perennial genera to be grown in the garden. This has now been pared to 14. The main reason is that the number of cultivars selected used up the 500 feet of garden. Each cultivar will be assigned a 3 square foot of space. Using a bit of math, this will allow about 165 different cultivars. The list of genera is below:

Species	Cultivars
Agastache	18
Artemisia	24
Asclepias	11
Astrantia	16
Baptisia	10
Echinacea	16
Geranium	16
Helleborus	14
Nepeta	22
Perovskia	8
Phlox	11
Sanguisorba	10
Sedum	22
Stachys	17
<b>total cultivars</b>	<b>215</b>

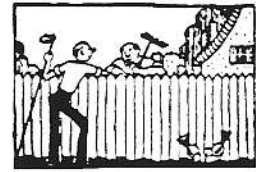
You can see that 215 is more than the 165 for which we have space. We are doing it this way as we expect not all cultivars will be available, plus there may be some which are identical but have two names.

The 3 x 500 foot trial area could look a little strange in a park setting, so plans also include some back ground plantings of grasses and other perennials. Currently under consideration are:

## Grasses

Helictorichon  
 Spodiopogon  
 Chasmanthium  
 Deschampsia  
 Miscanthus  
 Calmagrostis  
 Carex  
 Festuca

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## Plant Sale

(continued from page 1)

- 'Lemon Lily' daylily *Hemerocallis* – earliest blooming daylily, tall and very fragrant
- 'Giant Kale' *Crambe Cordifolia* (Baby's Breath) – variety that grows 7-8'
- *Pelargonium* (Scented Geraniums) – assorted varieties
- 'Sarah Bernhardt' *Paeonia* (peony) – old fashioned pink variety
- 'Koreana' *Buxus Microphylla* – boxwood
- 'Burgundy Giant' *Pennisetum* – red fountain grass; acts as an annual in Minnesota
- 1997 University of Minnesota chrysanthemum releases from Dooley Gardens:
  - *Betty Lou* – Striking red button, short the first year. Second year plant shapes to 30" high and 30" wide
  - *Inca* – Large flowered button mum begins blooming as a red button which fades to a light bronze orange as each flower ages. Resembles a marigold flower. 14"
  - *Snowscape* – This semi-double mum has a bicolor patterning of purple and white looks similar to a dahlia flower. In Minnesota trials, it begins blooming in early August and continues until a freeze. 14"
  - Plus six other past releases of Minnesota Mums
- Lilies and Siberian Iris from Borbeleta Gardens
- Hostas from Savory's
- Baby hostas from Shady Oaks
- Specially-selected, unique plants from the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

Annuals typical of past Plant Auctions

will again be available, in addition to the more unusual plant varieties added this year.

**A request to MGCM members:** We need plant materials from your garden to sell in the Country Store. Please pot up plant material from your garden, identify the plants and bring them to the Plant Auction. This event is a fund-raiser for the Club's yearlong activities and we can use and appreciate your support!

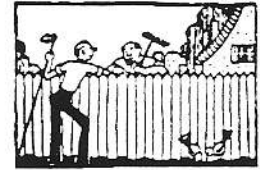
The plant auction agenda is as follows:

4:30 p.m.	Country Store Silent Auction
5:45 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Plant Auction

The fun starts Tuesday, May 6 at 4:30. Invite all your friends and neighbors today, and **fill in the form on page 3** to reserve your seat and register your guests.

## Wanted: Items to raffle at the Plant Sale and Auction

Please bring new or quality used items that could be given as prizes for the raffle, ie, garden tools, planters, bird bath or any special accessory you have. In past years several businesses or individuals have donated most of the items. Take advantage of this opportunity for more contributions. If you have any questions, call Bob Voigt at 823-4934 or just bring your donations on May 6.



## National Flower Award: Salvia

by Mel Anderson

Salvia is not hard to say. It's not hard to grow or exhibit, either. But there are some choices to make as to type, height and color. There are four types of salvia:

### 1. *Salvia Splendens*

This is the plant we all know as "salvia". The red is the most commonly used and can be had in a range of heights from 'Red Hot Sally' at 8-10 inches to 'Bonfire Elite' which is listed as 36 inches in some catalogs. In between are 'Carabiniere' (16-18 inches) and 'Sizzler' (12-14 inches). 'Carabiniere' is an old favorite, probably the most sold of all, and is available in four colors—red, purple, orange and white. 'Sizzler' is a newer variety with a wider color range, including burgundy, lavender, orchid, purple, red, salmon and white. Another series worthy of mention is 'Hot Stuff' at 12 inches. It is advertised as more fade resistant in all six colors—pink, red, rose, salmon, violet and white. There are also bicolor salvia such as 'Fire and Ice' and 'Sky and Ice', each around 10 inches tall with white tips on the blossoms.

### 2. *Salvia Coccinea*

This is an improved dwarf strain of a southern wild flower. It has small trumpet shaped blooms in whorls around its flower spike. Although its called a dwarf, it grows up to 15 inches tall. Colors are white, salmon and red. 'Lady in Red' is the most common, a bright red that usually can be purchased in packs. Being of southern heritage, it blooms more continuously than other salvias in the heat of summer.

### 3. *Salvia Farinacea*

Another unusual salvia, 'Farinacea' has delicate, thin stalks with tiny evenly

spaced blooms. Having good continuous bloom during hot weather, it is 16-18 inches tall in either white or blue. They are commonly called "Victoria". A newer variety 'Strata' is more compact at 14 inches and bushier, too. It is a blue and gray-white bicolor. It has won both the Fleuroselect and AAS awards last year. Dwarf types are the white 'Cinne' (12 inches) and the blue 'Rhea'. 'Farinacea' is the best salvia for dried flowers.

### 4. *Salvia Horminum*

This salvia has unique blooms 1/2 inch apart resembling large flat insect wings. They are very striking in floral arrangements. They grow 18 inches tall and have white ('White Swan'), blue ('Blue Bird'), pink and cream for color choices. I've never seen this variety in packs, but seed can be ordered from Stokes.

### To Grow Salvia

Plant the seed indoors now for transplanting about June 1. You can also plant directly in the garden around June 1 and they will be blooming by Flower, Food and Foto Show time in August. The third alternative is to buy growing plants at the garden center. Salvia like part to full sun, ample watering and some 20-20-20 fertilizer about June 20 and again a month later. Keep cutting off the faded blossom spikes to promote additional blooms.

### To Show Salvia

Cut the flowers the evening before the show. Use a sharp knife and put the specimen in a pail of tepid water. If the flower is dirty, rinse or spray with tepid water. If you need to take the flower out of the water for any reason, make a new cut before returning it to the pail.

Store the salvia overnight in a cool, dark place—a basement is ideal. The salvia will absorb water during the night and be in prime condition by morning.

In the morning, sort the varieties and check the show schedule for the correct





## Chestnuts

(continued from page 6)

Other background plants

Eupatorium  
Rudbeckia, 'Herbstonne'  
Aruncus  
Aconitum  
Angelica, gigas  
Cimicifuga  
Macleaya  
Rodgersia  
Tiarella  
Veronicastrum  
Silphium  
Thalictrum  
Filendula  
Helenium

The University plans to have graduate students check the trial plants weekly and keep detailed records on their progress and adaptability to our Zone 4 climate. Plans are that each year those cultivars that do not survive will be replaced. Also, the present thought is that each trial period will be on a three year cycle.

The Community Garden Committee will provide the work groups for MGCM but anyone in the club is welcome to participate. Cochairman Dave Moehrke and Bob Redmond will contact committee members for their participation. Work will commence in June after the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board have killed all the weeds and prepared the beds. By then the U of M will have procured the plant material and grown it to a good size in their greenhouses.

I look forward to this project as an excellent learning experience and a good project for the MGCM.

## Salvia

(continued from page 8)

quantity to exhibit. Remember, you can enter as many times as you wish, but each entry should consist of the correct quantity of one variety only.

Put your best specimens in the bottle so they stand upright. Trim so that no foliage is below the water line. Arrange them to look as uniform as possible. Don't be afraid to use packing in the bottle neck if necessary.

Judges will look at your exhibit for:

- condition – clean, fresh, undamaged and healthy specimens
  - color – bright, uniform, no faded blooms
  - form – specimen true to the variety exhibited
  - size – is it typical of the variety named or slightly larger
  - stem and foliage – straight, healthy looking.
- uniformity – between the three spikes

The judges will rarely find a perfect specimen, so don't be discouraged by the criteria above. Enter your salvia. If there are many entries, the judges can divide the salvia into sections by type, color or height. Each section will be awarded blue, red and white ribbons. Maybe you will win one—or several. Maybe even the large pink National Award Flower ribbon!



**Arbor  
Day  
Planting**

Saturday May 10  
9:00 a.m.  
Lake Harriet/Lyndale Park

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# The Garden Spray

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