



March 2016

## The Garden Spray

Vol. 74, No. 3

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Coming Up

Next Regular Meeting

## TUESDAY, MARCH 8: "FLOWERING SHRUBS"

Presenter: Debbie Lonnee, Product Development Manager,  
Bailey Nurseries

Location: Lakewood Cemetery Garden Mausoleum,  
3600 Hennepin Ave. S., Minneapolis

Debbie's presentation will focus on plants like hydrangea, spirea, potentilla and azaleas, and will include a number of new varieties from both Bailey Nurseries and Proven Winner® Color Choice® shrubs.



Debbie Lonnee

She has a B.S. in horticulture from the University of Minnesota and has worked at Bailey Nurseries for more than 20 years. Debbie is responsible for Bailey's new breeding farm in Georgia and works with the breeders around the world bringing new plants to Bailey brands.

Debbie is an avid gardener, a member of the Perennial Plant Association, and past president of the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association. She is the first woman to be inducted into the MNL Hall of Fame.

Garden writing is her second job; she is the horticultural editor for *Northern Gardener* magazine and writes the "Plant to Pick" article for each edition.

### 2016 CLUB DIRECTORIES

If you haven't already picked up yours, the MWGCM 2016 Directory will be available at the March meeting.

6:00 Social time & photos  
6:15 Dinner  
7:00 Business meeting  
7:30 Program

Menu  
Straw & hay pasta  
with sausage  
Antipasti platter  
Garlic bread  
Salad  
Lemon bars

- **Please note location: Lakewood Cemetery Garden Mausoleum.**
- Permanent reservations are in effect.
- Dinner is \$13.
- Reservations or cancellations are required no later than Friday, March 4.
- Email [Carole Ann Brekke](mailto:CaroleAnnBrekke@baileynurseries.com) or call (952) 435-6029.
- For last-minute cancellations, call Alan Gallaher at (952) 933-1713. If he can sell it,

you won't be billed.

[View the 2016 Meeting & Event Calendar](#)

## Annual Dinner and Flower Show at Macy's

MACY'S FLOWER SHOW WITH GARDENS BY BACHMAN'S

ANNUAL DINNER AND SHOW, TUESDAY, MARCH 29

THIS YEAR'S THEME: "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL"

Our annual trip to Macy's Flower Show with Gardens by Bachman's is coming up. This year Macy's 8th floor auditorium will be transformed into "America the Beautiful." Dale Bachman will speak to us about the plants following dinner at Oak Grill on Macy's 12th floor.

Timetable (we will need to follow this schedule closely):

- 5:00 - Gather, be seated, order beverages
- 5:30 - Dinner is served
- 6:30 - Dale Bachman will speak
- 6:50 - Proceed to 8th floor to view flower show
- 8:00 - Macy's store closes (must exit store by 8:20)

Cost is \$23 per person (tax and tip included). Reservations are required, and we will collect reservations on a first-come, first-served basis at the March 8 MWGCM meeting. **All reservations must be received no later than Monday, March 21.** Seating for dinner is limited to 56.



Menu selections (select one on the reservation form):

- *Mrs. Hering's 1890 Original Chicken Pot Pie* - The Oak Grill's signature dish with fresh ingredients and a hand-finished crust served with salad of mixed greens.
- *Oven-baked Meatloaf* - Beef meatloaf with pine nuts and spinach, whipped potatoes, red pepper gravy, fresh vegetables and onion strings.
- *Mandarin Salad* - Marinated chicken breast, red peppers, mandarin oranges, pea pods, applewood smoked bacon, almonds, water chestnuts, green onions, mixed greens and crispy won tons with toasted sesame dressing.
- *Roasted Harvest Salad* - Mixed greens, roasted butternut squash and shallots, Gorgonzola and pumpkin seeds with maple vinaigrette

Each entrée is served with a signature popover, dessert and beverage (coffee, tea,

lemonade, or fountain drink). Free parking vouchers for the Macy's ramp (good after 4:00 p.m.) are available at the Oak Grill.

Questions? Please call Judy Berglund (952) 975-1960.

Please fill out the reservation form below and bring it with payment to the MWGCM meeting March 8, or send to: Carole Ann Brekke, 709 Rushmore Drive, Burnsville, MN 55306.

## Registration Form

**Registration Form**  
**Macy's Flower Show with Gardens by Bachman's**  
**Dinner at the Oak Grill**  
**Tuesday, March 29**

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ dinners at \$23.00 each. Include check payable to "MWGCM."  
**Please note: only 1 guest allowed per member.**

Dinner choice(s):

\_\_\_\_ Mrs. Herring's Chicken Pot Pie

\_\_\_\_ Oven-baked Meatloaf

\_\_\_\_ Mandarin Salad (Can be made gluten-free. Please indicate on form.)

\_\_\_\_ Roasted Harvest Salad

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

Guest Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservation form and checks will be collected at the March 8 meeting on a first-come, first-served basis or may be mailed to:

Carole Ann Brekke, 709 Rushmore Drive, Burnsville, MN 55306

**Reservations must be received by Monday, March 21, 2016.** No exceptions, out of respect for the committee and our arrangement with the Oak Grill staff. Thanks.

[A printable version of this form is also available on the MWGCM website.](#)

# Coming Up

## SPRING KICK-OFF MEETING

Who: Arbor Day, Lyndale Park/Mixed Border and Native Garden Committees

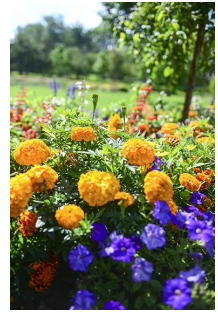
When: Tuesday, April 12, 7:00 p.m.

Where: Bryant Square Park Rec Center, 3101 Bryant Ave. S., Minneapolis

What: Planning the 2016 Lyndale Park Gardens

All MWGCM members are invited to join and learn about the MWGCM public garden projects.

For more information contact, [Kay Wolfe](#), [Kirky Otto](#), [Carol Schreier](#) or [Robert Kean](#).



## Plant Sale News

Gary Geister, Chair

SAVE THE DATE:

TUESDAY, MAY 10 IS THE ANNUAL MWGCM PLANT SALE

St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church

3450 Irving Avenue, Minneapolis

Our annual plant sale will again be in the Great Hall at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church. New plants as well as favorites from previous years will be available, and you will be able to pre-order (see below). After dinner we will have our plant auction.

## SOME OF THE NEW PLANTS FOR SALE THIS YEAR



Ketchup 'n' Fries™ is a tomato plant that has been grafted on to a potato plant! From the same plant you will have cherry tomatoes on top and later in summer you can dig up some potatoes. Be the first in your neighborhood to have this plant!

Night Sky Petunia received the 2016 Fleuro Star Award. Ball Seed Company describes it as "Light years from usual. This might be the most distinctive bloom you have seen on this planet." Purple-blue with specks of white dots, it looks like the stars at night. (Keep in mind, the petunia is the FFF flower this year.)





Gryphon Begonia is a non-flowering, large-leafed begonia that does best in the shade. It can be used alone or planted with coleus or impatiens. It can be brought inside for the winter and makes a good houseplant.

Hens and Chicks Oddity is a *sempervivum* perennial for zone 3. It prefers a hot, sunny, dry location and can be grown in the ground or in containers.

Gary Geister



## PLANT ORDER FORM IS ONLINE NOW

Club members again have the opportunity to order containers, specialty annuals, and flats or half-flats of annuals. All plants are locally grown and have proven to be of excellent quality. Prices are competitive with local retail outlets, and your purchase supports the club.

You will receive the plant list/order form in a separate mailing, and your order, with payment, is due in late March. [The order form is also available on the MWGCM website.](#) You will be able to pick up your order at St. Mary's on the day of the sale.

Please note: the order form is a list without much description beyond variety name and/or color. Google Images is a good place look for more information about a particular item on the order form.

Mary Maynard

## From the President

Judy Brooke

I picked trees to write about this month because they are relevant for a garden club column, and because my favorite poem is Robert Frost's "*Birches*." Part of the poem is quite appropriate for this time of the year, and I hope you'll find it food for the soul.

"...Often you must have seen them  
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning  
After a rain. They click upon themselves  
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored  
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.  
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells  
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust-

Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away..."

Recently the *Star Tribune* had an interesting article about trees. It suggested because our Minnesota climate is changing and new invasive, tree-eating insects are arriving, this might be a good time to look at alternatives when adding a tree to your yard.

Did you know there are now varieties of elm trees that are resistant to Dutch elm disease? The article says among them are 'Patriot' and a new variety discovered in Minnesota called 'St. Croix,' which is expected to be more widely available in nurseries this year.

The article lists the Linden tree among the shapely, bigger trees. It has yellow spring flowers that attract bees, however, it is also a favorite of Japanese beetles. The article names the Kentucky coffee tree as among the bigger trees to consider. Its male cultivars like 'Espresso' have no seedpods and are suggested as a good option.

Among smaller trees, the article indicates newer varieties of crabapple are showy with disease resistance that keeps them looking good into fall. The Japanese tree lilac is also mentioned because of its ability to persist and flower in cramped spaces. In late May and June it produces showy cream or white flowers, and it attracts butterflies. It's on the Master Gardener list of best plants for tough sites.

Did you know the University of Minnesota Forrester Resource Extension has a page with information on trees for all different parts of the state? It's in the section titled "[My Minnesota Woods](#)."

Frost ends his poem this way:

"I'd like to get away from earth awhile  
And then come back to it and begin over...  
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,  
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk  
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,  
But dipped its top and set me down again.  
That would be good both going and coming back.  
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches."

Happy tree planning. I look forward to seeing you at the two events coming up in March.

*Source: The Poetry of Robert Frost (1969)*

## From the Editors

Tom McKusick, Nancy Felice

If you plans to grow vegetables in a raised bed this season, here's an offer you may like. We were recently contacted by a representative from [Plaisted Companies Inc.](#) an Elk River firm that manufactures and distributes aggregates, gravel, soil, amendments and gardening mixes.

They've developed a line of bagged, soil-less planting medium that's designed for growing vegetables in raised garden beds, and they've offered to let us test some for free. The only stipulation is that we report back on how it performs. Photos would be even better.

The mix consists of mostly peat, composted pine bark, organic yard compost, perlite, lime and slow-release fertilizer. Here's their promotional info:

"[This] is a soil-less blend. Soil produces weeds and also compacts during the summer, resulting in more watering needed but less water getting to the root system. Professional greenhouse growers do not use soil when growing vegetables.

- Requires no tilling.
- Almost no weeding necessary.
- Requires less watering. Peat retains water.
- Requires less maintenance. No need to amend soil each year.
- Slow-release fertilizer is already in the blend for faster growth.
- The pH is near 6.0, a value professional vegetable-growing greenhouses prefer.
- No mixing required; just pour and plant."



*Plants grown in this mix after six weeks.*

I'm looking for one or two club members who want to try it in a raised vegetable bed and are willing to take notes on how it does. Since this isn't a soil amendment, it should be used in a new bed rather than in one that's already holding soil.

Let me know if you're interested. I won't be at the March meeting, so email or a call is best: [tomm@northerngardener.org](mailto:tomm@northerngardener.org) or my number is in the club directory.

Tom

Club action is picking up as spring approaches. The Macy's/Bachman's show is coming up and our annual plant sale is just around the corner. To make it easy to participate, we've included these links to printable forms on the MWGCM website (thanks to Andy Marlow):

[Macy's/Bachman's flower show and dinner registration](#)

[Plant sale order form](#)

And of course, it's never too early to start planning for the FFF Show. Stay tuned.

Nancy

## Photography Committee

Lloyd Wittsock, Chair

### NEW COLOR PHOTO DIRECTORY IN THE WORKS

Because we have so many new members, the MWGCM Board has decided to update our



photo directory because there are so many new members. This one will be in color, which means all members need a new photo taken. At the next several meetings, members of the Photography Committee will take photos for the new directory. If you'd prefer, you can submit a photo of your choosing (see below).

We plan to have an electronic version (PDF) of the new directory. It can be carried to meetings on smartphone or tablet, or printed out if you choose. If the file size isn't too large, the new directory will be emailed to you. If it's too big, you'll be emailed a link to download it from our web server.

The directory will contain only your photo, name, city of residence and the year you joined MWGCM. We will continue to publish a printed directory for members only with your contact information. The online directory will be in a non-public area of our website where only members will have access to it.

If you have questions, please contact [Lloyd Wittstock](#) or [Andy Marlow](#). If you have a photo you'd like us to use, send it to Lloyd or Andy as an email attachment.

## FFF: 2016 Featured Vegetable

Judy Berglund

### FEATURED VEGETABLE FOR THE 2016 FLOWER, FOOD AND FOTO SHOW IS THE TOMATO



*Golden Rave*



*Big Brandy*



*Genovese*

Each year the MWGCM Flower, Food and Foto Show showcases one vegetable and awards a special ribbon for the best specimen of the show. This year we are featuring tomatoes.

While tomatoes are botanically and scientifically the berry-type fruit of the nightshade *Solanum lycopersicum*, commonly known as a tomatoes plant, they can also be considered a culinary vegetable, which causes some confusion.

There are over 7,500 tomatoes varieties grown. Heirloom tomatoes are increasingly popular among home gardeners since they tend to produce more interesting and flavorful

crops.

Tomatoes are commonly classified as determinate or indeterminate. Determinate, or bush types, bear a full crop all at once and top off at a specific height; they are often good choices for container growing. Indeterminate varieties develop into vines that never top off and continue producing until killed by frost.

Tomatoes keep best unwashed at room temperature, out of direct sunlight. Refrigerating is not recommended as this can harm the flavor. Storing stem down can prolong shelf life.

When exhibiting tomatoes, select three larger tomatoes or seven tiny tomatoes that are uniform in size, shape and color. Remove stems, from all types of tomatoes. Fruit should be perfectly shaped and free of cracks or blemishes. Fruits should be shown with the stem scar down. Tomatoes may also be exhibited as largest tomato or any vegetable growing in a container.

*(Photos from Park Seed)*

## Lyndale Park/Mixed Border Garden

Kay Wolfe, Chair

### SUPPORTING LYNDALE PARK SINCE 1952: PART 2

In June 1981, a devastating tornado hit south Minneapolis, and Lyndale Park was right in the path. The arboretum collection in the park was destroyed, including the crab apple collection that MGCM planted in 1952. Here is an article from the *Spray* of July 1981:

#### **TIME FOR ACTION**

Gentlemen, the opportunity again has come for the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis to be of valuable service to the community. A great horticultural tragedy has hit Minneapolis. The tornado of June 14th leveled one of the finest collections of mature tree specimens in the state. The giant Ginkgo that stood majestically by the Lake Harriet-Lyndale Gardens Rose Gardens has been destroyed along with the evergreen collection and the Crabapples which the club donated a few years ago. When the chain saws finish clearing the debris, there will be very few mature trees left in the park, Such a wonderful resource within the limits of the city should not be lost. It is time for us to give of our time, our service and our money to gain replacements for this park.

I polled the Club board and received support from them as well as enthusiastic support from every club member I talked to about the club serving as a catalyst for a reforestation project. The Minneapolis Park Board is facing serious cutbacks in its budget and

would not have any money for replacements for some of these trees. The park district lost a total of 2,000 street trees in the tornado which is a serious setback.

To start the ball rolling our board must approve the allocation of seed money from our reserve fund. The membership will then be asked to make personal contributions. We will then solicit additional contributions from whatever sources we can. We will ask nurseries to donate materials... We will solicit money from businesses in the area and from the general public. This project can be our most significant contribution to our community since we helped start the University of Minnesota Arboretum.

Theodore Wirth planted the major part of the area well before 1940. I hope by the year 2020, and beyond, it will again look as it did only a few days ago. It is up to us now to make sure it does.  
Ray Marshall

The club did indeed jump into action. For Arbor Day 1982, they planted seven large trees on the tornado-devastated site: balsam fir, butternut, ginkgo, ironwood, star magnolia, red maple clump and white pine. In 1983 they planted a large Ohio buckeye and made a united effort to replace the flowering crab apple collection. Twenty-seven flowering crabs were paid for and planted by individual club members. For this the club won a National Arbor Day Award in 1983. Ray Marshall, also a landscape architect, drew up a plan for the Lyndale Park Arboretum across Roseway Road from the current Mixed Border Garden. Many of the trees in the arboretum planted by the MGCM still stand today.

This is the second article about the history of our club's donations to Lyndale Park. You'll find the first article on [page 10 of the October 15 Spray](#).

## 2015 Metro Blooms Award



For the second year in a row, the Lyndale Park Garden received an award from Metro Blooms.

Metro Blooms is dedicated to promoting and celebrating gardening to beautify our communities and help heal and protect our environment.

They thank us for beautifying Minneapolis through our garden! Thanks to all club members who help support this gardening effort.

Kay Wolfe

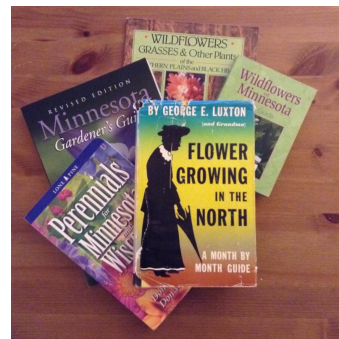
Lyndale Park/Native Garden

Kirky Otto, Chair

#### FAVORITE BOOKS FROM NATIVE GARDEN FANS

Unless you're starting early seeds under lights or carrying over plants, you may be yearning for the smell of moist earth and digging in a garden at this point in the year. The people who work

on the Lyndale Park/Native Garden meet monthly in the winter, and in February shared favorite gardening books, old and new. Reading can be nearly as good as gardening, and you may find one or two that will carry you through the rest of the winter.



Three focused on native plants - a natural for this group: *Pollinators of Native Plants* by Heather Holm; *Wildflowers, Grasses, and other Plants of the Northern Plains and Black Hills* by Theodore Van Bruggen; *Birdscaping in the Midwest* by Mariette Nowak.

Three others were old favorites, either published or focusing on gardening 50 and more years ago: *Flower Growing in the North*, by George Luxton "and Grandma," who adds wise, old-fashioned tips; *A Paradise out of a Common Field*, by Joan Morgan, on the development of gardening in the Victorian era; *The Complete Book of Composting*, a Rodale publication from the 1960s.

Four more centered on gardening in Minnesota: *Minnesota Gardener's Guide*, by Melinda Myers; *Perennials for Minnesota and Wisconsin*, by two men named Don - Engebretson and Williamson; *Wildflowers of Minnesota, a field guide* by Stan Tekiela; and *The Best Plants for 30 Tough Sites*, a compilation of plant lists and descriptions by University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners.

In spite of our mid-February rain and thaw, there's time to find a book that may lead you to better, wiser, easier, or some other improved sort of gardening in May. Hit the library or a bookstore, or order or borrow something, and look forward to learning something new.

## Membership Corner

Judy Brooke, Chair

### WELCOME THREE NEW MEMBERS

#### DIANE VANDIERENDONCK

Diane describes her yard and garden as "a work in progress." She and husband John have lived in their Robbinsdale home for more than 30 years. As the trees matured, there's less and less sun. Their two large dogs and the local rabbits (of course) also present a challenge.

Hostas do well in her yard.

Diane commented she really has no master plan for gardening; she just goes where the winds take her. She has her eye on a sunny area in her yard and is thinking about planting there, but realizes it will need to be enclosed. John is not into gardening, but he will put up the fences.

Her reason for joining our club is to learn from other the members and for the variety of interesting speakers. Diane is an RN and works on the Kidney Transplant Unit at HCMC.

## MARY HELEBRANT

Mary learned about MWGCM through friends. Now retired, she has time to attend our meetings. She calls herself a messy gardener: "I just plant what I like, I don't have a theme or a color scheme." Her gardens are in the front, back and side. Since she has lost many elms, she also plants the boulevard.

Most of her favorites are perennials: roses, peonies and bee balm. She also grows a variety of tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers. She purchases many of her plants from a small farm near Vermillion and also loves Donahue's in Faribault and the Minneapolis Farmers Market. She says her husband Gary plants the front gardens. "He shops for his own plants since he is more artistic and particular about his colors." Mary says she does all the caretaking.

## JANET YEATS

Janet is a marriage and family therapist. Last spring she moved into her first home, which is located in Robbinsdale. The landscaping was all garden and no lawn with lots of trees and shrubs. Janet decided to remove some of the trees to add more light to the space. She went on to plant an apple tree and lilac and rose bushes. Her yard also has a pond and fountain. Janet plans to have a vegetable garden and would like to know more about growing her own food. She previously owned a gardening business for about five years where she designed and helped plant gardens.

Two additional members joined at our last meeting, Loretta Mitchell and Sara Schuh. You'll learn more about them in the next *Garden Spray*.

*EVERY MEMBER BRING A MEMBER.*

## Treasurer's Snapshot

Alan Gallaher, Treasurer

AS OF FEBRUARY 20, 2016

Checking Balance	\$86,911
Designated Funds	
Lyndale Park/Mixed Border Garden	\$2,983
Scholarship	\$3,796
Deane Fund	\$65,033
Working Balance	\$15,099

Petty Cash  
CD

\$100  
\$5,282

## Meeting & Event Calendar

### **March 8**

Flowering Shrubs  
Debbie Lonnee  
Lakewood Cemetery

### **March 29**

Macy's Flower Show with  
Gardens by Bachman's  
Macy's Downtown

### **May 10**

Plant Sale and Auction  
St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church,  
Minneapolis

### **June 14**

Tips for Competing in Plant Shows  
Judy Berglund, Mary Maynard and Friends  
Lakewood Cemetery

### **July & August**

Garden Tours  
Dates and time TBA

### **August 20 & 21**

Flower, Food and Foto Show  
U of M Landscape Arboretum

### **September 13**

Grow Native: Bringing Natural Beauty to  
your Garden  
Lakewood Cemetery

### **October 11**

Hydroponic Gardening  
Larry Cipolla  
Lakewood Cemetery

### **November 8**

Low Maintenance Lawn Care  
Sam Bauer  
Lake Harriet Methodist Church

### **December 13**

Holiday Party  
Location TBD

## 2016 Officers & Directors

### **Club Officers**

#### **President**

Judy Brooke  
Minnetonka

#### **Vice President**

Board shares responsibilities

#### **Membership Secretary**

Judy Brooke

#### **Recording Secretary**

Laurie Levin  
Golden Valley

### **Directors**

Judy Berglund  
Minnetonka

Bonnie Haehn  
Minneapolis

Dave McKeen  
St. Louis Park

Steve Shubick  
St. Paul

**Treasurer**  
Alan Gallaher  
Edina

**Past President**  
Tom McKusick  
Minneapolis

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