

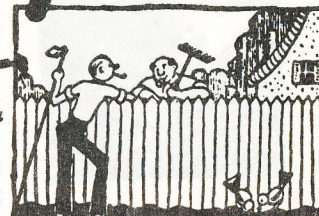


The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

Member--Men's Garden Clubs of America • Minnesota State Horticultural Society

February 1984, Volume 42, Number 2



GROWING PLANTS UNDER LIGHTS

By next year you can be growing posies for your favorite Valentine all winter long if you listen to advice from CHET GROGER at the February MGCM meeting on Valentine's evening, Tuesday, February 14, 1984 at Lake Harriet United Methodist Church, 4901 Chowen Avenue South, Minneapolis. Chet and his wife Em have been gardening indoors for years and are members of the Indoor Light Gardening Society. He'll be showing slides of his set up and talking about both indoor plants and starting seedlings under lights for outdoor planting.

and

"Growing Under Glass"

Every gardener dreams of having his own greenhouse, "someday." For MGCM member JERRY SHANNON, "someday" arrived a few years ago. He and his wife Lee operate a greenhouse attached to their home year around, growing orchids among other things. Jerry will talk about how they got started, the changes he's made to combat increasing energy costs and what he would do if he were starting all over now.

Unfortunately you can't bring your Valentine with you for the meeting is for men and male guests only; but do get her a bouquet or a box of candy for consolation (or another date maybe?) Dinner at 6:00 PM for \$5.00 as usual so: GET THAT RESERVATION CARD BACK TO BOB CHURILLA PROMPTLY!

Commencing with the February meeting, the Show and Tell committee will have a special table set up where members can show and tell about their particular item that they wish to bring to the meeting. This show and tell item can be an attractive house plant that the member wishes to explain how he grows, bulbs, rhizomes, tubers, seeds, etc. which he might have a particular way he plants, divides, etc. or it might be a particular garden tool which he is very proud of, etc. Bring your items to show and tell. Let's make 10 or 15 minutes of the program educational and interesting by sharing.

Our first honorary member was Professor L.E. Longley who was praised in the February 1949 issue of The Garden Spray as one who "has been active in the field of horticulture and floriculture. He has been particularly interested in chrysanthemums and has developed some varieties which have received national recognition and are listed in many catalogs."

Bill Hull, club Historian

IN MEMORIAM

- CARL J. HOLST -



Longtime member Carl J. Holst passed away on Saturday December 17, 1984. Carl joined the Men's Garden Club in 1956 and soon became a very active member. He was the first professional member to become President of MGCM. His horticultural expertise was shared with many groups. He was a Past-President of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society and Past-President of the Minnesota Rose Society. He also served the American Rose Society as North Central District Director and chairman of numerous national committees. His service was fully recognized when he received the A.R.S. Silver Honor Medal for distinguished service to the A.R.S.

As Superintendent of Horticulture for the Minneapolis Park Board he always showed a willingness to help or give advice when requested, about roses or any other type of plant. True, he was sometimes outspoken; but only for what he believed to be right.

He was a kind and generous person always on the go; but never too busy to stop to listen to a good story or to tell a joke. His generosity was most evidenced by the way he constantly gave of himself to his church, the Zuhrah Shrine Circus Committee, the American Legion Post #310 and to the legions of people he helped with rose problems through the years.

His love of and interest in children was manifested in numerous ways --By his support of Courage Center, by Shrine activities, by school gardening classroom talks, and by numerous other child oriented activities and organizations.

He was an outstanding judge of roses for the American Rose Society as well as a judge for the All-America Rose Selections committee which annually selects the roses best suited for the American public to grow in their areas.

He was an outstanding Consulting Rosarian for the American Rose Society. His legacy will long be remembered by the groups which he helped organize such as the North Star Rose Society and the St. Cloud Rose Society. He also assisted in the formation of the Mankato and the Winona Rose Societies.

Dear friend you will be fondly remembered by the many you personally helped--as surely as the first rosebuds appear each spring and until the last roses of summer gently fade away.

Farewell --

Jerry Olson

At times when a stalwort like Carl is suddenly taken from our midst the words of Rev. Richard Hulbert on December 2, 1974, seem singularly appropriate. They are reported in toto on page 8.



TERRACE TALKS

As I sit in my enclosed porch and look out the windows past the bird feeders and the icicles to the terrace, I wonder if the snow will ever go. It looks pretty thick and deep in the garden. I do notice however, the snow sunk enough (before the last 6 inches on January 11th and 12th) so that the whirling daisies used to discourage the birds (which didn't get removed before the snow fell) are whirling in the wind.

Looking in the opposite direction towards the attached greenhouse, things are nice and green, even though quite dormant. A few orchids blooming or showing signs or blooming. A much better sight.

Between looking out the window to the west towards the terrace and looking towards the greenhouse on the east, I have been spending my time on garden club work. The committees are basically all formed and only a few chairpersons are still required. I don't anticipate any problems of filling out the committees. Thanks for your signing up and helping. I will be contacting each of the committee chairmen to encourage committee meetings and getting the year off with a good start. Thanks for your cooperation.

Now is a good time to study the garden catalog and place orders, get items which take a long time to grow started, like the onion plants, geraniums, etc. so that they will be ready to set out in early spring. It's also a good time to clean up the garden tools that didn't get cleaned last fall.

The only other thing to do, I guess, is sit and wait until February and March when the sun starts shining again and warming up the area and when excitement again begins to build and when the greenhouse, which was dormant in December and January, shows exciting growth. Until then, let's sit back and relax and wait. and wait. Let's defer a couple of the days in January to May where the garden calendar committee so nicely gave us two extra days last year. Until then, see you in the February meeting.

-Russ Smith

The raffle committee hopes to hold a raffle each meeting similar to the one held in the January meeting. The raffle committee would appreciate any plants, bulbs, flats of seedlings or any items which would be of interest to a garden club member. If you have any items to contribute, Robert L. Smith would appreciate hearing from you prior to the meeting. Give him a call at his home, 537-5637 in the evenings. If you can't call, bring them anyway.

**MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MPLS.
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR 1983**

<u>ACCOUNT NAME</u>	<u>1983 BUDGET</u>	<u>1983 .ACTUAL .</u>	<u>1984 BUDGET</u>
Dues	2,950.00	2,962.00	\$3,100.00
Monthly Meetings	3,200.00	3,522.50	3,500.00
Monthly Auctions	200.00	132.20	150.00
Spring Plant Auction	2,000.00	3,855.75	3,200.00
Tours	650.00	1,622.50	1,600.00
Christmas Party	1,800.00	1,823.00	1,800.00
MGCA Calendar Receipts	3,000.00	2,368.00	2,000.00
Interest Income	600.00	703.01	600.00
Gardeners Receipts	new in 83	121.00	50.00
Special Projects	new in 83	450.00	—
Gardening Lessons Book	— 84	—	825.00
Miscellaneous Income	50.00	116.00	50.00
INCOME TOTALS	14450.00	17,675.96	\$16,875.00

EXPENSES

Dues to MGCA	1,100.00	1,140.00	1,200.00
Dues to Mn. Hort.	800.00	812.00	854.00
Garden Spray Expenses	1,100.00	1,111.19	1,100.00
Monthly Meetings	3,000.00	3,340.12	3,400.00
Monthly Auctions	50.00	-0-	50.00
Spring Plant Auction	1,200.00	1,508.40	2,000.00
Tour Expenses	500.00	1,555.30	1,500.00
Flower & Vegetable Show	400.00	396.08	400.00
Christmas Party	1,700.00	2,055.30	1,800.00
Directory Expenses	200.00	143.18	200.00
Memerials Expense	50.00	-0-	25.00
Remembrances	50.00	56.25	75.00
Honorariums	50.00	70.00	50.00
Arbor Day	200.00	243.80	250.00
Awards & Trophies	100.00	122.49	100.00
MGCA Life Membership	100.00	100.00	100.00
Nat'l Convention Delegates	500.00	500.00	600.00
*Arboretum Project	350.00	350.00	350.00
*Minn. Hort. Bldg. Project	-0-	0-	150.00
MGCA Calendar Costs	2,800.00	1,855.00	1,700.00
Bank Charges	100.00	56.70	50.00
Gardeners Purchases	new in 83	77.68	25.00
*Special Projects	new in 83	625.02	-0-
Gardening Lessons Book	— 84	—	796.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	100.00	122.60	100.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	14450.00	16,241.11	\$16,875.00

NET GAIN FOR 1983

1,434.85

* This contribution is contingent upon our yearly gain. Each account will get the same ratio as listed above.

HOUSEPLANTS EXPLAINED AT JANUARY MGCM MEETING

reported by Andy Marlow

Houseplants can be easy to grow or they can be proof a person has a "black thumb". Thanks to University of Minnesota Assistant Professor of Horticulture Deborah Brown, a few more of us have a chance to escape the latter category. Professor Brown may be familiar to you as the expert who answers horticultural questions for the "Fixit" column in the Minneapolis Star and Tribune or the horticulture expert on "CCO at Large" on WCCO radio. Comments by her also appear in the January-February edition of MGCA's The Gardener.

Brown told her audience that many problems with houseplants are based on some misconceptions that relate to the three basic needs of plants: light, fertilizer and water.

The most common problem for houseplants in the northern latitudes is lack of sufficient light. Not only do our mid-winter days have only 8 to 8-1/2 hours of daylight; but the quality and intensity of that light is low due to the angle of the sun. Plants need both adequate duration and intensity of light. Increased intensity can make up for fewer hours of light, or increased hours can make up for low light intensity; but the plant cannot do without an adequate balance. If the plant doesn't get enough light to make sufficient food for itself, it will stop growing and even begin to shed parts it cannot feed. e.g. Leaves get brown and fall off.

More light can be provided and the duration of light can be controlled by using electric lights. Brown strongly recommends fluorescent lights to provide the necessary illumination. They are a bit more expensive than incandescents but they last a long time and the quality of light they give off is better suited to the plants' needs. Special incandescent lights may be used for special effects or if you have nothing else; but, Brown said, they will encourage pale, tall, spindly plants because their light is mainly in the red end of the spectrum. Also, because of the heat given off, incandescent bulbs must be kept too far from the plant to do it much good. A better alternative is to use a fixture containing both a cool white and a warm white fluorescent tube, or just cool white alone. The only reason to buy special plant light tubes is if you are having trouble getting plants to bloom.

Professor Brown emphasized the fact that fertilizer is not plant food--plants, in fact, make their own food. Fertilizer is just one of three raw materials necessary for the food manufacturing process to take place, the other two being light and water. Fertilizer should be thought of as more like a vitamin supplement to be used only when the plant is actively growing. That means not fertilizing plants much during a Minnesota winter if all the light they're getting is coming through the window. As a general rule, she said, cut the amount of fertilizer recommended on the package in half. Too much will do more harm than good.

Water, the last of the three plant necessities, is usually too generously or too stingily applied. All houseplant pots should have drain holes. If you have decorative pots without drain holes, plant the plant in a size smaller pot with drain holes and put the smaller pot inside the decorative one. Then, water until water runs out the drain holes. That way you can be sure you've watered thoroughly. And, don't water too often. Brown says there's only one rare houseplant that needs to be constantly in moist soil. The rest need to dry out somewhat between waterings to allow oxygen to get to the roots. Fluffy, light, porous potting mixtures with many

(continued over)

different size particles will help get oxygen to the roots, but you should still hold off watering until the top layer dries out. Use your finger to test.

Another aspect of watering is the practice of misting plants. It may help control some insects, but is, otherwise, a useless practice. It does little to actually boost the humidity around the plant and may provide a rich breeding ground for fungi and bacteria that will attack the plant. Ms. Brown suggests a whole house humidifier if you have a forced air furnace, a room humidifier, or simply grouping plants close together to try to overcome the low humidity problem. In the question and answer session that followed her talk Brown pointed out that the average humidity in a Minnesota home in the winter time is 12-15% while the relative humidity of the Sahara desert is 20-25%.

We tend now to have cooler winter homes than a decade ago. This is good for most houseplants, despite their tropical origin. The cooler temperatures encourage the plants to slow their growth and activity at just the time when light levels are also low. She said that gesneriads, including African violets, don't do particularly well under these conditions, but was quickly challenged by those members whose violets were doing well. Optimara violets, she said, were specially bred to grow under lower light and cooler temperature conditions, so if you have trouble with any of the regular varieties, try these.

Later, in the question and answer period, Professor Brown was asked about the transition involved in setting houseplants out for the summer and bringing them in in the fall. She explained that leaves of plants grown indoors and those grown outdoors actually have a different physical make up. If the leaves are unsuited to the conditions a plant is suddenly thrust into, it will drop the old leaves and grow new ones better suited to the new environment. To avoid leaf drop, gradually ease plants outside, beginning with a shady, protected spot and moving slowly to sunnier and more open areas. In the late summer or fall, bring the plants in when outdoor nighttime temperatures are about the same as the indoor temperature you'll maintain for the winter.

Deborah Brown and her colleagues at the University's Agricultural Extension Service are available to answer more questions about houseplants and other horticultural questions through the DIAL U service. Such advice used to be free, but due to budget cuts at the U, there is now a \$2.00 charge that's added right to your phone bill. From most of the metropolitan area you can call DIAL U at 1-975-0200. The last digits remind you that there's a \$2.00 charge. By the way, the phone company only gets \$.25 of that and the University \$1.75. It's worth it for advice of the caliber given to MGCM members by Ms. Brown.

With cacti and succulents, if in doubt about watering, leave for another day or two....Most of the flowering plants require more light than foliage plants. Also, cacti and succulents require good light for maximum growth. A few plants that will grow in low light are Grape Ivy, Snake Plant, Cast Iron Plant, Dracina, Dumb Cane, and Heartleaf Philodendron. Most begonias, ferns, African Violets, schifflera, peperomia, rubber tree and piggy back plant like medium light. High light plants are most of the cacti and succulents, Ivy, citrus, wax plants and asparagus fern.

"Pest Control - The three most common pests on houseplants are whiteflies, mealybugs and mites. The best spray for whiteflies is resmethion, for mealybugs use rubbing alcohol on a Q-tip, and for mites use soapy water" plus kelthane.

--CORT-LAND SOD BUSTERS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 1983 SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT

(Editor's Note: The following is an abridgement of Andy Marlow's report at the January meeting. Many of the items, appropriately included in the report, have been covered earlier in the GARDEN SPRAY so have been condensed or omitted in this resume.)



Rookie of the Year

1983 marked the 41st year in the history of the MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS. We began the year with 119 members, including 5 who joined in late 1982 so that their memberships became effective at the beginning of 1983. By the end of the year our ranks had swelled to 133. Five men joined the Club late in the year and have their dues credited to 1984.

Five men had perfect attendance records during 1983 and won Green Thumb awards. They were Vern Carlson, Burton Deane, Chet Groger, Carlton Nelson, and Robert L. Smith. Smith has won the award 3 years in a row. Chet Groger has won it 4 consecutive years. Dr. Robert G. Olson earned the Rookie of the Year award for 1983.

A new committee, Youth Gardening, was inaugurated in 1983. Members assisted young people at a number of locations and a giant pumpkin and a giant sunflower contest were held. Special interest groups, for members interested in growing particular kinds of plants, were revived.

Sherm Pinkham was reelected to represent the North Star Region as a Director of MGCA. Fred Glasoe was elected President of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society.

The Club made contributions for the first time to both the MGCA Building and Grounds Fund (\$80) and the Horticultural Society's Building Fund (\$150).

Twenty-eight Crab apple trees and 1 Ohio Buckeye were planted near the Lake Harriet Rose Garden as the Club's Arbor Day celebration. The crabs were purchased by individual members to replace those originally planted by members in 1951 at the same site. There was television coverage by two Twin Cities stations.

The Club's spring plant sale and auction, under the guidance of co-chairmen Carleton Nelson and Dave Johnson, was the most successful ever. The net gain for this activity was over \$2,400. Some of these funds are being used to finance republication of the Club pamphlet "Gardening Lessons We Have Learned". New articles have been written by Club members and old articles updated by editor Bill Hull. It is now available for purchase by current members. New members will be given a copy when they are officially inducted into the Club.

An emergency calling committee, with Bill Hull as chairman, was set up to notify members of important and timely events. It was activated just once, to notify members of the death of Carl Holst and arrangements for his memorial service.

IN MEMORY of THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT US

(Rev. Richard Hulbert's words of consolation at the Christmas party.)

Three of our members cannot be with us this evening to enjoy our annual Christmas party. We miss them as we pause for these moments to remember them. We miss them, but as gardeners we should not mourn.

My yard looks pretty desolate right now. My garden companions are either under the leaves or in my root cellar. I miss them, especially the tall, sturdy ones that stood head tall--the roses, the dahlias, the delphinium and the cannas. With what splendor they reflected the whole spectrum of the sun's rays. They are all gone and I miss them. But I do not mourn for them for two good reasons. One is that I can remember them so vividly. I can shut my eyes and it is as though they were there at arm's reach. The second reason is that I know for sure that come next June, like returning Florida winter vacationers, they will be back in even greater vigor and beauty than when they were put below the ground.

Now these companions, no matter how lovely, could not talk to me, could not understand me and never extended hands of sympathy in my trouble. Now if a good God would not deprive me of such limited companionship for long, how much less will he deprive any of us for long of these human gardening companions whom we love. We miss them sorely in this wintertime, but we will not mourn. Rather we will take our moments to remember them vividly and we will patiently wait for the coming summer with sure expectant trust.

- 8 -



Return to
THE GARDEN SPRAY of MGCM, INC.

Edwin C. Culbert, Editor

5315 Portland Avenue

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55417

* * * * *

MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

CLUB OFFICERS:

President: Russell C. Smith

1610 Holdridge Terrace, Wayzata 55391

Vice-President: Andrew Marlow

10700 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka 55343

Secretary: Michael Denesuk

910 21st Ave. S. E., Minneapolis 55414

Treasurer: George H. McCollough

8812 Tretbough Dr., Bloomington 55431

Past-President: Chet H. Groger

6836 Creston Road, Edina 55435

DIRECTORS:

Robert G. Churilla

3725 Lincoln St. N. E., Columbia Hts. 55421

Dale Durst

6108 Oaklawn Ave., Edina 55424

Robert L. Smith

4215 Kentucky Ave. N., Crystal 55428

Stanley P. Van Vorst

2210 Edgecumbe Rd., St. Paul 55116



FIRST CLASS MAIL

To

MR. HOWARD H. BERG
10107 LAKEVIEW DR.
MINNETONKA, MN 55343