

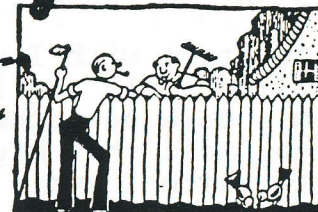


The Garden Spray

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

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

February 1989 Volume 49 Number 2



THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB IS SCHEDULED

For Valentines Day, February 14th

Valentine's Day? That's right! However, you needn't bring any valentines unless of course, you still possess one of those old penny horrors so common years ago to share with your friends at table. The Board has kept the cost down to the usual \$6.00 by agreeing to purchase the paper goods usually supplied by the caterer and naturally they wouldn't tamper with the time, 6 P.M. for fear of losing hungry customers. The place? Lake Harriet United Methodist Church, 49th St. at Chowen Ave. S. No change.

RUSH YOUR RESERVATION BACK TO GENE ACKLAND

PROGRAM

State Fair Vegetable/Flower Shows

Speaker: CURT KLINT - University of Minnesota retired

Ever want to enter any of the shows at the fair, but found yourself intimidated by the people, the parking, the competition or lack of information? Come hear Curt Klint explain his work on the vegetable shows and how you could participate. The time to think about shows is now, when you order your seed.

Tree Maintenance

Speaker: RALPH GREILING

Ralph is a private contractor with a degree in forest land management. He trims the high stuff at the arboretum. This is rescheduled from the November meeting. Winter is prime time for your tree work.

DALE DURST DISCUSSES STARTING BEGONIAS FROM SEED

I have been starting fibrous begonia seed since seeing the mammoth plantings in Australia and New Zealand. Up until that time I thought that begonias could only grow in the shade. But I had two circles in my front yard where I had recently taken out scotch pine trees and I wanted to re-plant in color. Begonias could be the answer.

To start with I use a combination of 3 parts JIFFY MIX and 1 part sterilized soil. I fill a 4½" clay violet pot to within ¾" of the top. I mix some powdered sphagnum moss into the top ½" of soil to help overcome any mold that might occur. I then soak the soil with dechlorinated water to which I add 4 drops of hormex to the gallon.

Begonia seed is very fine--approximately two million seeds to the ounce. It looks like dust. I empty the seed package onto a sheet of white paper and gently spread the seed over the pot. The average seed package holds approximately 500 seeds so I only use half of the seeds to a pot. I do not cover the seed with soil.

I then mist the pot with a water hormex mixture. I then cover the pot with cling wrap or other plastic film.

Begonia and geranium and most other seeds need steady bottom heat of 65-80 degrees to germinate. I find that my furnace top has steady heat of 70 to 80 degrees so I keep my pots there for one or two weeks or until I see seeds starting to germinate. I am careful to see that the soil does not dry out. I also gently mist the top with the hormex water spray.

After two weeks I place the seed pots on the upper shelf of my violet stand just above the ballast of the lower lights. I found this area gave off a temperature of 80°. My light stand is on a 14 hour cycle.

The light given off by my fluorscent bulbs is over 500 foot candles which I think is too strong so I cover the pots with a sheet of Kleenex. This reduces the light to 150 foot candles. I keep the pots covered with Kleenex for two weeks past the time they start to germinate, then I remove the Kleenex and place the pots to within 3 inches of the light. All this time I keep the pots covered with plastic wrap.

If you try my method you will have to be careful not to let the soil dry--but do not over water.

No matter how careful you are the seed seems to spread in clumps. Also of the approximately 200 seed you scatter only 75 or 100 will germinate. When they grow about ½" tall, they will be crowded so I transplant them by clumps. I water in with the standard hormex transplant mixture of 10 drops hormex to the gallon. After this they will grow faster. Then they can be given a final transplant into six-packs.

Editor's Note: Dale also showed the tops of plastic pop bottles he cuts off for use in covering newly planted pots of seed.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBER Matthew N. Smith who is already listed in our 1989 Directory.

Add Charles Proctor's name to the Christmas Party and the Plant Auction committees.

Notes from the President . . .

Moving along with the theme of the musical garden--
Are we all whole notes or at rest with our garden?
I suppose some of us are like 16th notes tripping
here and there to get those little seedlings grow-
ing for next summer.

We have people in our club who give that strong
sturdy beat to our club's functioning and activities.
Recognizing this fact I would like to highlight one person each
month who adds to the steady pulse that makes MGCM such a great
club.



MGCM FEBRUARY PERSON OF THE MONTH The person for February joined our
club in 1981. His work during the year is continuous. The hardest part
of his job comes in November--getting people to turn in registrations for
the next year. He is also busy preparing our revenue and expenditure
statement, so Frank Vixo may audit it. This month I'd like to recognize
Joe Stenger for his hard work as treasurer of our club.--Thanks Joe.

I would also like to recognize Howard Berg for his hard work on the
Christmas Party. He and his committee put in many hours "pulling off"
this traditional event. It was the feeling of the Board that most every-
one enjoyed the party. Ease in parking adds positive dimension to this
party.

Most of the seed catalogs are in our hands. At last month's meeting we
got a chance to share the wisdom of many of our members about their spec-
ialties. Most of the Garden Centers know what plants do best in Minnesota.
It has been suggested that we should buy locally. Why do we continue to
buy from companies out of the state? A couple of reasons come to mind--
Some varieties that one likes are not available from local nurseries.
Also we like to try something as an experiment.

Have you noticed that Stohes has gone to a larger format? They have quite
a bit more color this year. I think we tend to buy more when we can see
the end result.

The Master Gardening Program is a very worthwhile activity. During
January one takes 48 hours of class and then during the year volunteers
50 hours of community service. Mel Anderson and I will join those who
are in the program. There are over 100 people enrolled in the Master
Gardener program or taking it as a short course. This year we meet
Tuesday and Thursday evenings 6:30 - 9:30 and Saturday 8 A.M. - 2 P.M.

You remember that Archie Caple gave a talk about this program last April.
Give Archie a call if you have further questions or call the Hennepin
County Extension office (542-1427) and have them mail you an application
form for next October.

--Duane Johnson

The apple probably is the most researched of all fruits, but yet there
is no apple insect resistant.

GREEN THUMB RECIPIENTS - MGC MINNEAPOLIS

We have been presenting the GREEN THUMB AWARD for about thirty years, when I brought it back from either Portland or Seattle, where it had originated. To us it is a recognition of those men who have supported club activities by being present at every meeting throughout the year. Over the years we have recognized sixty-seven members for this service - several of them many times, as they increased their number of years of perfect attendance. From the records, these are the people whom we have praised:

The record is held by Evald Johnson for 14 years, followed by Jack Peterson for 11 years and Dale Durst and Bill Swanson for 10 years each.

The next group consists of Fred Glasoe for seven years and these six year fellows: Ed Culbert, Chet Groger, Carl Holst, Nate Siegel and Harry Sova. Then came Sherm Pinkham at five years.

The four year members are: Archie Caple, Verner Carlson, Paul Lindstedt, Jim Perrin, Duane Reynolds, Marlin Rosin and Russ Smith.

And, at three years we have: Cliff Brisco, Paul Burt, Burton Deane, Dave Johnson, Andy Marlow, Bob Olson, Darwin Price and Bob (Robert L.) Smith.

Our two year men are: Walt Flumerfelt, Donald Jepsen, Art Johnson, Clarence Knooblauch, Herb Neby, Phil Peterson, Charlie Proctor, Dean Schneider, Joe Stenger, and Erle Tornstrom.

Those with perfect attendance for only one year have usually had problems with health or jobs requiring much traveling. They are: Roger Anderson, Rick Bonlender, Vinton Bouslough, Bob Churilla, Bill Cowcill, Tommy Falconer, Bill Frederick, Bob Gage, Ev Haedecke, Henry Halvorson, Bill Hull, Manly Jackson, Charlie Jonas, John Lillibridge, Bob Livingston, Walter Menzel, Jim Mielke, Maurice Moorman, Watt Myers, Carleton Nelson, Len Nelson, Otto Nelson, Art Olson, Jerry Olson, Ted Olson, Jerry Shannon, Juel Shefland, Cameron Smith, Dwight Stone, Milt Thomas and Dick Victor.

You newer members will see quite a few strange names hereon; in most instances they are of members who have died but to we older members they bring back memories of some wonderful fellows.

Shoot for perfect attendance this year. Look at the wonderful program we had in January to start the year and anticipate a great year of gardening information. We understand a new technique of registration may be established soon - and we'd like nothing better than to honor you a year from now for being a Green Thumber.

Bill Hull
Historian

TRISTAR STRAWBERRIES

At the 1986 convention of Mens' Garden Clubs of America in Albany New York one of the subjects in the seminars was Tristar Strawberries. They sounded so exciting that I could not resist ordering them as soon as the convention was over-- in late July.

Tristar strawberries are one of two varieties (Tribute is the other) that are a day neutral variety. Day neutral as used here means that the day length (as long as there is some daylight) does not affect their bearing ability. This is the opposite from June berries which bear in June because they are programmed to bear at that day length.

The catalog description of Tristar is:

"With this new everbearer it is possible to enjoy fresh strawberries from spring until fall. Bearing at approximately 6 week intervals. Tristar will produce a heavy early crop, a lighter summer crop, and a good yield again in the fall. The medium size firm fruit has excellent sweet flavor with good red color throughout. Few varieties can rival it for eating out of hand. Has good plant hardiness with resistance to red stele, verticillium wilt, powdery mildew and leaf scorch. Ideal for hanging baskets. Due to light runner production we recommend denser planting for this variety."

I ordered 25 plants, but anticipated that they would not be sent that late in the season. The plants arrived promptly about the first of August. I looked at them and thought that they were all dead, but further looking revealed life in all. I then potted them in 4" pots. All showed some growth but only about 10 survived in those pots..

Wanting to test them as a hanging basket plant I potted two 10" baskets with 3 plant per basket and planted the rest in the garden. The hanging baskets did O.K. but I lost the ones in the garden.

The hanging basket plants did bear 4 or 5 nice strawberries but were bothered by spider mites and required nursing and spraying.

By spring I had 5 or 6 week plants and/or runners remaining. Those were planted in the garden. They started slow but then grew well and by mid summer were producing. By fall, until frost, I harvested berries. There were some runners and as the description indicated, they did bear on the new plants even though they were not rooted. By fall my bed-- 4'x7' was about 25% full of plants.

The plants wintered well in the garden with a straw mulch. In spring the plants started producing. The only problem I noticed was some deformed berries on the early crop. This I believe was due to insect damage, not the plant. The later season berries did not have this problem. By fall the bed was full of plants and I harvested strawberries until frost. The best were the late season berries. I harvested about one pint of berries per day average) from the bed.

(continued)

The best and largest berry was of course the first or King berry. That was much larger than the rest of the, generally 6, other berries each stem produced. The berries were generally nice and firm but are not as sweet as others which I have eaten.

After two seasons of garden production I am satisfied with this variety and particularly enjoy the late season production. I think with a spraying program in early spring to control the insect problem will also make the early season production desirable.

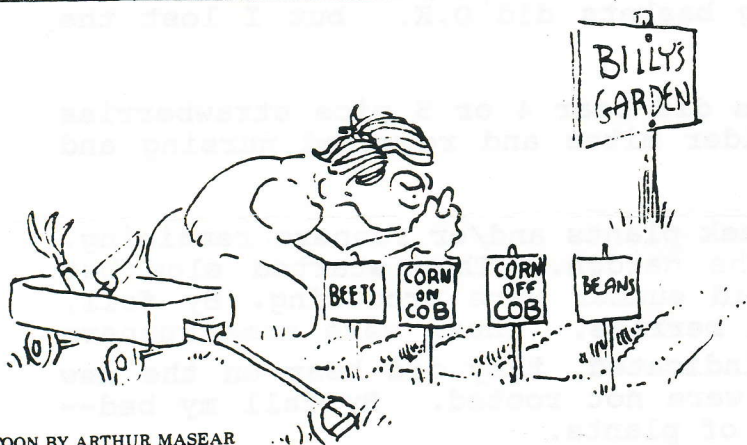
- Russell Smith

1989 DIRECTORY CHANGES

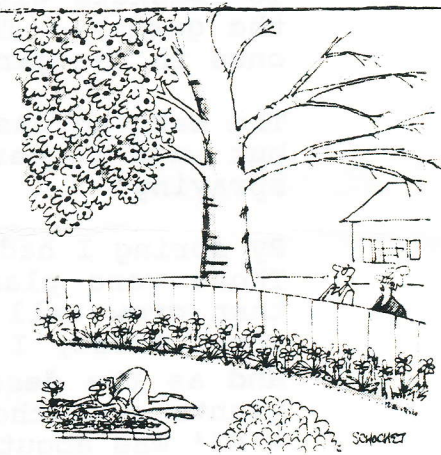
DUANE REYNOLDS Business telephone number is 422-4696
GERHARDT ROTHEN Telephone number is 789-4873
GREGORY SMITH Address and telephone should be
1540 Rhode Island Ave. N. 591-5996
Golden Valley, MN 55427 545-4404

George Washington was not only the first president--he was also this country's first rose breeder. Franklin D. Roosevelt's will stipulated that he be buried in his mother's rose garden in Hyde Park, N.Y.

Some plants such as ferns, should be watered as soon as the soil surface feels dry. Others such as the rubber tree, should be allowed to dry an inch or more below the soil surface.

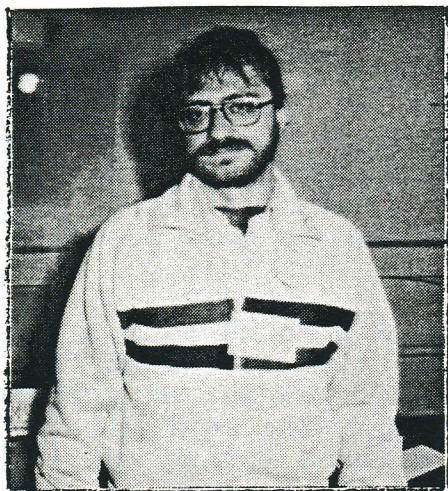


CARTOON BY ARTHUR MASEAR



"Talk about green thumbs!"

**"Life begins the day
you start a garden!"**



Gerhardt Rothen

THE JANUARY MEETING

After dinner and induction of officers for 1989 Certificates of Award were presented as follows:

- To GERHARDT ROTHEN: 1988 Rookie of the Year
- For perfect attendance: 4 Years, DUANE REYNOLDS and RUSSEL SMITH; 2 Years, JOSEPH STENGER; 1 Year, PHIL PETERSON.

Dale Durst opened the program part of the meeting by telling about his begonia seeding technique (See page 2).

Much discussion followed Dale's presentation. Part was engendered by Roger Koopman's report that at a seminar he recently attended Michigan researchers claimed plants grow only during the 15 minutes before sunrise and the 15 minutes after sunset.

Then Dave Johnson talked. He said he started his begonias March 1st, kept the lights on 24 hours and got "beautiful plants". His comment that he used "the diaper pail" when he first started planting brought the expected comments and questions.

Kent Petterson and Dave both talked about catalog buying. Dave advised collecting the catalogs of all the companies you are likely to buy from to study pictures, descriptions, packet contents (ounces or number of seeds) before buying. Kent discussed the virtues of various catalogs and named numerous Minnesota sources of seeds and plants.

There weren't as many Green Thumbers as usual this year to hear Bill Hull's briefing on Green Thumb history. That proved to be a good thing for the rest of us if it caused him to prepare the article on page 4.

Evald Johnson during his lifetime as Bill notes in his article achieved a record of attending 168 consecutive MGCM meetings (14 years). No current member save Dale Durst (10 years) has anywhere near reached this record. Even Evald's record was exceeded by Glen Ives of the Seattle MGC who until August 18, 1988 had never missed a meeting of his club for 27 years. The night he ended his stretch he was helping the Gladiolus Society set up a display at a shopping mall.

MGCM BOARD ACTIONS IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

- Decided to drop the Raffle Committee.
- Relieved the Club caterer of costs of paper products used.
- Appointed a sub-committee to investigate the need for developing and/or updating documentation of Club procedures and traditions.
- Discussed need for a family membership policy (dues structure).
- Voted to plant annual flowers at Lake Harriet United Methodist Church each year to show our appreciation.

NAMES OMITTED Paste in your 1989 Directory

Jach, D. P. "Dan" (1981) 473-1665
2640 Jewel Lane (Fran) 377-8133
Plymouth, MN 55447

Smith, Douglas (1982) (218) 682-2279
R.R. 1, Box 109 (Dolores)
Hackensack, MN 56452

DRIFT FROM THE SPRAYER
by Ed Culbert

Would you believe it? Chewing gum kills moles. At least that is what an unidentified member of the Watchung Hills, N.J. MGC intimates in their bulletin GREEN SPROUTS: "Last summer's severe drought did have one beneficial effect: for the first time in many years our garden was not plagued by slugs. And incidentally, the dropping of a stick of Juicy Fruit chewing gum into each newly appearing mole hole seems to have brought under control their population."

Several years ago I read that chickadees would be attracted to a turkey carcass hung from a branch after Thanksgiving. I tried it. What fun! I did see a few birds but the squirrels are the ones who put on a performance. I hung the carcass down from a lilac branch. The squirrels tried to pull up the carcass by the twine. Then they climbed in and had a feast. Before spring even most of the bones were gone.

One year the entire turkey disappeared shortly after I hung it. It could have been a wandering dog for there was a pile of hard show underneath but I blamed the squirrels for it was nowhere to be found. Since then I have used wire coat hangers. Now they don't work either. Last year the bones disappeared in February. This January I saw the turkey skeleton one day when I went out to shovel my front sidewalk. An hour later only the coat hangers were left. I'll bet those bones are high up in the big white pine in my neighbor's back yard where I heard squirrels chattering.

Last winter one Mr. Squirrel learned how to remove the top of my bird feeder. I saw him prying off the lid. I saw him dipping into the feeder and throwing the seed down onto the ground where he later sat eating it. He hasn't returned this winter and so far I haven't seen any of the other squirrels shinnying up the metal bird feeder pole or leaping from the lilac to the feeder perch.

Did you ever wonder what members are on the permanent reservation list? For 1989 they are Gene Ackland, Charles Benson, Howard Berg, Bob Churilla, Ed Culbert, Burton Deane, Fred Glasoe, Chet Groger, Walt Gustafson, Dave Johnson, Duane Johnson, Andy Marlow, Jerry Olson, Kent Petterson, Duane Reynolds, Greg Smith, Matt Smith, Russ Smith, Joe Stenger, Bob Stepan, Dwight Stone, Norm Ter Steeg and Frank Vixo.

Duane Reynolds has been elected president of the dahlia society. Congratulations!

What keeps the SPRAY functioning? Your help--for which I am thankful. In addition to those who have had by-lines they are Rick Bonlender (Board minutes), Glenn Bartsch (mailing labels), Joe Stenger (miscellaneous), Barbara Culbert (mailing help), Nancy Tallman (turning my ideas into attractive typing) plus the many others whose comments, suggestions, tips have led to material for our pages.

ATTENTION PHOTOGRAPHERS: Bob Lyons will talk on "PRACTICAL TIPS ON TAKING PICTURES" at 7:15 P.M. Thursday February 17 at the Earle Brown Center on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus. The meeting is open to the public.

The turnip leaves have 6,000 times more vitamins than the turnip.