

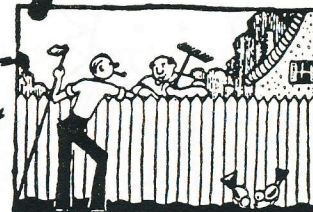


# The Garden Spray

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

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

March 1983, Volume 41, Number 3



Here it is, the previously announced  
MGCA MEETING in conjunction with THE DAYTON-BACHMAN FLOWER SHOW

THE DATE: Thursday March 24th (Note the changed day and week.)

THE PLACE: Dayton's Skyroom, Minneapolis downtown store. (Store will be open.) This will be a private dinner for MGCM members, their wives and guests, featuring Chicken Provencale.

THE PROGRAM: Our speaker will be a representative from Dayton's Department of Special Projects and Services.

THE PRICE: \$7.50 per person

THE TIME: 6:00 PM

-- BY RESERVATION ONLY --

RESERVATIONS MUST BE IN BY MONDAY, MARCH 21ST AND SHOULD BE MAILED WITH YOUR CHECK BEFORE THAT TIME. FILL IN THE RESERVATION FORM AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE AND MAIL TO:

George McCollough, Treasurer, 8812 Tretbough Drive, Bloomington, MN, 55431

## NEW COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

COMMUNITY GARDEN Committee - Dick Bormes  
PHOTOGRAPHY Committee - Bob Livingston, Jerry Shannon  
PLANT AUCTION - Jim Tuff (Remove Livingston)  
YOUTH GARDENING EDUCATION Committee - Dale Durst, Carl Holst

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RESERVATION(S) FOR MGCM MEETING THURSDAY EVENING MARCH 24  
Return this form with your check payable to MGCM to  
George McCollough, 8812 Tretbough Drive, Bloomington, MN, 55431

I plan to attend. Reserve \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) for me (\$7.50 each)

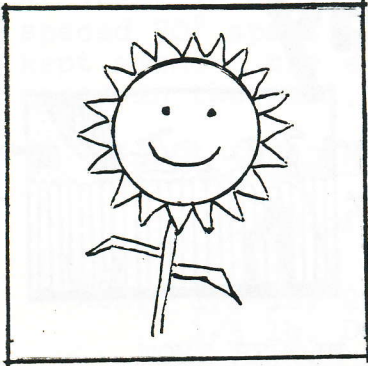
My check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_

My Guest(s) will be \_\_\_\_\_



## JUST AMONG US GARDENERS



Those members attending the January meeting will remember the introduction of Past Presidents and their recognition for service to the Club. I referred to them as the backbone of the Club. Since then, I have called on them for their advice and suggestions for the continuing welfare of the Club. These Past Presidents have a wealth of information among them concerning the activities of the Club in past years and which programs and projects worked and which did not. As the result of a meeting with this group, I have been able to make suggestions to our Board for the betterment of our club year. Drawing on only a few of the many subjects discussed, I have recommended that we activate or

reactivate some programs and procedures. The Club can assimilate only a few changes in a year and I am recommending to future Club Presidents that they meet with Past Presidents each January to help plan the Club's future. These are some of our plans:

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS: Members will be encouraged to form groups interested in Vegetables, Annuals & Perennials, Iris, Peonies, Roses and Lilies. These groups will be available to all members for information and assistance and to the Program Chairman for programs and/or demonstrations.

MEETING DEMONSTRATIONS: An attempt will be made to add interest to each meeting by having a member conduct a timely demonstration, such as seeding, transplanting, pruning, etc.

FIELD DEMONSTRATIONS: During the gardening season, members will offer to be listed in the Spray each month for timely field demonstrations. When a member is going to prune his roses, disbud his dahlias, divide his iris or tip his roses, members would be welcome to come on the day announced to observe and learn. Our Editor would need the information on the 15th of the previous month.

BACKYARD COFFEE VISITS: Members will be encouraged to let our Editor know as above when they would welcome members to stop by on a Saturday for a visit and to view their gardens. We sometimes lack the neighborliness attributed to gardeners and we should return to the old-fashioned backyard visits.

There are more possible additions to our club year that merit consideration and could be added as situations warrant their use. There should be more to our Club than a good dinner and speaker. There should be continuing activity outside the meetings where members can work together and get to know each other. The Community Garden is a good example of this but we need more. There is the danger that our Club could, as it grows, make getting acquainted more difficult. This can best be overcome by first working with a group or committee and then expanding acquaintances from there.

Toward that goal, I am gratified by a member coming forth with a suggestion that we start a YOUTH GARDENING PROGRAM. In my quest for committee members, Jim Fishbaugher suggested he would like to serve on such a committee if we had one. Jim is in the Edina School system and pointed out that we have several members in the educational field. I have, as a result, appointed several members from that field to the YOUTH GARDENING EDUCATION COMMITTEE with Jim as chairman. They will formulate plans for the year and will call for additional members to work with youths in their gardens this summer. Some members have worked with this program some years ago when the Club participated. They will be called on for guidance in our first year of return to the national program, which includes the Big Pumpkin and the Giant Sunflower. Please volunteer your help to this committee and participate in a very worthwhile activity. It will culminate in a show with National Awards and recognition of all youths participating in the program.

One of the first things a new president of MGCM notices is the willingness of members to help in any way asked. This is a mark of a good club and a primary reason for the continuing success of our MGCM. I am looking forward to a very active year for our Club and it will all be due to the cooperation and volunteer efforts of our members.

- Chet Groger



## YOUNG GARDENERS NEED YOU

Share your expertise and enthusiasm for gardening with a child. Be a volunteer and help with the Children's Summer Growing Program at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

The program begins in late April and runs for 14 sessions through mid-August. The children come on Saturday mornings until June when school is out and then come one morning a week. The program is open to any child 8 through 12 years of age who wants to garden. Eighty children participate. Two children work together on a plot which is theirs to plant and care for and have all they produce. There is a fair at the end of the course, ribbons are awarded and each child receives a T-shirt. The fee is \$20 for Arboretum members, \$25 for non-members.

The role of the volunteer includes assisting the instructor to direct planting in the spring, help the children use and care for tools, recognize a weed from a vegetable, and harvest and weigh in their produce. If you so desire you may actually teach a segment or part of one during the class period which is a part of each session.

Experience the thrill of seeing the eagerness and pleasure of children as they plant the seeds and later harvest their crops. Why not volunteer now and also

register your own child or grandchild. 1983 Children's Garden Registration Day is Saturday, March 26, 10 A.M. to 2 P.M., at the Learning Center. Remember, the future of gardening rests with the children. Help them to have a successful experience.

To volunteer or if you have any questions or need more information, contact Sandy Tanck, Learning Center Director, at 443-2460.

--Dale Durst

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### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS:

If you would like to join with other members with the same special interest, check this list of Special Interest Groups being formed and call Chet Groger. You will be listed in the group or groups of your choice.

<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/> Annuals	<input type="checkbox"/> Perennials	<input type="checkbox"/> Dahlias
<input type="checkbox"/> Iris	<input type="checkbox"/> Indoor Gardening	<input type="checkbox"/> Peonies	<input type="checkbox"/> Roses
<input type="checkbox"/> Lilies	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth Gardening		



## HELPING TREE ROSES SURVIVE OUR LONG WINTERS

by Charles L. Jonas, MGCM member

Tree roses are always a most attractive addition to our yards. Years ago the problem of wintering them was assumed by Bachman's. For a small fee they would pick your rose trees up after the first heavy frost and care for them during the winter months. Some time ago, they decided they were running out of space and discontinued the program.

They told us that it would be necessary to bury our rose trees during the winter season. Since they know their business, and I have seven or eight rose trees, I have worked out a simple method of putting my "babies" to sleep. Here is my method.

These lovely little trees are usually six to seven feet in height and come in large plastic pots. I never remove the tree from the pot in which it is delivered to me. Should I wish to plant it in the garden, I dig a hole wide enough and deep enough to set the pot into. Again, I do not take the tree out of the pot. I have attractive plastic planters into which I put the trees, pot and all, for the summer. Each planter sets in a dish which holds excess water for the plant's needs. Normal rose care will provide beauty all summer.

Comes a good frost in the fall and the tree roses must be put to bed. Here is how I make them comfortable:

In my vegetable garden area I dig a trench long enough, wide enough and deep enough to lay all my trees, pot included, in the trench. Since I have several trees, I will lay some one way and the rest the opposite way. The trench should be wide enough so that each tree can lie on the bottom. Since it is fall I have a good supply of leaves so I put a bed of leaves on the bottom of the trench before laying my trees down. I will then put a cover of leaves on top of the trees and finish off with a large sheet of plastic atop the bed. I use the plastic to enable me to get the trees out of their bed in the spring without damaging the trees with the shovel. The sheet of plastic should be large enough so that it will lap over the sides of the trench after all the dirt has been put back.

Now, I put all the dirt back. There will be a small mound on top which is fine. My "babies" can now sleep peacefully all winter.

After the ground is warm and soft in the spring, I dig my trees up being careful when digging down to the plastic cover. I then roll the plastic back as I remove the dirt cover. Then I carefully take the trees out of the trench, stand them up and use the garden hose to wash off the old leaves.

Within a few days, all the rose trees will awaken ready for another season in the sunshine. I also bury in the same trench some rose bushes and miniature roses which I keep in pots. I have the same good luck in getting them through the long winter.

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Weather means more when you have a garden. There's nothing like listening to a shower and thinking how it is soaking in and around your lettuce and green beans.



## SPRING PREPARATION OF YOUR LAWN

by Jack Kolb, MGCM Member

Spring lawn care is one of those areas of more overkill than neglect. Of course, the secret to spring lawn success is dependent on how the lawn was "put to bed" in the fall. If the proper procedures had been followed for fall preparation such as a fertilization with high nitrogen, low phosphorous, high potash fertilizers, adequate moisture into late fall, etc., most of your work and worry are already done.

Be that as it may -- Let's proceed with the spring preparation: Light raking is desirable to remove leaves and trash. Too often, however, spring raking is severe and a lot of good turf plants are removed with the trash. The freezing of the soil during the winter actually aerates and nearly cultivates the soil. That is, the soil particles have been moved away from each adjoining soil particle by frost action, leaving the soil in a very fluffed condition. This action leaves many plants loosely anchored and severe raking can actually remove them from the soil.

Soil temperature will determine, somewhat, how fast your lawn will begin to grow and take on good color. Grass begins to grow at soil temps of 33° and higher. Soil temperatures are influenced by a variety of circumstances and a lot of spring sunshine is not all the answer. Spring soil temperatures are influenced more by water than sunshine and often you will notice that everything turns green after one particular rain. That rain was probably quite warm and occurred at a particular time when it had a lot of influence on soil temperature.

Since mother nature does not always send moisture when needed, you should consider doing it yourself by sprinkler or irrigation. Watch the soil moisture. It often times can be quite dry in the spring. Never keep your soil saturated! Irrigation under certain circumstances can raise the temperature of your soil. The more important use of irrigation, however, is to keep the moisture adequate for turf survival.

Fertilization should be the next step in spring lawn care. As stated earlier, it is to be hoped that proper fall care was adequate. Then the need for fertilizer could be delayed from early spring to late spring. Often fertilizers are applied too early in the spring. Many fertilize before the grass begins to grow.

The theory on fall fertilization is to have the grass plant store food reserves or carbohydrates in its food storage area (only perennial grasses have this ability), then in the spring while the soil is too cold for root activity, the energy from the sun and internal plant activity will utilize the stored up nutrition giving earlier greening and earlier growth. Spring fertilization can then be delayed until mid May or later, thus avoiding a flush of growth which can't be kept mowed and which also leads to thatch with Fusarium sp. problems.

In the writer's opinion, thatch removal should be accomplished in the fall months such as September unless the case is severe enough to warrant both spring and fall.

Mowing of the lawn can begin as soon as growth occurs. Because of the nature of the new growth in a grass plant, it is generally the oldest part of the grass plant that is removed by mowing. Thus that first cutting is going to remove the old discolored necrotic leaves and the brilliant color of the new growth will be more visible. This is the brilliance of spring  
(over)



which turns an older man's fancy to thoughts of ----- gardening and he finally has something which outdoes the gala of colors in the seed catalog which has been his companion since February.

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#### YOU, TOO, CAN BE A RHODODENDRON HYBRIDIST

By Weldon E. Delp, Crystallaire Rhododendron Foundation, Box 434, Harrisville, PA. 16038. Reprinted (briefed) with permission.

Help is desperately needed....., if we intend to keep introducing new and improved rhododendrons in the future. .... No matter on how small a scale, it is my desire to have everyone, with a love for the plant, become involved in a breeding program. I can, personally, guarantee great rewards and pleasure from your accomplishments, even if you raise only a few seedlings. Each cross you make, and plant you bloom, will constitute a first since there will be no other like it in the world. I've made many crosses over a period of thirty years, and have never seen a duplication. ....

I will give my procedure (in pollinating) in detail: Using at least five florets from each truss, remove the stamens and petals from the unopened buds. Snip off all remaining florets on the truss. Make your label (parent first x pollen parent) and attach to branch. Apply ripe pollen to pistil (stigma should be sticky) and cover with a small piece of surgical tape (available at drug stores). This is more effective than bagging or aluminum foil since it permits air circulation and yet protects from rain, wind, and insects.

Watch seed capsules closely in the fall, and when they begin to turn from green to yellow or brown, it is time to pick them. Let the capsules air dry until they open. The seed can now be gently shaken out. A few may have to be opened by hand, and on these I use a wire strainer to remove any chaff that is mixed with the seed. The seed may be sown anytime after being cleaned.

Collected pollen can be placed in a gelatin capsule and stored in the refrigerator for a period of three days. Then, place calcium chloride in bottom of glass jar, with a layer of cotton on top, and capsules of pollen put in last. Seal the jar with a lid, and store either on a shelf or in the refrigerator. These will keep for months. However, if you want to keep the pollen for more than this period of time, place the sealed jar in a freezer at zero degrees fahrenheit. When using the pollen taken from a freezer, allow it to reach outside temperature before using. The remainder of the pollen can be refrozen without any damage.

If you want to improve hardiness on a particular species for your area, raise successive generations of the seed from that species and keep selecting for the hardiest plants. To improve seed set, cross the two best of these seedlings. The first cross between two different species gives the largest percentage of good offsprings.

There are many factors to be considered when selecting plants for cross breeding and I will give you some tips that have helped me most through the years.

Many times the good traits in a hybrid are recessive and don't appear until after the second generation of selfing, or by making a cross of the two best seedlings.

(continued page 7)



HYBRIDIST, from page 6

Often there will be a first generation hybrid that cannot be interbred nor selfed. Simply solve this problem by using another parent plant that contains the characteristics you desire to introduce in this particular cross.

Excellent hybrids have been realized through back-crossing to the parent with the most desirable characteristics or to some similar plant with the same characteristics.

Much of the ground work has been done for you by your predecessors in the field of rhododendron hybridizing, so great numbers of first crosses have already been made, and you are free to continue on from there. All you need to do is select the mates you feel will bring out the very best and most desirable results. IF A BEE CAN DO IT - SO CAN YOU. ....

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#### ACCELERATED PROPAGATION OF RHODODENDRONS

By Weldon E. Delp, CRYSTALAIRE RHODODENDRON FOUNDATION, Box 434, Harrisville, PA. 16038. Reprinted by permission.

Rhododendron and Azalea seeds are among the easiest to grow. No stratification is necessary. They can be sown as soon as they come out of the seed capsule or can be held over as long as they are kept cool and dry.

#### DELP SEED GERMINATING MIX:

1 cu. ft. Plaster Grade Perlite. 1 oz. dry Aqua Grow  
1 cu. ft. Peat Moss (screened through 1/4" hardware cloth)

Firm mix in 4" square plantbands. Pour scalding water on bands containing mix with a sprinkling can, and let set overnight. The following morning, place 5" plastic labels on opposite sides of plantband. (One label is to contain seed identification.) Sprinkle seed on top of mix. DO NOT COVER SEED. Place plantband containing seed inside a freezer bag and close with a tie. Place containers where they will receive 70-75° F. bottom temperature and give them 18 hour day lengths. No further care is necessary until seeds have germinated.

As soon as the roots have gone into the mix, gradually give more air by opening bag. After one week, remove the freezer bag completely. At this point, mist the seedlings to keep medium moist. When the first true leaves form, it is time to transplant the seedlings.

#### DELP MIX FOR SEEDLING FLATS:

1 cu. ft. Michigan Peat screened through 1/4" hardware cloth  
1 cu. ft. Peat Moss screened through 1/4" hardware cloth  
1 cu. ft. coarse Perlite  
ADD: 2 oz. dry Aqua Grow 1/2 teaspoon FTE 503 (Peters)  
2 oz. Dolomitic lime 2 oz. Long Last Fertilizer (21-15-15)  
2 oz. 20% super phosphate 1 oz. 10% chlor dane granules

#### FORMULA FOR LONG LAST FERTILIZER:

15 lbs. Potassium Nitrate 15 lbs. Diamonium Phosphate  
15 lbs. Magamp (medium grade) 15 lbs. Muriate of Potash  
40 lbs. Urea Form

(continued over)



ACCELERATED PROPAGATION from page 7

I transplant into flats on 2" centers and induce rapid growth from January until June by maintaining a night temperature of 72-75° F. I give them at least 18 hours of daylight. This I accomplish by using 60 watt bulbs spaced 30" apart and 20" from the plants. After June 21st, the plants are kept without the extra heat and light, and are left to go into normal dormancy in the fall. After dormant, transplant into one gallon containers.

DELP MIX FOR GROWING ON IN ONE GALLON CONTAINERS:

3 cu. ft. Delp basic soil mix; 1 cu. ft. Peat moss  
1 cu. ft. coarse Perlite

ADD: 1/2 lb. 20% super phosphate      2 oz. dry Aqua Grow  
1/3 lb. Dolomitic lime      1 oz. 10% chlor dane granules

DELP BASIC SOIL MIX:

2 parts clay soil      2 parts Michigan peat  
2 parts humus      1 part coarse sharp sand

After transplanting into one gallon containers, the plants can be forced to bud by putting them in the greenhouse and keeping them under the same conditions as seedlings.

SEEDLING RHODODENDRONS WILL PRODUCE FLOWER BUDS ON THE FIFTH GROWTH CYCLE.

After budding, let them go dormant in a cool greenhouse (Below 50° F.) and they will flower normally in the spring.

DELP MIX FOR GROWING ON IN FIVE GALLON CONTAINERS:

Use same mix as for gallon containers, but add 1/2 lb. Magamp. Transplant these during April, May, and June. This Delp mix for growing on in five gallon containers is for rhododendrons only.

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WANTED

Someone to letter certificates for the club. This may include a quantity for Youth Gardening program. Contact Chet Groger.

ALSO WANTED

Plants from your growing spot under lights or from your greenhouse for the MGCM plant auction in May. Let Carleton Nelson know you will have some available.

BEFORE SPRING COMES REMEMBER:

- Winter months are the best opportunity to prune, repair and shape large and medium sized trees. Broken limbs and dead branches are easy to see, low branches can be taken off with less chance of damage. Plant Pathologists advise pruning oaks, apples, crabapples, and mountain ash only during the cold weather season to lessen the chances of spreading oakwilt infection or fire blight.
- To sandpaper those wooden tool handles. Sanding the handle smooth makes it fit your hand. It even helps when you are wearing gloves. Sanding takes down the part of the wood that has risen up over the winterlong storage period. The dust will fill the pores and give you some extra "grip".