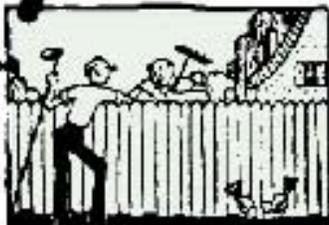




The Garden Spray

Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc
 2006, Volume 64, Number 10



Upcoming Events

| Date | Location | Event |
|-----------|----------|--|
| Oct. 10th | LHC | Botanical Treasures of China with Jay Hutchinson |
| Nov. 14th | LHC | Raingardens |
| Dec. 5th | LHC | HOLIDAY PARTY |

LHC = Lake Harriet Church (4901 Chowen Ave. S., Minneapolis)
 MF = Marshall Field's Downtown
 WLC = Westwood Lutheran Church

Botanical Treasures of China

China is a vast and extremely diverse country. This talk will provide a plant-oriented travelogue, starting in Beijing and ending in Tibet - a journey of more than 2,000 miles. You will see the gardens of the Forbidden City and Summer Palace, beautiful mountain forests in the Qingling Mountains of Shaanxi and enchanting valleys of eastern Tibet. Along the way a commentary on the Chinese and Tibetan culture will be provided.

Jay Hutchinson is a retired forester from the Forest Service's North Central Forest Experiment Station on the St. Paul Campus. He was a silviculture researcher in the State of Virginia and Pennsylvania and turned technical editor and popular writer later in his career. He's interested in ethnobotany--what native peoples use different plants for-- and has studied plants used in the Amazon since his retirement in 1993. He volunteers at the Como Conservatory interpreting useful plants and does a little writing for the International Wolf Magazine.

October Dinner Meeting: Tuesday, October 10th

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Gathering and Conversation | -----6:00 pm |
| Dinner | -----6:30 pm |
| Business Meeting | ----- Approx. 7:00 pm |
| Program | ----- Approx. 7:30 pm |

Dinner Reservations

Permanent reservations for the June dinner meeting are in effect. Permanent reservations are shown by the "p" on the mailing label or by the email message for those receiving the newsletter by email.

Reservations or cancellations are required by the Friday before the meeting. Call or e-mail Carole Anne Brekke (952-435-6029, numsix24@comcast.net) for your reservation or cancellation. For last-minute cancellations, call LeRoy Cech (952 435-7621). If he can sell it, you won't be billed.

A Word from the President

by Kristine Deters

Fall has arrived. As I write this message, the high for the day is supposed to be in the 50's. Not exactly typical September weather, but certainly not unusual. The cooler weather and reduced daylight hours have gotten me thinking about the end of the gardening season. Yet, with the sedum coloring up and asters starting to bloom, my garden is starting to look fresh and colorful again after the doldrums of late summer. It's hard to have to think about putting the garden to bed but that's exactly what we soon will be facing.

Fall also brings a return of our monthly dinner meetings. It is nice to have a change of pace during the summer months, but there is something comfortable and familiar about returning to a schedule. We can look forward to seeing friends again that we might not have seen at the tours. Also, a return to our speaker series gives us a jolt of enthusiasm for learning new things.

With several good speakers scheduled and a holiday party to look forward to, the remainder of the year should be a good one for MGCM.



A Note from the Editor

by Jason Rathe

If some tribe hasn't called fall "second spring," they should have. I think the roses have grown a foot in the last month and many perennials and annuals seem to have gained a second life. Maybe some of us have gained a second life, too, having survived the dog days of summer and now basking in the more humane breezes of autumn.

The presentation by Chuck Levine was certainly interesting. You never quite know what to expect with our presenters but it is generally memorable. I am looking forward to hearing the talk about China in October. I am always fascinated to hear about the similarities and differences in plant life around the globe.

Thanks to Chuck Carlson for all his articles. Read his reprint of an article on Sempervivums in this Spray. He always expands our range of plant knowledge. I am still haunted by the picture of his huge "Crown of Thorns" from the Food Flower and Foto Show. There **MUST** be a place in my house for one of those.

I try to stop by the outstanding local public gardens whenever I can. In this issue I briefly relate some of my impressions of recent trips to Noerenberg Gardens, Longfellow Gardens and the Landscape Arboretum. I have to admit being at Noerenberg in the fall is this gardener's heaven.

Jason Rathe



A Story of a Garden, and more...

Chuck Levine gave garden club members a rollicking and free-wheeling ride through the evolution of his unique garden during his talk at the September meeting. Taking a large piece of property along a major highway with absolutely no top soil, Chuck described how he had leagues of trucks dump stump grindings, wood chips and soil to form massive mounds in his yard.

These mounds turned to gold as they composted and provided the soil for his wide ranging interests and tastes. Chuck uses many tropicals, such as brugmansias, in his gardens and has a collection of over 30 cultivars of ginkgo trees. He is admittedly quirky and unconventional. He stations pink flamingos throughout the garden and practices laissez faire gardening where surprises and even diseases are not only allowed but admired. His pictures of stump fungi were truly stunning.



Speaker Chuck Levine



Sharla introduces two new members



Club Renewal Time

Alert from Sharla Aaseng

It is that time of year again when you need to renew your club membership for 2007. I know it seems early but time is needed to put all the information together for the directory. And, if you are or wish to be a member of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society (MSHS) through the club, then please send in your renewals by October 20th.

This date is a little earlier than usual but please consider being prompt. There is a copy of the newly updated renewal form on the website and in the Spray. When you renew, please fill out the "interests and activities section". You can just check off the ones you are interested in and mail that plus your renewal info to me:

Sharla Aaseng

1025 20th Avenue SE

Minneapolis, MN 55414-2511

Any questions? Please call (612-623-9341) or email me (nsaaseng@earthlink.net) Note: email in address book incorrect.

I look forward to seeing all of your renewals. I will also have forms at the October meeting and you can pay then. Thanks all, Sharla

As long as we are talking about members, there are two new members: Marjorie and Wilbur Maki.

10463 Spyglass Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55347
wmaki@mn.rr.com

Marjorie has signed up for FFF, Wilbur for Photography and both for the Holiday Party committees. So welcome our new members and be sure to add them to your committee lists.

Sundry Notes:

- * Elaine Spiegel is now Sunshine Committee Chair. Please send all news and flower-sending requests to Elaine.
- * Kent Petterson announced that there were three scholarship winners. The names will be announced later, but two were undergrads and one was a grad student.

Financial Snapshot

Financial Snapshot as of September 16, 2006

Checking account - \$61.98

CD's - \$10,345.42

Cash - \$100

Total - \$10,507.40

Meeting attendance (113 Members)

January - 48 members (43%) plus 3 guests

February - 35 members (32%) plus 7 guests

March - 31 members (28%) plus 18 guests

April - 42 members (38%) plus 6 guests

May - 38 members (34%) plus 12 guests

June - 42 members (37%) plus 1 guest

July Tour - 29 members (26%) plus 19 guests

August Tour - 24 members (21%) plus 18 guests

September - 46 Members (40%) plus 5 guests



MGCM NEW MEMBERSHIP & RENEWAL FORM for 200__

Name _____ Garden Partner _____

Address _____ Date _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

Email address _____ Occupation _____

Please check here if you are a Master Gardener _____

Please list me in the directory as a mentor gardener.

My specialties are _____

Please include me in the share and/or trade plants list. If interested, include category of plants _____

I will serve on the following committees (minimum of two), as I am able. Please circle choices.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Arbor Day | 8. Hospitality | 15. Sunshine |
| 2. Auditing | 9. Lyndale Park Garden | 16. Telephone/Email |
| 3. Awards/Trophies | 10. Membership | 17. Tours (Public) |
| 4. Flower, Food & Foto (FFF) | 11. Photography | 18. Tours (Club) |
| 5. Garden Spray | 12. Plant Auction | 19. Valleyfair |
| 6. Historian | 13. Publicity | 20. Youth gardening |
| 7. Holiday Party | 14. Scholarship | 21. On committee as needed |

I am willing to chair the _____ committee.

MGCM annual dues are \$10.00. If you wish to join the Minnesota State Horticulture Society (MSHS) through us, the dues are \$45.00 (\$10 + \$35) for a single membership or \$48.00 (\$10 + \$38) for a dual membership.

Are you a New member (Please see back) _____ or Renewal _____? MSHS: yes _____ no _____

Total paid by Check (payable to MGCM) \$ _____ or Cash \$ _____

NOTE: MAILING ADDRESS ON PAGE 4
and NEW MEMBER QUESTIONS ON PAGE 6



If you are a new member, please fill out the following information so that we can get to know you better:

Name _____

As a member of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis (MGCM), I will to the best of my ability

β Faithfully attend monthly meetings.

β Participate on club committees indicated previously.

β Willingly participate in the exchange of my horticultural skills and knowledge with club members and others in the community.

My reasons for wanting to join MGCM are _____

Other Horticultural Affiliations _____

Indicate what your current horticultural activities (a) and interests (i) are:

____ Container Gardening

____ Environmental projects

____ Flowers ____ annuals ____ perennials

____ Fruits ____ trees ____ bushes ____ vines

____ Greenhouse ____ gardening ____ propagation

____ Growing under lights ____ gardening ____ propagation

____ House plants ____ foliage ____ flowering

____ Hydroponics

____ Landscaping

____ Lawns

____ Trees and shrubs

____ Vegetables

____ Other _____

Signature of New Member _____ Date _____



Confessions of a Lazy Gardener: *New Things Tried in 2006*

by Mary Maynard

It's kind of embarrassing when a Lazy Gardener gets even lazier. This year, I only tried one new annual. I could run out the excuses -- like the white pine that is growing beautifully, and limiting my space to grow sunny annuals, or the cold wet May that limited my enthusiasm for shopping for new things. And the fact that, by the time I got around to thinking about annuals, the Jewels of Opar and Ageratum 'Blue Bouquet' seedlings had come up from last year and I decided to just let them grow.

Basically, I have gotten comfortable with some favorites and I don't always need to try the next thing. But -- I have had a lot of fun with one annual vine. I got one little plant of *Ipomoea lobata* (Spanish Flag) that Gary Geister brought to the MGCM sale in May. It looked tiny when I planted it at the base of our lamppost in the front yard. And it took a while to get established.

But now, it has completely covered the lamp. And the flowers are very distinctive, as you can see in the picture. After dark, the light of the lamp glows through the leaves for a very cool -- though not terribly practical -- effect.



I don't know a lot about Spanish Flag, but it seemed to thrive in a very hot spot in my front yard. It took a while to get going, and didn't start to bloom until late August. But it's now a bright spot in the fading garden, and I hope that Gary brings more seedlings next year!

LATE SUMMER INSPIRATION * ANNUALS IN LOCAL PUBLIC GARDENS

by Jason Rathe

It's late summer, the temps have cooled just a bit and it seems the garden year is winding down. But for annuals, it is in this late season where they hit their stride and there are several local gardens that show off the array of possibilities these plants offer.

I was driving to drop off my reservation at Bob Redmond's for the second of the Club's garden tours, when I realized I was passing **Longfellow Gardens**. Run by Minneapolis Parks, this garden in the vicinity of Minnehaha Falls is jam packed with annuals. I had been to this garden earlier in the summer and all there was to see was black dirt and plant labels. When I visited in August, it was stunning. The designer layers annuals, like brilliant red celosia, *Asclepias* 'Silky Gold', tall ageratum and *Verbena bonariensis* to dramatic effect. The garden is well thought out and features "designer-y" (is that a word?) effects like using tones of all one color. A yellow section brought together melampodium, a soft yellow pompom marigold, a yellow flowered *Nicotiana* and the yellow leaves of *Talinum* 'Kingswood Gold'.

If designer-y is a word, it can definitely be used to describe **Noerenberg Gardens**.



Typical gorgeous assemblage at Noerenberg



The entry border at Longfellow Gardens

While the bulk of the plantings are perennials, it is a good place to see annuals inserted into mixed borders to great effect. The color palette at Noerenberg is very narrow - grays, purples and reds dominate, while yellows and oranges are completely left out. The observer loses track of the vast array of different sages in the garden - purple sage, tricolor sage, Victoria blue sage, *Salvia argentia* etc..

I particularly like the use of tender perennials in this public garden. The garden is filled with eucalyptus and the ornamental grass *Pennisetum setaceum*, both not hardy in Minnesota.

Of course, the **University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum** is beautiful



at all times of the year, but my visit in early September showed off the annuals. The beds are filled with interesting specimens. One of the “Secret Gardens” (the current exhibition) in front of the main buildings featured huge banana trees and a green foliage plant I wasn’t familiar with, *Bassia scoparia* ‘Evergreen’. I wish I had a picture of this combination to show you because it is still emblazoned in my head. Another plant that caught my eye was *Ruellia brittonia* ‘Chi Chi’ - Mexican bluebell.



Oranmental peppers were used in profusion at Noerenberg

Although I have only had a chance to cruise through them this fall, the Trial Gardens at the **University of Minnesota St. Paul Campus** are always a good place to see great annuals (that are well grown). The gardens seem to expand in size and scope every year.



ABOUT SEMPS

Edited by Chuck Carlson From an article in the newsletter of the Genesee Valley Chapter Of the North American Rock Garden Society.

The Genus *Sempervivum* is monocarpic i.e. each rosette can only flower once and then dies. The dead plant can leave a hole in the clump, which can be a problem for the gardener or garden requiring a well-groomed look. The dead rosette can be carefully removed and the hole filled with a suitable gritty mix, or some of the rosettes, cut off when the dead stalk was removed, can be relocated to the empty space. Just in case you don't have an idea what a clump of semps looks like, the following picture will give you an idea what is being discussed.



In the picture above it's obvious some of the rosettes are starting to "grow up". This means they are going to blossom and so end the life of that rosette.



In the picture above, the same clump just two weeks later and rosette is now a blossom stalk with very beautiful blossoms.

Most Semp blossoms are well worth a closer look, as the picture below shows. A closer look at the picture below shows a lot of offsets or "chicks" ready to take the place of the dying rosette. This is the way most of us propagate these plants.



According to the literature, Semp flowers are hermaphrodite flowers and have first a male stage. Then the stamens curve themselves and spread away from the carpels at the center of the flower. So self-crossing is rather difficult. The color of the flowers is reddish, yellowish, pinkish, or white. In Semps the flowers are actinomorphic (like a star) and have more than six petals.

Below is a picture of the clump after the all of the blossom stalks have died and been removed. In this instance some of the rosettes were moved to fill in the holes left when the blossom stalks were carefully cut out. Depending on how you like to groom your garden, the stalks could have been cut off rather than cut out. This leaves the base of the stalk, which is already turning brown, as a brown patch in an otherwise growing clump. When six or eight stalks are cut off it leaves a lot of brown patches until they disintegrate.



If a large stalk is cut out and there are not enough "chicks" to fill in properly the hole can be filled with a gritty compost. Thus ends the saga of the life of a monocarp. There are many plant families that are monocarpic. It pays to know about them before purchasing a fine specimen and having it bloom before any offsets have been produced.





Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

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3542 40th Ave. S., Minneapolis
Recording Secretary: Denise Rust
7933 Girard Court, Brooklyn Park
Membership Secretary: Sharla Aaseng
1025 20th Ave. S.E., Minneapolis
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212 Interlachen Rd., Burnsville
Past President: David McKeen
2834 Vernon Ave. S., St. Louis Park

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The Garden Spray is published monthly by the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc. for its members. The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis is a not-for-profit, equal opportunity organization.

Return To:

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