



Bulletin of the Men's and Women's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

2015, Volume 73, Number 2
February

Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event
Feb. 10	LHC	New Plants for 2015
Mar. 10	LWC	10 Plants You Should be Growing
TBD	Macy's	Macy's/Bachman's Flower Show
May 12	SMG	Plant Sale and Auction

LHC = Lake Harriet Methodist Church, 4901 Chowen Avenue South, Minneapolis
LWC= Lakewood Cemetery, 3600 Hennepin Ave. S, Minneapolis
SMG= St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church, 3450 Irving Ave S, Minneapolis

More calendar information on Page 11

Note: Permanent reservations are in effect. Dinner is \$13. Reservations or cancellations are required by Friday, Feb. 6 – **no later!** Call or e-mail Carole Ann Brekke (952-435-6029, numsix24@comcast.net) for your reservation or cancellation. For last minute cancellations, call Alan Gallaher at 952-933-1713. If he can sell it, you won't be billed.

Menu for February Dinner Meeting

- Parmesan crusted Tilapia
- Swedish meatballs with noodles
- Ambrosia Salad
- Chocolate Dessert

**February Program:
New Plants for 2015
Meleah Maynard**



Meleah Maynard will give a presentation on new annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees that will be arriving on the market in 2015. Meleah is a freelance journalist and Master Gardener. In addition to

contributing articles, columns and essays on a wide variety of topics to print and online publications, including *Northern Gardener*, she writes the gardening blog, *Everyday Gardener* (www.everydaygardener.com). She is also the co-author of "Decoding Gardening Advice: the Science Behind the 100 Most Common Recommendations," published by Timber Press.

Schedule for Tuesday, February 10

- 6:00 Social
- 6:15 Dinner
- 7:00 Business meeting
- 7:30 Program

**Looking Ahead: March Program
Ten Plants You Should Be Growing
With Ted Beverly**

Notes from the Prez

-- Tom McKusick

I think February is kind of a weird month. Not only is it the shortest one, but for a gardener like me it's also kind of a gray, limbo-like time that hovers somewhere between the icy depths of winter and the first hints that spring really may be here someday. By now I've already gone through the new seed catalogs and made my selections, but for most of the vegetables I grow it's too early to start them. That's why when this time of year rolls around I seek refuge among indoor displays of plants. Working at the Home & Garden Show this month will provide some measure of relief; in between all the displays of hot tubs and outdoor kitchens and there are some real, live plants to look at. And nothing beats spending a gray February afternoon strolling around the Como Conservatory and breathing in the warm, humid air while marveling at all the beautiful blooms.

The program at our February meeting is also sure to provide a needed respite from winter. Our presenter is Meleah Maynard, who will tell us all about the Best New Plants for 2015. Those of you who read *Northern Gardener* know Meleah as a regular columnist and a frequent contributor of feature articles. She also writes a gardening column for the *Southwest Journal* community newspaper in Minneapolis. For the last few years she has written the "Perennial Favorites" column in my magazine, but with the upcoming March/April issue is switching to, "Garden Solutions". As a UMN certified Master Gardener, she was inspired to cover this topic by all the questions she gets from people when she staffs the Master Gardener Answer Table at events.

As members of this club, that's one advantage we have over other some gardeners: a wealth of gardening knowledge among us that we're

always happy to share with each other at our gatherings. Hope to see you at the meeting.

Editor's Note

-- Mary Maynard

Dave McKeen has stepped up once again. Several years ago, our club vice president had to resign from the Board, and Dave volunteered to finish the VP term and then serve as president the next year. Then we needed a treasurer, which is one of the busiest and most responsible positions on the board, and Dave stepped up. And this year, when we had trouble finding one last member to serve as a director, Dave came through again. Thank you, Dave! You will bring important perspective to the Board in 2015.

We hold one last club meeting for the year at Lake Harriet Methodist church in February. It always feels like "coming home" when we convene at Lake Harriet, since we've been meeting there for as long as I've been a member. But the facility at Lakewood Cemetery is lovely, and I look forward to the bright light and the lovely views across the grounds.

I'm looking forward to meeting Meleah Maynard at February's meeting. I've been reading her work at the *Northern Gardener* and the *Southwest Journal*. Maybe we're related somewhere back in the mists of time!

Finally, I wish to thank Kay Wolfe and Kirky Otto for their articles this month. Sometimes the *Spray* seems to cover only Club business. But I am happy to report that this issue contains two articles just about gardening.

The days are getting longer, and the average daily temperature has started going up again. Spring is coming!

Treasurer's Snapshot

As of 1/17/2015

Checking balance	\$23,724
Designated Funds	
Lyndale Park Garden	\$ 4,810
Scholarship	<u>\$10,915</u>
Working Balance	\$ 7,999
CD	\$5,260

Membership Corner

Welcome to our newest member Sue Pacquin. More about Sue in the March Spray.

Every Member Bring a Member

Welcome New Member

Judy Brooke

Welcome, new member Kristi Soli. She learned about us when she Googled "garden clubs".

Kristi was born and raised in Minnesota, but moved to the East coast after college where she resided for the next 20 years. Living in Connecticut, she did both flower and vegetable gardening. She moved back to Minnesota 6 years ago. Although apartment living in Edina has restricted her regular gardening activities, Kristi has expanded her interests to home and garden product designing. She's launching a new product this spring, a designer pot cover for hanging plants. You can view it on her website, www.potpants.com.



Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

Note: New Bachman's/Macy's Flower Show Date

This year's trip to the Macy's Flower Show will be earlier than originally expected, since the show closes on April 4. We are still nailing down the details, but it will probably be either Tuesday, March 31 or Wednesday, April 1. Watch the March *Spray* for details.

Save the Date: Plant Sale on Tuesday, May 12

Gary Geister, Plant Sale Chair

Mark your calendars for our Plant Sale!

Again this year we will be having our plant sale at St Mary's Greek Orthodox Church located at 3450 Irving Avenue South in Minneapolis (on the east side of Lake Calhoun).

If you know of plants that you would like to purchase at the sale let me know.

You can e-mail me at garygeister@aol.com

2015 Board Sworn In

The MWGCM Board of directors took the pledge at the January meeting. Thank you for stepping up to serve the club in 2015. And we thank Sandra Abraham, Ray Bauch, Nancy Bjerke, and Margaret Hibberd as they rotate off the Board.



The Board Pledge:

I pledge my life to the club,
 As long as I can serve and not flub.
 With a heart that is true
 I will work with this crew,
 And when finished I can soak in the tub.
 --Bob Olson, 2012

*Left to right: Dave McKeen, Director, Alan Gallaher, Treasurer, Laurie Levin, Recording Secretary, Mary Maynard, Pledge Administrator, Tom McKusick, President, Judy Berglund, Director, Judy Brooke, VP and Membership Secretary, Randi Larson, Past President, Bonnie Haehn, Director, Steve Shubick, Director
 Photo by Lloyd Wittstock*

One Last FFF Trophy Finds a Home



Mary Barsness missed the Holiday Party, so she didn't pick up the Robert L. Smith trophy for the best first-time exhibitor at the Flower, Food and Foto Show until the January Meeting. Congratulations, Mary! Enjoy that trophy while you can. When it comes to this trophy, you only get your name on in once.

FFF Chair Judy Berglund, left; and Mary Barsness. Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

FFF Featured Flower and Vegetable for 2015: Marigolds and Summer Squash
 More about Marigolds on Page 9. Summer Squash will be featured in the March Spray.

Two New Honorary Members: Roger Koopmans and Jerry Shannon

Mary Maynard

At the January meeting, the Club approved the nomination of two new Honorary Members.

Roger Koopmans has been an active member of this club since 1957. The club had only been in existence for 15 years when he joined. Roger is known for his extensive and meticulously maintained and labeled hosta collection. And his daylily collection is nothing to sneeze at, along with all of the other annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs that thrive in his Faribault gardens. He also known for unique, dramatic landscape features of his own design.

Roger and his wife Kak are also famous for their hospitality and generosity, having hosted many club tour visits – sometimes with music, and always with food.

By the way, Roger has the foresight to marry very well – into an MWGCM dynasty.

Jerry Shannon has been a member for a mere 37 years, not having joined the Club until 1977. Jerry has a tremendous breadth of plant knowledge. And his dramatic gardens are ready for visit 12 months of the year. His garden is almost certainly the most-toured garden in the club. Jerry's garden is known for unusual specimens: trees, shrubs, bog plants, green roofs, rock gardens, containers, water gardens, and perennials and annuals that we won't necessarily see just anywhere. But he also does the "regular" things exceedingly well. His vegetable garden is a thing of beauty and an object of general envy.

Jerry is also the only club member to have been accosted by the St. Paul Police – that we know of!

(New members – there's a story behind this!
Ask around!)



Jerry is always willing to share his knowledge. The FFF Committee, for one, has benefited from his advice, but members in general can count on him to know something on pretty much any topic.

Like Roger, Jerry married very well. His wife Lee is an outstanding partner in all things related to their gardens.

Left to right: Jerry Shannon, Roger Koopmans, Mary Maynard, who can't keep her hands off the microphone. Photo by Lloyd Wittstock.

2015 Rookie of the Year

Judy Brooke

Our recipient for 2014's Rookie of the year first learned about our club when reading the sign at the Lyndale Park Garden and later through our publicity notices in the *Star Tribune* and *Northern Gardener*. She attended the January 2014 dinner/program and decided to join our club, remarking that we were a welcoming group.

Soon our rookie had contributed a couple articles to the *Garden Spray* based on her experience as a Master Gardener Emeritus. And by spring she was a full-fledged team member on the Lyndale Park Garden committee where she was not only a regular part of the Tuesday crew but also took on extra projects photographing their weekly activities and sending the reports to the 'Spray'. She helped lead a class for high school teens where they could earn credit for a summer course and learn about jobs in the "green industry". Now she's serving on the park garden's "plant acquisition team helping identify, find and integrate the important plants needed for pollinators and butterflies.

Those that know our rookie have commented on her terrific attitude. She's a real asset to the club. Please congratulate the 2014 Rookie of the Year, **Kirky Otto!**

Kirky continues her service to the club. See her article on Page 10

January 2015 Board Meeting Highlights

Laurie Levin, Recording Secretary

Highlights of the January board meeting included:

- welcoming Dave McKeen as a new director
- nominating Roger Koopmans and Jerry Shannon for Honorary Life Memberships
- the announcement of the proposed 2015-16 budget
- the announcement that the Directory would be ready for distribution at the January general membership meeting.

The Nominating Committee is already being formed, allowing that group time to organize and recruit new board members.

An ad hoc committee is being formed to review the Member Handbook, and a second ad hoc group will be appointed to review the Club's Memorial Donations Policy.

The full minutes are available to any member who'd like more information after the minutes have been approved by the Board. Please get in touch with Laurie for a copy.

Green Thumb and Dirty Fingernail Awards for 2014

Photos by Lloyd Wittstock

To win a **Green Thumb Award**, a member must attend all dinner meetings and other events throughout the year. In 2014, the following members earned Green Thumb Awards:

Left to right:

Mary Maynard
 Randi Larson
 Carole Ann Brekke
 Judy Brooke



Dirty Fingernail Awards go to members who attend all of the dinner meetings, but missed one or more other events. Dirty Fingernail Awards went to the following members:

Sharla Aaseng	Margaret Hibberd
Joanne Bauch	Robert Kean
Ray Bauch	Dave McKeen
Judy Berglund	Tom McKusick
Nancy Bjerke	Tim Rosener
Chuck Carlson	Rodger Sefelt
Lynda Carlson	Stephan Shubick
Bonnie Haehn	Don Trocke



The Green Thumb Pledge

I pledge my life to the spade
 As long as I can spade in the shade
 With a heart that is clean
 And a Thumb that is Green
 Ah – that's the life that I crave!

News from the Lyndale Park Garden Garden-Worthy Conifers and Their Care, Part 1

By Kay Wolfe

The Lyndale Park Garden Committee is always learning through trials at the park garden. In 2000 we started experimenting with conifers in the “mixed border” garden. Now we grow about 30 different varieties of *Chamaecyparis*, Juniper, *Picea*/spruce, Pine, *Taxus*/yew, and *Thuja*/arborvitae.

Junipers are some of our favorites. They are drought tolerant and grow in various sizes and colors. Of the many tall blue varieties we are growing two. ‘Wichita Blue,’ reaching 18 x 6 feet, was planted as a backdrop in 2009. ‘Skyrocket’ has become a new favorite. In 2014 we planted 3 of them – they reach 15 feet but remain a narrow 2 feet. Two spreaders that we like are ‘Grey Owl’, a steely blue that gets 3 feet tall and 6 wide; and ‘Daubs’ Frosted,’ which has gorgeous foliage--frosted gold on new growth and blue underneath. It only reaches 18 inches with a spread of 5 feet. All junipers--including the uprights--need pruning to keep them thick and dense. Our oldest spreaders are *Juniperus chinensis* ‘Pfitzeriana Aurea.” Planted in 2004, the two plants have each spread to about 8 feet – we would not recommend them for a small garden! This year Rog Sefelt gave them a severe haircut. A lesson learned – don’t wait 10 years for hard pruning!

Arborvitae or *Thuja* also perform well at the park. We planted three ‘Yellow Ribbon’ in 2004 – their 10 year size is 8 feet by 3 feet. This past June Len Brenny helped us trim them. Note the “before” and “after” photos. Len told us to trim them each season – the foliage should grow dense so you cannot see through them. A favorite green arborvitae is ‘DeGroot’s Spire’ which reaches 10 feet tall but stays a narrow 3 feet. This species can be pruned to stay around 5 feet tall and form a narrow spike in the landscape. We plan to “trial” this procedure! We planted some old standby arbs – one ‘Techny’ in the far back, and five of the smaller ‘Technito.’ We use small globes near the border edge – two green varieties are ‘Little Giant’ and ‘Technito Globe.’ A new favorite is ‘Fire Chief’ – a gold variety that has reddish tones in the new growth. A small 3 foot globe, it is a great accent in the front of the border, and looks great next to purple or blue flowers.

The park garden is a showplace for new cultivars of low maintenance and hardy plants. Stop by the garden in spring when the crews are working – they are happy to share their knowledge. Also a big thank you to everyone who donated to help fund this educational project – we so appreciate your support. For more information on plants or work days contact Kay Wolfe at: mgcmgarden@q.com



Left to right: *Thuja* “Yellow Ribbon” before pruning; Same “Yellow Ribbon after pruning; New “Fire Chief”
Photos by Park Garden crew members.

FFF Featured Flower for 2015: Marigolds

Mary Maynard

Photos courtesy of Park Seed

Every year, one flower and one vegetable are featured at the Flower, Food and Foto Show. Winners are awarded a special ribbon and have a spot at the front table. This year, the featured flower is Marigold. Marigolds are generally easy to grow, preferring full sun and reasonably good drainage.

The FFF Show Catalog divides Marigolds into three sub-classes:

- Large, over 3 inches across: 3 blooms
- Medium, 2-3 inches across: 1 spray
- Dwarf, under 2 inches: 1 spray

The *Exhibiting and Judging Handbook* by the Minnesota State Horticultural Society defines a "spray" as a "small branch bearing dependent branchlets or flowers." Fortunately for us, the current version of the *Handbook* has been posted on line, and you can see a very nice illustration of the difference between a stem, branch and spray in the illustration on Page 125. Here's the link to the *Handbook*:

<https://www.northerngardener.org/images/website/docs/exhibitingandjudginghandbook.pdf>



Low Maintenance Gardening

Kirky Otto

How does your garden grow? If you already manage your gardens so there are no weeds or daily chores, you can probably move on to another article. But if you think you spend more time than you'd like on garden chores, you might find a suggestion or two here.

One of the most helpful websites for people wanting to make gardening a bit easier is SULIS, the Sustainable Urban Landscape Information Series produced by the U of MN Extension. Google SULIS, and it'll be the second or third site, right after the one about Celtic polytheism.

The whole point of the site is to make gardening sustainable, that is to keep labor, costs, chemicals, and water use to a minimum, while producing wonderful yards and gardens. Good idea!

Start with a basic question for yourself: can you tolerate imperfection? Cultivating the ability to overlook a couple weeds can be a good start to having a low maintenance garden. There are few gardens even on tours that don't have a weed here or there. A few weeds in a full garden won't have room to take over. On the other hand, lots of bare soil in either a lawn or a garden is an invitation to those weeds to multiply. You'll want to plant thickly, or mulch, or use ground covers as mulch to leave as little space as possible for weeds.

So, mulch. Or plant ground covers. Find the ones that work in your spaces. The periwinkle I planted under a new tree began to thrive after its first year, but the ajuga needed to move into a shadier part of the garden. Lee Reich's *Weedless Gardening* is a goldmine of advice on how to create new garden beds without digging, and using mulch to do it. If you're using wood mulch, do keep it back 2" from the stems of the plant, to avoid causing rot.

Another thing that helps make gardening low maintenance is to pay *some* attention. If you stroll past your garden a couple times a week, you'll see the problems when they're small and easy to rectify. Figure out what's causing the problem: a plant in too much shade or sun? A need for water? One sick plant that could spread its disease? Wimpy-looking plants that could use some nutrients? Then take care of that problem while it's a single problem. If it's an insect or weed, don't apply chemicals without identifying it, its growth habits, and the best chemical to use on it. Then apply only to the problem plant at the right time, rather than spraying everything in sight. If a plant is just not happy in that spot, try moving it. Get rid of diseased plants in the trash, not the compost pile. Find out what kind of fertilizer the wimpy plants need before applying anything.

If you're really tired of fussy plants, consider natives and ornamental grasses. This photo is an example of the ultimate low-maintenance garden bed. It was created with Lee Reich's method in a single day. It's 2 years old, and was watered only the first year; now it gets no additional water unless there's been no rain in 3 weeks; none of the plants need fertilizer; everything is cut back once a year, in the spring, just as the new grasses are starting to grow. It softens the fence, and provides winter interest, with almost no maintenance.



Calendar of Events

February 10, 2015

New Plants for 2015
Meleah Maynard
Lake Harriet Methodist Church

March 10, 2015

Ten Plants You Should be Growing
Ted Beverly
Lakewood Cemetery

TBD 2015

Macy's/Bachman's Flower Show
Macy's

May 12, 2015

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

June 9, 2015

Martagon Lilies
Frans Officer
Lakewood Cemetery

July, 2015 (Date TBA)

Garden Tour?

August 15-16, 2015

Flower, Food and Foto Show
U of M Landscape Arboretum

August, 2015 (Date TBA)

Garden Tour?

September 8, 2015

Laura Schwarz of Tangletown Gardens
Gardening in the Minneapolis Downtown
Improvement District
Lakewood Cemetery

October 13, 2015

Roses Return: New Hardy Shrub Roses for the
North
David Zlesak
Lakewood Cemetery

November 10, 2015

Hostas
Bob Olson
Lakewood Cemetery

December 8, 2015

Holiday Party

This Month's Contributors: Thank You!

Printed Content: Nancy Bjerke, Judy Brooke, Alan Gallaher, Gary Geister, Laurie Levin, Mary Maynard, Tom McKusick, Kirky Otto, Kay Wolfe.

Photography: everydaygardener.com, Park Garden photographers, Park Seed, Kirky Otto, Lloyd Wittstock

**MEN'S and WOMEN'S
GARDEN CLUB OF
MINNEAPOLIS, INC.**



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Club Officers:

President: Tom McKusick

Minneapolis

Vice President & Membership Secretary:

Judy Brooke

Minnetonka

Recording Secretary: Laurie Levin

Golden Valley

Treasurer: Alan Gallaher

Edina

Past President: Randi Larson

Minnetonka

Directors:

Judy Berglund

Minnetonka

Bonnie Haehn

Minneapolis

David McKeen

St. Louis Park

Steve Shubick

St. Paul

The Spray

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

Return To:

The Garden Spray

Men's and Women's Garden Club of Mpls., Inc.

Mary Maynard, Editor

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First Class Mail

***February
2015***