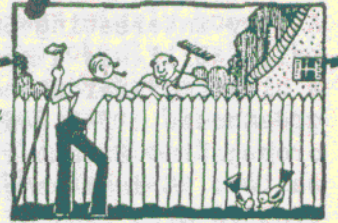




The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS



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

April 1965
Volume 23, No. 4
G. Victor Lowrie, Editor

Associate Editors:
Wm. H. Hull, Neil Barry

April Meeting

Officers

April 13, 1965

Charles Proctor	Pres.
R.E. Smith (Bob)	V.P.
G.R. Christenson (Bud)	Sec.
S.F. Pinkham (Sherm)	Treas.

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church
50th Street and Knox Ave. So.

5:45 P.M.

\$1.75

ANNUAL SHRUB AUCTION

Les Johnson tells us we will have some very fine specimens of various shrubs available at the auction this year, so look over your acreage and study the attached list to see what you will particularly want.

This is also a good month to bring guests.

Added attraction: V.P. Bob Smith also has some film under scrutiny and promises us something of unusual value. He has not completed the selection yet, assuring us he is to see the film before presenting it, so we know it will be worthwhile. We'll see you there.

Harold Kaufmann.....

whom we all know has been seriously ill in Florida, is reported to be progressing well and coming home about April 1. This is, indeed, good news and we look forward to having him back with us soon. It would be wonderful if he could make this April meeting.

OVER THE GARDEN GATE

by Bill Hull

A very interesting Sunday afternoon recently with Bill Cowcill and his better half. Bill has a great many geraniums growing from cuttings and seedlings, plus a blooming azalea and some good ideas on converting a porch into a pseudo-greenhouse. I liked his arrangements; if interested, see him. He also has a propagating case built beneath a basement workbench, thus utilizing space usually wasted. A door hangs on the front to close it in completely. Says he has no trouble with lack of air circulation.

Bill also grinds up his own leaves each fall and puts them through two small sieves, in order to have them for seeding and potting, to use in mixtures. He does not compost these particular leaves. They look about like tobacco at that stage.

Another good idea from Bill is a home-made scoop for potting, sowing, etc. Wish some handy person would make about twenty-five of them and bring to our spring sale. First, he empties a beer can, a worthy undertaking in itself. Then he cuts from it a scoop. The longest measurement is about five inches, the shortest slightly less than two inches, with a graduated curve leading between the two. Of course one end of the can has been entirely cut away, the other end left as is. On the whole end he screws a drawer pull and presto he has a very fine scoop. Gave me one and I assure you, it's a size which comes in handy. Painted green when finished. If a fellow made quite a few of these, emptying them as he went along, wow!

Started eight flats of various seeds today. For starting flats I prefer the small plastic flats about three by six inches in size and I write the identity of the contents on the side with a felt marking pen which doesn't wash away; I recommend it. Some seeds three to five years of age are going into those flats and they test out high germination. Seeds can frequently be kept for long periods of time if kept in a tight tin like a tobacco pound tin.

Also transplanted twenty-nine Nittany Lion geraniums, supposedly the only hybrids to come true from seed. Predicted to be the first step in a whole new series of geraniums. Planted January 7.

On March 7, 1964, a year ago, I crossed two Saintpaulias; it took months for the seed to ripen. First, though, if you try doing this, you must break the pollen pods to free the pollen. When cured, I planted the seed; this was on January 20, 1965. Now a year and a week from the crossing date, I have tiny seedlings at the two-leaf one-quarter inch high stage. Patience needed. And yet I'm an impatient guy, so we must have the patience when we really want to have it.

I see Dale Durst is getting ready for spring, too. He went in carrying some new fluorescent tubes today, so we're all working for spring.

The Junior Gardener in our family reported that Dolph and Ursula Bezoier have a blooming passiflora in the greenhouse, and that the color is superb.

On March 8 I had a couple of hours to visit the International Flower Show in New York, at the Coliseum. Quite a show; I prefer it over the one in Chicago, but both are similar. This one featured thousands of blooms. For example, have we considered how much we owe to our friends who can bring into bloom at one time,

OVER THE GARDEN GATE

Continued

While in Binghamton, New York, this last week (March 11) I was astounded to learn of the death of John Ford. Called "Wandering John," he was widely known and beloved by thousands. At age 76, John had passed away unexpectedly, being in fair health. Many of us will remember when he was here about two years ago; others have met him at conventions; he was noted for passing out candy kisses to ladies, for wearing the silly hat with streamers on it, for being regional chairman of MGCA, and for being one of the most dedicated youth gardeners and garden clubbers in the nation.

Calceolaria Mexicana, slipper flower. Must be a hundred plants in the seeded flat I started in January. Wonder if I'll ever get them into blooming stage. When they get a little larger, some of you may have some if you wish, or perhaps I'll have some ready for the show. Sometimes called lady-slippers, that name really refers to Cypripedium. Should ask Lloyd Bachman what they will do outside. Have never seen them locally except in a greenhouse.

If all the snow which has fallen since I moved to Minnesota, fell in one year, it would total about 133 feet. And I wouldn't be surprised. I still like our state but enough is enough!

Have you had a chance to get acquainted with Al Hubbard, one of our new members. Do so. Al has many shrubs and trees which he has planted on his beautiful lot overlooking the Minnesota River valley. I know one organization which has an annual picnic at Al's lovely home. Maybe we should plan or at least consider such for this summer.

Fire blight hit a lot of crabapples this last summer. I've been studying and discussing this with experts recently, including Cynthia Westcott, the famed "Plant Doctor," just last week. Here is the program I've laid out for myself and recommend for you, too, if you have such problems. Fire blight first hits the ends of apple tree limbs and they wither and die, turning black. If you have it, you know it. All dead limbs noticeable will be trimmed off my trees this spring during dormancy, dipping the pruning shears constantly in formaldehyde and painting wounds with a mixture of Bordeaux mixture in linseed oil. The trees will also be sprayed heavily with a dormant oil spray, when the temperature is around 50 and won't go below freezing for twelve hours (don't use such sprays on evergreens). Then as soon as the first blossom opens, I'll start spraying twice-weekly with streptomycin. My expert friends say this works providing the spraying is maintained twice-weekly until each blossom has opened and insects cannot bring further infection into it. You might be interested to know that Pfizer has a streptomycin product called Agrimycin for this purpose (agricultural streptomycin). First references said to use Agrimycin 60 but then Pfizer changed it to Agrimycin 100 and now to Agrimycin 17, if you can find it at all. All summer long keep your shears and formaldehyde handy and use regularly. Ain't life hell?

Why doesn't every man in our club this year encourage some youth to grow a pumpkin (any cucurbit) for our BIG PUMPKIN CONTEST?

P.W., the delphiniums are coming along nicely. I have ten good healthy plants from seed you provided. I didn't plant all the seed; never do this because so many things can happen when I'm traveling as I do. I want a reserve supply of seed. But my good husfrau has learned how to care for seedlings and I believe actually enjoys it.

CLIPPINGS

by Charlie Proctor

A real gratifying turnout for the fine program planned by Bob Smith and so well presented by Carl Holst, Joe Witmer, Les Johnson and Bruce Johnstone. Nice to have so many guests.

With a new method for propagating orchids, it is mathematically possible to obtain four million plantlets from a single clone in a year. Imagine the loss if one only gets say twenty-five per cent results.

And speaking of plants, especially you fellows who start seeds under lights, don't forget to earmark a box or two of plants for the plant auction, just a few weeks away. Bob Kelly has a good committee working to come up with a real fun affair.

Received a letter with some real fine suggestions relative to the question raised at the March meeting about the President's beautification program. At the moment, we have one project underway, working with the management of Sumner Field Homes, a low rent project. The idea is to try to interest the occupants in doing some planting around their individual apartments. There must be other projects in this general area of beautification which we could undertake as civic efforts. We would appreciate any suggestions.

Just got a good buy on some fluorescent fixtures through a friend. No more on hand at present, but he says he does have them from time to time and will call me. Anyone interested, give me your name for future reference.

THE LEHMAN TROPHY

For the benefit of new members, this trophy is offered by member, Dick Lehman, of the Lehman Gardens, Faribault, to the member whose garden shows the greatest improvement for the year.

It will be judged as in former years as follows:

Landscape (100 points) Planting and general design including foundation planting.

Selection (100 points) Trees, shrubs, suitable for area and in proper location.

Lawn (100 points) Freedom from weeds, general condition and maintenance.

Borders (100 points) Location, design and proper depth.

Maintenance (100 points) General, including pest control, but not lawns.

General Improvement (100 points)

Total maximum points: 600 points

This is an excellent opportunity for new members to enter their gardens. To older members, particularly those who have previously entered the contest, it is suggested they continue their efforts. It should be noted that the maximum score is 600 points. Very few contestants to date have exceeded 400 points. You will, therefore, see that in addition to other factors, if the care of the lawn and general maintenance are carefully watched, decisive points can be gained.

Those wishing to enter their gardens please contact Joe Witmer or Archie Flack as soon as possible. Judging will commence as early in the season as possible and

HOW MY HUSBAND RAISES PRIZE BEGONIAS (THE SPECIAL "UNDER-THE-BED" SPECIES)

BY

AN OBSERVING WIFE

(Harriet E. Pinkham)

First you buy the tubers, inspired and influenced entirely by the beautiful colored illustrations in the seed catalogs. With ultra determination, and a firm grip on your pocket-book, an uncontrollable weakness overpowers you, as you order 85 or more tubers instead of the 25 originally planned. When they arrive, you place them (with rounded bottoms down) in handmade wooden varnished flat-like beds, bedding them down with "Pete" Moss (every gardner's old friend) and the look-alike twins, "Pearl" Lite and "Pearl" Loam. They resemble half buried garden-toads trying to hide from you. The beds are now fitted into specially made inch-high moisture proof metal containers. Thus, each bed has its own bed pan.

If you have an uncooperative wife, who refuses to have the living room, dining room and kitchen cluttered up with these fifteen or more space-robbing intruders, you may become momentarily psychologically frustrated. Then, you realize there is only one course left open for you. Button up your lip, choke back any retort you may feel arising, and silently tote them into the bedrooms and shove them under the beds. To your utter surprise you will discover that in this temperature zone and semi-darkness, an ideal place has been found to start their incubation. You may hang several thermometers from the bed springs for interest and decoration, if you wish. At this point, you revert again to the childish game of "Peek-a-Boo," by daily getting on your hands and knees, and peeking under the bed to see what goes on there. Of course, these dormant embryos become a bit thirsty; so you haul these little trundle beds out from time to time, making the tubers believe that spring has come by giving them a gentle squirt of tepid, wrist-warm water from your wife's plastic sprinkling bottle. If your knees get sore and your back begins to ache, keep right on peeking anyway, for eventually you will be rewarded and the game reversed. Comes the day when your blood pressure shoots up and a gurgle of joy escape, as you behold the beginning of a miracle. Believe it or not, from those hard, brown, hairy objects, little pink eyes emerge and peek right back at you. When two baby-white arms with small green palms reach out to you, it is time for a change. In the meantime, a building project has been in operation, as you fashion wooden window-high trestles. (Specifications on request.) These are placed at the windows and around the bedrooms by pushing the furniture together, or stacking it like in a warehouse. The "trundle" beds are now hoisted upon the trestles. Let me suggest that you emphatically discourage friends to stay over-night during this growing period. It would be helpful also to carry a small compass in your pocket, to aid you in finding your way to your own bed at night.

At this next stage, you automatically become baby sitter and round-the-clock nurse, for the beds have to be changed, shades adjusted, temperatures checked, water dispensed and charts kept at the foot of each bed. One must also watch for the first signs of the dreaded "Tuber-foe-lo-sis," recognized when little lumps appear in unexpected places. Whether you hold a doctor's degree or not, by necessity you now become a specialized surgeon. With tears in your eyes, you amputate these life-sapping growths, all except one, with a small scalpel or razor blade. Be sure to bury or destroy these at once, for the sight of them lying around always fills one with anguish.

(To be continued in May)

WRITE THESE LETTERS NOW!

Once again we urge all of you to write your state senator and/or representative to support two pieces of legislation: the roadside preservation legislation and the retention in the budget as approved by the Building Commission of the appropriation for a new building for the horticulture department on the St. Paul campus.

We heartily endorse the suggestion made by Neil Barry and the North Star Region, of which Neil is president, to write these officials of our individual support of this program.

We are told at the time of this writing that the building is still included in the plans. We have heard from several speakers how urgently more space is needed. The department, through its research program, is rendering valuable assistance to the horticulture industry which in turn contributes some Three Hundred Million Dollars annually to the Minnesota economy. The various segments of the agricultural industry will certainly be the losers if the horticulture department continues to be reduced in effectiveness because of inadequate facilities.

Hearings have already begun in the senate on legislation for control of billboard advertising along highways. A "final" bill is expected to be presented soon by the sub-committee, if it hasn't been done by the time you read this. What is important is for all of us to write our representatives to show them a large segment of the people favor legislation which will serve to keep roadside advertising within bounds and thus help to preserve the beauty of our state. MGCA and affiliated clubs have worked hard for this in other states and have contributed successfully to the achievements; there is no reason we can't make our desires felt here just as well.

We are including with this issue of SPRAY a separate listing of names and addresses of the Hennepin County delegation to the state Senate and House, together with a map showing the boundaries of the districts in Minneapolis. Richfield is 32N, Bloomington is 32S, Edina and Hopkins are 33S, and St. Louis Park is 33N. This information should enable anyone to identify his senator and representative.

Let's get busy and send those letters or postcards.

PLANTS FOR AUCTION

(Bring this list to the April meeting)

- 5 Carya pecan (Pecan)
- 9 Celastrus loesneri (Chinese Bittersweet)
- 6 Forsythia 'Beatrix Farrand'
- 5 Forsythia ovata (Early Forsythia)
- 3 Hippophaea rhamnoides (Russian Sea Buckthorn)
- 5 Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle'
- 2 Lonicera heckrottii 'Goldflame'
- 5 Lonicera tellmanniana (Tellmann's Honeysuckle)
- 3 Metasequia glyptostroboides (Dawn Redwood)
- 3 Philadelphus lemoine 'Belle Etoile'
- 1 Philadelphus 'Enchantment'
- 1 Philadelphus microphyllus
- 3 Philadelphus 'Purity'
- 9 Potentilla fruticosa 'White Gold'
- 5 Weigela 'Avalanche'
- 5 Weigela 'Fairy'
- 3 Weigela 'Newport Red'
- 10 Buxus microphylla Koreana