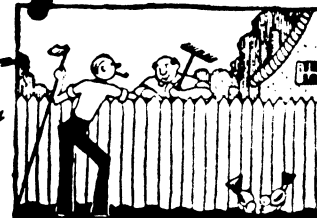




The Garden Spray

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

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



December 1973, Volume 31, Number 12

COMING - NEXT MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 3, 1973

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

TURKEY DINNER

ENTERTAINMENT

AWARDS

MOUNT OLIVET LUTHERAN CHURCH
50th Street & Knox Avenue S.

SOCIAL HOUR 6:15 P.M.

DINNER 6:45 P.M.

PRICE: \$5.25 per person

All Guests Welcome

By reservation only If you have not yet made your reservation, or if you have additional reservations, call Jim Perrin immediately. (Home: 421-0058 or Business: 335-)

Invitations have been extended to members of the North Suburban, the Sioux Valley and the Minnetonka Men's Garden Clubs to join us.

GARDEN CLIPPINGS

This is my last message as president of the Minneapolis Men's Garden Club. The time has passed very quickly, but it has been a happy year and, hopefully, a year of progress. This is a great group of men. They are congenial, cooperative, and knowledgeable. Members are always willing to assume a chairmanship or assist with a project. This makes it possible to accomplish our goals without overworking anyone. I have enjoyed becoming better acquainted with many members of the club. They each excel in some special phase of gardening but they share a common enthusiasm for this hobby. I wish there was more time for visiting and learning all that our members have to offer

The officers have done a fine job, and that is what has made things move along. Especially helpful is our editor, Ed Culbert. He is a kind and patient man and his advice has helped me be a better president.

We have a new slate of officers. They will soon learn that our club has so much support from experienced members that no one needs to flounder.

I hope everyone has a Happy Holiday Season. Remember gardening books, tools, and, of course, plants as gift ideas. *May 1974 be filled with good health and a wealth of good friends and good gardening.*

--Carl J. Holst

Some neighbor might like to join MGCMpls.

THE FORTY-NINERS -- BOB BRYANT

by Don Wilson

Bob Bryant is quiet, unassuming, and knows his orchids. He agreed to let me in on him during our last dinner meeting. "Don't put any brag in about me," he warned.

During the interview a member in good standing asked if he could bring his non-orchids to Bob to see if he could work some miracle on them. "Oh, do you grow orchids?" I asked Bob. His eyes crinkled, and he smiled. "Yes."

It turns out that Bob Bryant has four greenhouses full of orchids in Minnetonka. He's a past president of the Minnesota Orchid Society. According to MGC member [redacted] has the largest and best orchids in the state." (Sorry about the brag, Bob.)

Born in Mora, Minnesota, Bob has been in the Minneapolis area since 1922. He worked with securities for the Bankers Trust of New York. Like many old-timers in the Club he can't remember the exact year he joined, but he avers it was "a long time ago." He hasn't been an officer of the Club because he's a professional member. He's a veteran of World War I, and is a past president and an honorary life member of the Minnesota Dahlia Society.

"Thirty-five or forty years ago my wife Olga gave me a present of two orchids. Those two, I've grown a lot of them (there are about 25,000 varieties in the world). I don't think she really knew what she started at that time," he said with a laugh.

LYMAN E. DUNCAN, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MGCA, WRITES

There is much good news to report to our members. We are having our best membership year in recent times with a 10% increase over 1972. We have 1563 brand new members this year. MGCA dues are the best gardening investment in America today. The Services Bulletin lists 40 items that are available to members, club officers, committee chairmen. As members of MGCA, our members have the benefit of receiving GARDENER magazine; they have access to the lending library of garden books, act awards, studies and reports, regional conferences, national conventions in all parts of the country, seed exchange, journalism exchange with other club bulletins, go on tours, shows and exhibits; they receive special publications to assist club editors, and members; and, have the prestige of belonging to a national organization.

Membership must be a constant program in each club, as a club will lose a minimum of 10 members each year for every 100 members of record. The way to get a member is to ask him.

The Club President's Newsletter, the Editor's Editor, and the Green Spade are all publications especially for club and national officers, while the individual member can order copies of Timely Garden Reminders, An Evaluation of Flowering Crabapples, Gardening Tips as well as any of 40 other items listed in the Special Services Bulletin.

The Men's Garden Clubs of America is the only national men's organization encouraging gardening, horticulture, and ecology. It is an organization which is responsible for the formation of each club including those which no longer acknowledge an obligation. The National dues should be looked upon as a contribution to the extension of interest in gardening and ecology and improvement of our environment as a means to an end. Every week the national office receives inquiries on how to join or how to organize a club.

Fellow church members may be gardeners. Have you approached them about MGCM?

SEED LONGEVITY
by L. W. Corbett

Every now and again we get a newspaper story of seed being found in some ancient tomb or ruins. Not long ago wheat seed was found in the pyramids. I doubt that this wheat would grow; therefore it is not seed. Nature protects its species by developing so called "hard seed", a seed that does not readily pick up moisture and will not germinate with the rest of the crop. Many seeds, especially tree seeds and some flowers, may take up to seven years before all of the seeds that will grow have made the effort. Seed of mustard may lie dormant in the soil for many years and when the field is reworked and the seed exposed to favorable conditions will grow.

New crop seed will not always grow if planted immediately after harvest. I have seen seed crops of peas and beans show very poor germination tests at harvest time but after two or three months the tests improve and become normal. Summer and winter squash has this same characteristic. In the southern states of Texas, Florida, Arizona, California and Arkansas many crops are planted in September and October or earlier. The planters do not like new crop seed just harvested but prefer seed one year old. Many seeds seem to need a rest or curing period.

Our knowledge of seed has improved greatly in the past 25 years. When I first came into the trade in 1925 we said seed had to breathe. The old Francis C. Stokes Seed Company was one of the first to package seed in cans. We punched a hole in the lid of the canister so the seed could breathe. We now know that was wrong. Seed is a living organism and it does carry on life's functions. It does give off moisture. Metabolism is a function of seed and it is this rate that counts.

It was not many years ago that inventoried sweet corn seed gave germination problems. Kiln drying changed that problem. We now know that when corn was dried in the field it often had 15 or 16 percent moisture. A combination of this moisture plus heat, warm days and nights speeded up the metabolism and the vigor and ability to grow was gone. We now harvest corn with moisture up to 35 percent but then subject it to kiln drying, lots of air and temperatures below 100° F. until the moisture within the seed is below 10 percent. Sweet corn stored in a cool, dry area will carry 5 or 6 years. I have seen inbred stock seed grow after 10 years.

The research work of Dr. Jim Harrington now at Davis, California is used as a guide by both flower and vegetable seed growers. There has, of course, been a lot of seed research conducted by other researchers and other universities. Basically, Harrington showed that by drying seed to about 5 percent moisture and then hermetically sealing the seed in containers you reduce the rate of metabolism to almost zero and, then, the seed can be carried for many years, maybe indefinitely.

Interestingly enough Iowa State drew the moisture content in some seed below one percent without causing seed injury. It is not practical nor desirable to try for such a low moisture content. Seed drying is neither simple nor easy. Some species and varieties can be thrown into dormancy. If the air and heat controls are not right seeds can be injured. Today we see more and more flower seed in metal foil packets. This seed has been dried to maintain vigor and germination. Vegetable seed moving into the tropics is being dried and canned in metal containers. The high price of F₁ hybrid seed has increased the need to protect its vigor and vitality.

We do know that certain seeds naturally have a long life while others do not. Most cold bearing seed such as radish, turnip, rutabaga, and cabbage have 4 to 6 years under favorable storage conditions, i.e. cool and dry. Tomato seed will hold 10 to 12 years, but bear in mind age reduces vigor. Seeds such as pepper, egg plant, parsnip, and saffron lose vigor and germination rather rapidly and two year old seed can cause trouble.

high humidity and temperatures of New Orleans would destroy vigor and germination in a matter of a very few weeks. Kansas City stock would go next. Minnesota is a good storage area; but Idaho is better. We have determined that humidity is the key factor.

Most seeds that you buy are dry enough to carry over. If you save some of your seed, be sure it is dried and cured correctly with a moisture below 10 percent to be carried over should be placed in moisture proof containers (glass or metal) sealed. Store these in a cool dry place. If the area is hot and if the seed has a high moisture content then "sweating" or free moisture could collect in the container and ruin the seed. This is what happened before we learned to dry seed correctly so we punched a hole in the container "to let the seed breathe".

Editor's Note Miles Roberts of North American Fruit Explorers, has been experimenting with "aged" seeds, believing that the use of only fresh untreated seeds is "a pampering process". For instance, when he planted 9 year old seed of "Pink" tomato, the few that produced plants had no leaf blight, a major problem of this variety. He has also been playing with 6 year old seeds of corn and pumpkin. The germination rate is tiny, but the purpose is to select seeds that, by the very fact they survived, may have that something extra that will make them a hardier variety than the same is possibly true of seeds that germinate under extremely adverse conditions such as late cold snaps or flooding.

THE NAKED SEED PUMPKIN STORY
by Bob Smith

A few years ago I read that prostate trouble was practically non-existent in Europe where raw pumpkin seeds are a regular part of the diet. This intrigued me as I had minor prostate problems that could lead to something more serious in the future. Prostate problems are common among older men in our country. So I tried some pumpkin seeds and really liked them. In fact, I got hooked. They make a great snack with a tasty butter that can be prepared in a blender with pumpkin seeds, oil and used like peanut butter. They cost about \$1.50 a pound and are very nutritious.

Last spring while scanning a Harris Seed Catalog a new introduction, Lady God Seed Pumpkin, caught my eye. With these I could grow my own without the work of buying the seeds and I could beat the high price. That is exactly what I did. I had a bumper crop of about fifty pumpkins. I busted a few open and separated the seeds to see how much work was involved and how many seeds one contained. Each one produced about 1/3 pound of seeds but it was more work than I wanted to expend. Then it came to me they would make good jack-o-lanterns. How could I give away that many pumpkins for jack-o-lanterns and still retain the seeds? The answer came a few days later when the art teacher at school asked if I could furnish pumpkins to the art class for a Halloween project. My answer was an immediate, "Yes, if you will save the seeds." The project was a huge success. The kids enjoyed carving the pumpkins and the seeds and some very nice letters. One from a fourth grade girl is reproduced on the next page.

New Member Glenn H. Ray, 2507 Lake Place, Minneapolis 55405 Phone: 374-4

If you kept an eye open for effective combinations in other people's gardens, remember to make a note of them, you will be able to go ahead with conviction when the time comes for garden alterations; not find yourself viewing a clump of herbaceous material with the plans of last summer for a spectacular effect completely forgotten.

Oct. 10/25/19.
Thurs.

Dear Mr. Smith
Thank-you for the pumpkin
so we can make a pumpkin
face on it.
I think it is a bargain that
we get the pumpkin and ~~we~~^{you}
get the seeds.
This is what me and Bessie
looked like we were share
Pumpkins.



I really thank you that we
can have the pumpkin.
I think it is fun to
take the seeds out
of the pumpkin cause
it is so slimy.
Tonight is the fall
banquet.
I go to Oak Chapel Me

x. B.