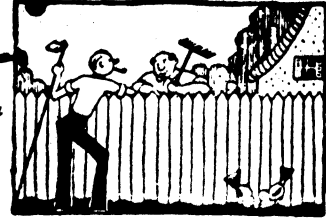




# The Garden Spray

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

Member--Men's Garden Clubs of America • Minnesota State Horticultural Society  
December 1976, Volume 34, Number 12



THEY'LL BE THERE.

WHO'LL BE THERE?

THE BACHMANS.

THEY'LL BE WHERE?

AT THE MGCM CHRISTMAS PARTY

AT MOUNT OLIVET LUTHERAN CHURCH.  
(50th St. & Knox Av. S.)

WHEN?

MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 6th.

Grandpa Henry has already reserved a whole table and a whole turkey for his family--children, grandchildren, in-laws. He's arranged for his own skilled carver who's sharpening up his knife now. They'll all be there with big smiles on their faces just as shown in the picture of grandpa Henry and grandson Todd, son Lloyd taken at last year's party.

The festivities begin at 6:00 P.M. with the unveiling of the punch bowl. The following hour will be spent with the gardeners bragging about the produce from their gardens or the fragrance of their flowers. The ladies will amuse each other bragging about their men and telling the others how sharp they look.

The dinner, family style at 6:55, will be delectable, satisfying and filling. It will be doubly enjoyable for the ladies, because they can sit back and let somebody else do the work. After dinner there will be awards, door-prizes galore to be passed out, and first rate entertainment.

Grandpa Henry wouldn't miss this party on a bet. But you will if your reservation isn't in for it's BY RESERVATION ONLY. If you have not yet made a reservation or if you wish additional ones CALL DEAN SCHNEIDER at 588-1959 or 330-6556 IMMEDIATELY. It's already deadline. There isn't time to write

*Sonoma Greetings*

## THE NOVEMBER MEETING

"Grow a house plant; they make good pets," was the gist of Glen Ray's mini-session slide presentation. He dropped a lot of names like schefflera and diffenbachia and quizzed us on others like veltheimia. The general idea was that house plants make ideal pets. They are quiet; they are colorful; they don't scratch furniture; they don't propagate; they don't escape from cages. But indoor gardeners do face one large problem (Light--or the lack of it.) and Glenn showed us some plants which work well even in that situation.

Feature speaker, Dr. Paul Read, made his working sabbatical the basis for taking us on a slide tour of northern Europe. We saw gardens, scenery, castles, ruins. We learned that fuel costs were way above ours; that celeriac is a crop on a level with potatoes and cabbage in Poland. We saw lamium as a ground cover replacing ajuga and as a bedding border. For a moment we foresaw an argument developing between Bill Cowcill and Dr. Read about the identity of some spots but the voice from the rear scotched that with, "I'm from Yorkshire."

Officers elected for 1977 were: Fred Glasoe, president; Dick Hulbert, vice-president; Jim Mielke, secretary; Bob Gage, treasurer; Charles Robbins and Dick Victor, directors; and, Dr. Leon Snyder past-president.

Good news: Si Rutherford is back on his feet again and was able to attend the November meeting.

## OF INTEREST IN DECEMBER

Euphorbia pulcherrima, or poinsettia, is a native to Mexico. First cultivated by the Aztecs, it was then called Cuetlaxochitl and prized by them as a symbol of purity. The poinsettias also had practical value for the Aztecs. They made a crimson dye from the colorful bracts and a fever medicine from the milky latex that drips from poinsettias when they are cut. Our first ambassador to Mexico, Joel Roberts Poinsett, had some sent to his home in Greenville, South Carolina in 1825 and the lovely Christmas flower has borne his name since then.

Today's poinsettias have stiffer leaves, better foliage retention and are much longer lasting than ever before. Some varieties are adapted to use in hanging baskets. Those bright, colorful "petals" on the poinsettia aren't really petals at all. They're modified leaves called "bracts". The real flowers are inconspicuous clusters of yellow-green "buttons" surrounded by the colorful bracts.

Care: Poinsettias should be kept in a bright spot, but not in direct sun; out of cold drafts; away from excessive heat. Ideal temperatures are around 68 during the day and 60-62 at night. Poinsettias should be checked daily and watered thoroughly whenever the soil feels dry--enough so that water runs out the drainage hole. (For foil wrapped poinsettias, pierce foil at the bottom of the pot for drainage.) After watering, water that has collected in the drainage receptacle should be discarded.

Chet and Em Groger got out an instruction sheet for the African Violet Society on building a flower cart and supplied enough copies for our members. It is included between pages 4 and 5 of this issue.

## SEED VIABILITY

- by D. Bruce Johnstone

Most all gardeners know that a seed is a dormant, living, embryonic plant that normally will sprout and develop into the seedling and eventually the mature plant of its parent species. Although similar in function, seeds are diverse in size, shape, germination-time and also in longevity.

Orchid seeds are dust-like in size; Begonia seeds are perhaps 2 million to the ounce; and the palm species, Coce de Mer, bears seeds up to 50 pounds in weight. In shape, seeds may be spherical, oblong, spindle, flattened, winged, lenticular--ad infinitum.

Under optimum conditions for growth in a suitable media and with sufficient moisture, warmth and oxygen, garden cress will germinate in two or three days, radish or turnip in four or five, beans in eight or ten, parsley and celery in twenty days--yet, many tree and shrub seeds require weeks to germinate.

The seed longevity or viability span of different species also varies considerably. Many legume seeds have a hard, vitreous seed coat and may live under optimum conditions for ten, twenty, thirty or more years. Some garden seeds, on the other hand, retain their viability only a very few months or years even under ideal storage conditions; viz., Gerbera for one year; Aster, Larkspur, Pansy, onion, salsify for two years; beans, corn, melons three to four years, etc. These figures are very approximate because conditions of seed harvest and storage may add or detract from the normal life of any seed. Poor growing conditions may result in immature or underdeveloped seed with both poor germination and short viability. Good growing conditions but wet or cold harvest weather may also reduce both germination and longevity of otherwise good seed.

Given ideal growing and harvesting conditions, each species has a normal life span which will be reduced by poor storage conditions and enhanced by optimum treatment. Although different seeds have varying normal moisture content after harvest, varying from 3 or 4% to 10%, we have learned that by carefully reducing and maintaining the moisture content to certain minimum levels, viability is greatly enhanced. This means artificially drying, then keeping the atmospheric moisture sealed off from the dried seed.

As an example of this treatment, Salvia seed has a short longevity (say 2 years) under good normal conditions and a normal moisture content at harvest of 6 or 7%. Under room storage in cloth bags, this moisture content will increase if the air is moist and humid and be reduced in very dry atmospheric conditions.

Now, if this same seed is artificially dried to 4 or 5% and stored in sealed containers or moisture-impervious containers, its viability will be increased by many years. Only when the seed is exposed again to normal atmospheric moisture thus gaining water content will it start to slowly lose its viability. Many short-lived flower and vegetable seeds, Pansy, Salvia, onion, etc. are now processed in that manner by seedsmen.

Although high moisture content is the most critical factor in seed longevity, high temperature is almost as destructive. In general, low moisture plus cool and stable temperatures favor longest life of all

Most reputable seedsmen will check moisture content to be minimal and either store critical seed in moisture proof containers or use special equipment to keep air at 20-25 RH and the temperature at a stable 50-60. Seed shipped into or across the tropics is very vulnerable to deterioration due to heat and high humidity and must be packed in moisture proof containers to prevent damage.

As for home storage of unused packets of seed, one should use moisture proof cans or jars, keep in a relatively cool stable temperature, and place a few packets of silica gel (a dessicant) inside the containers to keep moisture content minimal.

As to keeping seed we have harvested, knowledgeable gardeners know that collecting and saving seed from their garden plants is usually disappointing because most standard open pollinated varieties revert to unimproved strains or lose their color or quality. Hybrid varieties break up into parental strains and immediately lose their hybrid characteristics.

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MY 1976

SPECIAL THANKS

THIS THANKSGIVING TIME

TO THE ALMIGHTY GOD, CREATOR OF ALL MANKIND, WHO, through my parents, gave me a body that has stood a series of shocks but has come back again;

To Berneice, my companion who has stood my Whims and Idiosyncrasies for some Fifty-four years plus the past twenty-four weeks of my returning to a near normal pattern of life;

To my relatives, near and far, and friends for their many prayers, card flowers, letters, telephone calls and visits encouraging my return to health;

To the Doctors, Nurses and other hospital personnel;

To those who generously offered their cars to take Berneice and me from place to place.

--Silas J. "Si" Rutherford.

FIFTH DISTRICT HORT SOCIETY MEETING A GREAT SUCCESS

Nearly 700 people were present November 6th at Normandale Community College for the first meeting of the newly organized Fifth District. A spring meeting is planned for late March or early April, hopefully again at Normandale.

Officers elected were as follows:

Pres. - Dwight Stone	<u>Directors:</u>	
1st VP - Mary Maguire	Hazel Sweeney	Larry Corbett
2nd VP - Jim Seeden	Leon Snyder	Vic Lowrie
Secy. - Gladys Olmsted	Nate Siegel	Jim Perrin
Treas. - Fred Glasoe	Stan Crist	Norma Olson

## A THREE-TIER FLOWER CART FOR AFRICAN VIOLETS OR INDOOR PLANTS

You can build your own flower cart as pictured in the Sunset African Violet Book, following these directions. We settled on a 26" tray width to go through the normal door. Except for the plywood, material can be either clear pine or redwood. Galvanized steel trays, "eggcrate" plastic panels and Pelon sheet wicking are optional. The overall height is less than 70" and the cart is easily moved. We hope these instructions may help others to better enjoy indoor gardening.

Em and Chet Groger

### LIST OF MATERIALS (Assembly Instructions on reverse)

Lumber:	3 only 24" (or 26") x 60" 3/4" exterior plywood. (Must be full 24" width if 23-7/8" steel trays are used to accommodate 23-5/8" "eggcrate" plastic panels)	
	4 only 2 x 4 x 45" select fir or redwood.	
	6 only 1 x 4 x 61-1/2" clear pine or redwood.	
	6 only 1 x 4 x 24" (or 26") clear pine or redwood. (Total lumber cost approx. \$40.00)	\$40.00
Hardware:	4 only 2" ball bearing casters	10.00
	16 only 3/4" x 12 sheet metal screws (for casters)	.50
	4 only 5" x 6" shelf brackets (with 24 only 1/2" x 8 sheet metal screws)	2.50
	1 only 3/4" x 10' electrical conduit (shiny) (Bend to overall length of 60" for top arch and cut off end legs to overall height of 21")	4.00
	4 only 3/4" conduit hangers (strap type)	.50
	1/4 lb. 10d and 1/2 lb. 6d coated box nails (Total hardware cost approx. \$18.00)	.50 58.00
Lights:	3 only 48" shop lights with tubes (Watch for ads of specials around \$10.00 each)	33.00 91.00
Trays:	3 only 23-7/8" (or 25-7/8")x 48"x 2" high galvanized steel with edges rolled in.	42.00 133.00
Plastic:	3 only 23-5/8" x 47-5/8" "egg crate" plastic ceiling lighting panels (Watch for lumber yard or hardware ads of specials around \$5.00 each)	15.00 148.00

Note: The hardware above does not include that necessary to hang the 48" shop lights. For this, use:

- 4 only short 1/4" eye bolts with full thread
- 4 extra 1/4" nuts
- 4 only short screw eyes with not over 3/4" of thread
- 2 only 3/4" round rubber bumpers (for base of arch)
- 4 only 1/2" x 8 sheet metal screws (for arch brackets)
- 4 only 3/16" x 3/4" stove bolts (for top light strap hangers)

## THREE-TIER FLOWER CART

### ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pre-drill for all nails and screws.
2. Nail top and bottom plywood panels to 4 upright 2 x 4's, placing them at the corners with the 4" side along the long side of the panels. Use 10d coated box nails. Have finished sides of the plywood panels facing up.
3. Fasten the 4 shelf brackets just below a mark halfway up the 2 x 4's, pointing along the long side of the cart. Brackets should actually be dropped 3/8" below the center line to center the middle panel.
4. Notch the corners of the third plywood panel to fit inside the uprights. Be sure the fit is not too tight, forcing the uprights out. Fasten the panel to the shelf brackets, making sure the finished side is up, and the uprights are exactly the right width and length at the center. Draw them in or push them out as needed.
5. With the cart upside down or on its side, fasten the casters to the bottom corners of the cart. Allow 1/2" for caster rotation when the bottom shelf side and end boards are installed.
6. With the cart upright, nail the 24" 1 x 4 boards to the ends of the cart. Place them over the ends of the plywood panels, leaving 2" of the board above the top surface of each plywood panel. Before nailing, use a steel square to check the squareness of the cart each time a board is put in place. Use 6d coated box nails at the ends of the boards and at intervals along the edge of the plywood panels. When nailing the center shelf boards, the uprights should again be checked for exact width.
7. Nail the 61-1/2" 1 x 4 boards on in the same manner along the sides, checking the exact length of the center shelf as before.
8. Tack a round 3/4" rubber bumper in the center of each end of the top plywood panel. Allow 1/8" from the end. Fit the 3/4" conduit arch over the bumpers and fasten with 2 conduit strap hangers above the plywood panel and to the 1 x 4 board at each end. Use the steel square for exact vertical fit and check the 20" measurement between the top surface of the plywood panel and the bottom of the arch.
9. Most 48" shop lights have holes for a conduit strap hanger at either end. Attach the top shop light body to the arch with 2 hangers and stove bolts before installing the reflector and the light tubes.
10. Most shop lights have holes at each end for a 1/4" eye bolt. Install the 4 short eyebolts at each end of the two remaining fixtures, using a nut above and below the fixture. Assemble them with the eyebolts in line with the length of the fixture.
11. Open up the eye of the 4 screw eyes just far enough to allow the eye bolts to fit into the screw eyes. Find the center of the bottom surface of the two upper plywood panels and locate the screw eyes. Point the screw eyes to the side, allowing the fixtures to be hung.

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Deadline: the 15th OF EACH MONTH.

MGCM PRESIDENTS: WILLIAM H. HULL, 1960

Bill Hull joined MGCM in 1952, nearly 25 years ago. Only 14 of the 101 members at that time, are still in the club. He quickly became active as associate editor of the SPRAY. He served in that capacity, under Vic Lowrie, for 13 years; then as editor for five more years--a total of 18 years from 1953 through 1970. As editor he brought us five national awards for bulletin editing--one as Best Bulletin of the Year.



Bill Hull

He was MGCM treasurer (1956-1958), vice president (1959) and president (1960). He was 1963 Chairman of the standing committee to obtain the MGCA convention in Minneapolis.

He had a major role in that meeting and assembled and edited our club gardening book distributed then and still given to new members. He was awarded our Bronze Medal in 1966. Recent years have seen him as club historian.

Bill gained national gardening attention when he was elected a director of the Men's Garden Clubs of America in 1952, shortly after joining our club. His job was to rejuvenate the failing publication called MEGA, which he did and changed the name to THE GARDENER. Bill is still an MGCA director--has been for 24 years. He was national vice-president from 1961-1963 and president in 1964, bringing much honor to our club. That year the financial situation was turned-around, Bill started the Big Pumpkin contest, obtained IRS re-classification for MGCA and visited 108 clubs. As a result, MGCA awarded him its Silver Medal in 1966.

Other recognitions have come his way. He's listed in WHO'S WHO, has been since 1966, and in WHO'S WHO IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. He's done much writing of articles and pamphlets, plus a major book, "PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE PHARMACIST" (J. B. Lippincott). He's a member of Garden Writers of America, Royal Horticulture Society, a charter member of the Minnesota Press Club, is currently president of the Midwest Mail/Marketing Association. He's received two national awards from the Direct Mail/Marketing Association for outstanding direct mail campaigns and one regional award for major contributions to the industry.

"Gardening is still a great love with me," said Bill recently, "although I don't have the time to give it that I once had. I attend our club meetings whenever possible. I consider it the finest organization to which I ever belonged."

As national president of Men's Garden Clubs of America in 1964, Bill was the youngest president ever to hold that position and the second national president from this area, the other having been Herb Kahlert, another past president of MGCM, now deceased.

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Nature's power of renewal heals many abuses Even so, the quality of