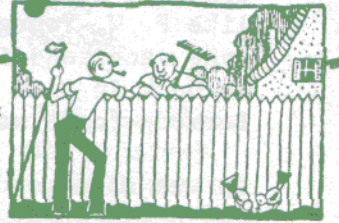




The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

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



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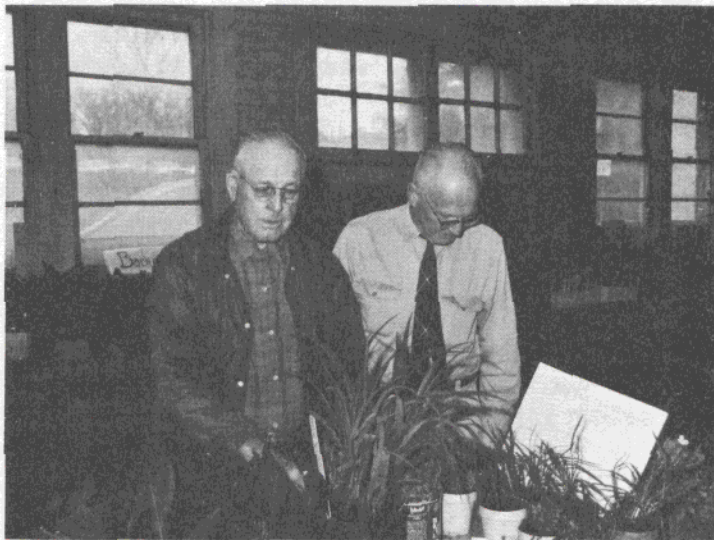
TUESDAY, JUNE 9

See you at Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church, 50th and Knox. 6 P.M., Dinner at \$3.00

Dr. Paul Reed, University of Minnesota, will speak on "Plant Propagation -- the Practical Side." Member Dave Goddard will talk on "Dividing Lilies" and member Jack Kolb on "Organic Fertilizers." See you there...bring a friend.

AUCTION PHOTOS

Chairman Cliff Brisco and Ed Culbert line up material. Auctioneer Dwight Stone works. Good food and good friends for Archie, Henry, Bill and P.W.



OVER THE GARDEN GATE

by Bill Hull

Isn't it great to see so many fellows back at the club this last time? Men like P. W. Young and Vic Lowrie, both esteemed past presidents back from nice long vacations in milder areas. Your editor was also pleasantly surprised to be back in time for this fine auction, having returned from a sales meeting in Bermuda for a week.

It was also good to see so many guests. The only one whose name I caught was Bob Livingston. We hope they all return again as guests and perhaps will become members.

These are great days. The vegetable garden is finally in, except for a few late items, and the annuals are out from the lights directly into the garden. I don't grow as much variety or even total amount as some of the other fellow but it was a step for me to get the lights activated again. In any event, we put out a good thirty dozen petunias and coleus grown downstairs. The coleus is several varieties from Sakata in Japan and to me are some of the loveliest I have ever seen. Don't they look good under those fluorescent lights, though? The roses are coming along fine after completely reworking the bed.

Wish I could enter the Lehman Trophy contest but the qualifications of "most improvement in a year" let me out. My huge lot has been too much for a one-year project. But we have lawn now where before the grass (as such) had never been cut. We've put in over 100 shrubs and trees, with about fifty of the crab apples blooming at different times these days. Some are still small. Advice: Buy your crab apple trees as large as you can afford. We've removed about twenty huge monstrous shrubs placed too close to the house, have put in a new rose bed sixty by six feet, established a forty by forty vegetable garden where there never was one before, and killed more crab grass and dandelions than I saw before. There's still lots to do. Oh, yes, and removed three large cedars and a huge oak tree.

I've grown about eighteen or twenty Southern Belle hibiscus this winter. They are actually an F₁ hybrid Hibiscus moscheutos (Sakata, Japan) and must get them out yet this week-end. Would like to discuss them with anyone who has also grown them. Please give me a ring at the first opportunity.

Welcome, Don Wilson

The board has approved the membership of Don Wilson, 5552 Emerson Ave. South, Minneapolis, 55419. Don is a federal employee with the U. S. Treasury Department. We welcome you, Don, and let's get acquainted. While we're at it, how does one get a roll of dollar bills?

Congratulations to Carol Hull

May I put something personal in Spray, although it's of a gardening nature. My wife, Carol, edits the Newsletter of the Federated Garden Clubs of Minnesota, which is, of course, affiliated with the National Council of State Garden Clubs. At the national convention (of this National Council, etc.) her publication won first place as best state garden club bulletin. This word was just received so we know you'll be pleased for her too.

BUGS FOR 'THE GARDEN SPRAY'

by Phil Smith

Most Successful Spring Auction? On the Tuesday evening of our May meeting, as your president was sitting in a New York theatre watching the Broadway musical "Hair," most of you were enjoying one of the most successful spring plant auctions in our club's history. While we have not checked through all of the past records, no one seems to recall a previous auction which raised more money. Perhaps it was the dawning of the Age of Aquarius which influenced our members to part with so many dollars (about \$430), but I would rather think it was the planning and efforts of Cliff Brisco and his committee in obtaining such a complete collection of well-grown plants. Nice work, fellas!

July-August Garden Tours: Bert Zats and Carl Holst will select the gardens for summer tours this year. It seems that we sometimes return to many of the same gardens every few years. Maybe this naturally results from the efforts of different committees to select gardens which are located close enough together to combine into an efficient tour. Then too, the members should be willing to put in that little extra effort to get their gardens in top shape for visiting by their fellow members and guests, and the gardeners must also be agreeable to open their property to the traffic, cursory review and judgment of their fellow members. This year the tours will try to include some gardens not seen before, and the committee would like to include the gardens of members who will volunteer their property for visiting by the club. If you would like to have your garden considered for the tours this year, please telephone Bert Zats right away.

National Convention: We have seen very little publicity on the national convention to be held this summer in Des Moines. However, in view of the closeness of the convention city, we should probably have a good delegation making the trip. If you are planning to attend and would like to represent your club as a delegate, please telephone me or Dave Johnson. We will soon consider the election of delegates, and the Board would like to have the names of all members who will be attending so that we will be able to select good representatives for nomination.

Our national organization is apparently again in financial difficulty after the dues increase of four years ago (see Bill Hull's article in the April "Garden Spray"). Because of this fact and other recent troubles at the national office, our delegates may have to represent our club in voting on some very important and perhaps critical issues. Among other things, a dues increase may be in the offing. We should become more informed about the operation of our national organization so we can make our feelings known to our officers and representatives so that they may represent us on an intelligent basis. I personally have not received any information or correspondence from the national office since being elected president of our club. However, I have written the national office for information regarding the agenda of the convention, and I will try to have some information for you at the next meeting.

MASS MARKETING OF FLOWERS IN HIGH TRAFFIC AREAS

by Ralph Bachman

Our firm has been studying the mass marketing of flowers for years. After analyzing the situation thoroughly, we opened our first test market in April 1968. Since that time, we have opened an additional twelve markets and have a number of others under construction.

While we still are studying results and compiling facts and figures, we now know that our new marketing concept is accepted by both the public and the store or chain operator and that growers over the country have shown a keen interest in this better way of marketing flowers.

Bachman's decided that something had to be done to market more flowers to more people in a better way and with better quality. The first step was to look at our present floral business (ours is above average and does a large volume) and see just whom we were serving and why.

The first fact we discovered was that well over 90 percent of the flowers we sold were strictly for occasions. In other words, with all of our advertising and the many special promotions we've carried out, we still were selling mainly for occasions and only to the top 20 percent income bracket.

We think this is true of all florists today and that if they too looked at their operations, they would find that all service florists are selling flowers for occasions only. It's the funeral business, the weddings, hospitals, anniversaries, birthdays, holidays, and special occasions from which florist shops are getting their business.

Flowers in small units, not arranged, not delivered, not charged, not boxed, are seldom going to be used for gift or occasion flowers. The biggest share of these flowers are for personal or home use, a market the florist really has never touched or encouraged, mainly because he has not understood it or did not want to understand it.

There is in fact no basis to the theory that flowers being sold in our "European Markets" will hinder or cut in on the normal florist's business. We have found it just the opposite in 16 months of intensive testing. The florists' business (occasion business as it is) will increase rather than decrease with the presence of these markets. We have the markets in the same shopping centers and department stores in which we have operated conventional flower shops with large volume for years. Our rate of increase in these stores has been above average, even though these markets are just blocks away.

The reason we tried supermarkets is that we found out that most of them did not know how to handle flowers properly. In fact, most produce men do not care to handle them. While nearly half a billion dollars of ornamental horticultural products are sold in nonfloral outlets, a large share is plants (mostly green ornamentals).

In Bachman's concept, the emphasis is on cut flowers in a new and unique type of open florist refrigerator that has met a high degree of public acceptance. Preliminary figures show that 65 percent of sales in these markets are cut flowers. Here, anyone can get a \$1.00-\$1.25 or a \$1.50 bunch of quality flowers any day of the year.

These markets are staffed at all times with at least one person. All purchases

All installations are handled on a percentage of gross sales. The store furnishes a receiving room and a sink and a 12 foot x 6 foot refrigerator for storage. And the store furnishes a carpeted area in a prime location with proper electric power and a drain. Bachman's furnishes all fixtures and inventory, and the clerks are our responsibility.

To make this a profitable venture for all concerned, a store should have grocery sales of \$4,000,000 or over. Percentage of sales in lower income areas has been as low as 1¼ percent and has gone to over 3 percent in above average stores. Sales area should be 500-600 square feet, depending on store and location.

In a very high traffic area, one cut flower box is producing sales as high as \$800-\$1,000 per square foot per year. While this is very unusual, our average for tests thus far is about \$200 per square foot a year.

Based on tests thus far, Bachman's plans a nationwide program for the future with distribution areas in most major metropolitan areas as a goal.

Patents are pending or have been approved on four of our fixtures, including the display refrigerator.

There's no question in our minds that many millions of dollars in flower sales could be made in the next few years with no reduction in volume to the conventional florist business.

We hope this short summary will answer many questions about this venture. We have had thousands of visitors and interested people since its inception and extend an invitation to any of you to visit us in the Minneapolis area.

(Condensed from a talk presented at the University of Minnesota Commercial Flower Growers' Short Course on September 14, 1969, and reprinted from the Minnesota State Florists Bulletin published by the Agriculture Extension Service, University of Minnesota.)