

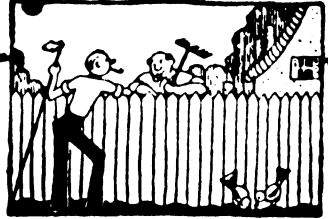


The Garden Spray

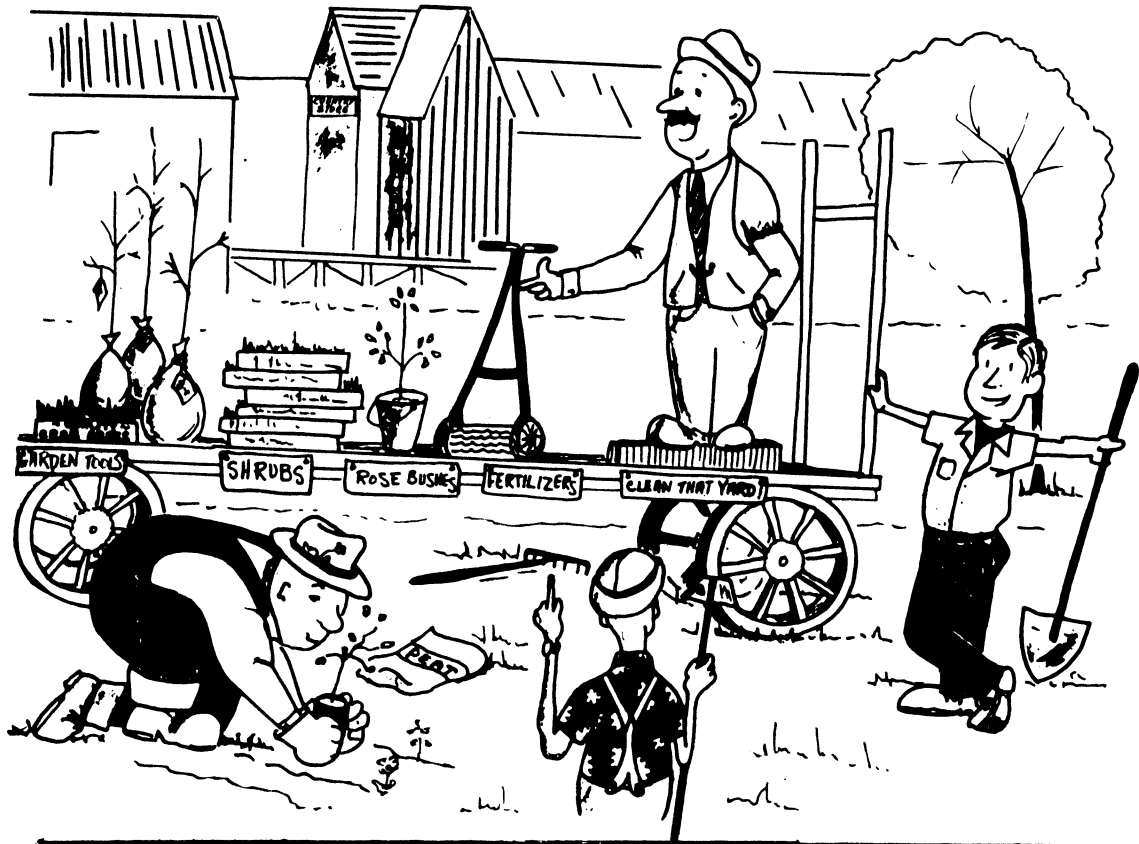
BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

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

MAY 1975, Volume 33, Number 5



YE OLDE COUNTRY STORE & AUCTION



Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis
Annual Plant Sale and Auction
Tuesday, May 13, 1975

Place: Pearl Park Recreation Building
Portland Avenue and East Diamond Lake Road

Time: 5:00 p.m. Country Store
5:45 p.m. Dinner - Price \$3.00
6:30 p.m. Auction

LUCKY BUCKS!

LUCKY DRAWINGS!

LUCKY YOU!

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

IMPORTANT! Don't forget to telephone your caller to inform him whether or not you will attend the Plant Auction May 13th. We need an accurate estimate of attendance for our caterer so please contact your caller early in the week so we can avoid last minute confusion.

I do not know if the 85 men at our last meeting set any attendance records. However, it was a great turn-out for our membership meeting and happily, the impressive number of guests were able to enjoy a very high quality meeting. The lively question and answer session moderated by Dwight Stone was the best program of that type I've attended. Ms. Hope Reed and Mr. Wayne Thompson were an added attraction with their presentation for a nature center at Theodore Wirth Park. This is the type of project we should all support in any way we can.

If you have seedlings started or are dividing perennials, be sure to bring some to the May Plant Auction. Some of my best purchases have come from the gardens of other club members. It's also a great night to bring a guest.

The spring clean up and planting of the Fragrance Garden is scheduled for Saturday, May 17th. We are to meet at the site, 19th and Aldrich South with appropriate tools at 9:30 A.M. For further information contact Carl Holst or Verner Carlson.

--Bob Livingston

MARCH 1975 WEATHER SUMMARY

(For those who file weather records with their garden notes)

March was an unusually cold month. The average temperature of 22.1 degrees was 6.2 degrees below normal. Temperatures during the month ranged from a high of 42 on the 19th to a low of - 8 on the 15th. Precipitation in the form of snow melted down was 1.67 inches, about normal.

The March snowfall of 18.3 inches, however, was 8.3 inches above normal. The greatest snowfall for the month was 6.2 inches on the 23rd and 24th. Total snowfall this winter through March has been 62.0 inches, about 20 inches above normal.

There were 8 clear, 5 partly cloudy and 18 cloudy days.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

(Clip and paste in your roster.)

Archie Caple
7221 - 15th Ave. S., 55423

869-3437

Walter Flumerfelt
4911 Sunnyside Rd., 55424

922-0787

Robert E. Pollman
2004 Heatherton Tr 55425

920-4007

Charles Robbins 861-313
7112 Park Ave., 55423

Kenneth Shaur 922-626
5328 York Ave. S., 55410

THE APRIL MEETING and PANEL

There was a whale of a crowd, 85 including 11 guests. Bill Hull was there hawking MGCA aprons at \$2. (He told me he sold 30.) Nate Siegel was there drumming up assistance for CUE Arbor Day (month) April 23 to May 23. Two young people were there with slides to present a proposal for a nature center at Theodore Wirth park. The girl who spoke had a frail voice and couldn't get the hang of how to handle the mike despite attempts by Bob Livingston and Don Wilson to assist so not even those at the front table got more than snatches of what she said. No matter we awaited the panel.

Dwight Stone warmed up for his panel moderator duties by auctioning off potted delphiniums, impatiens and geraniums--also jacobinia cuttings. He then warned us, "Never mind what the panel says. Do it your own way if your way works."

What a panel! Bob Smith, Glen Ray, Fred Glasoe, Bruce Johnstone. (Carl Holst who was to be the whole show at another meeting couldn't come.) Dwight had to cut them--or members of the audience--off every so often in order to inject another question. The audience gave rapt attention until 8:20 when a stretch break was called. Five minutes later we were at it again for another half hour.

Dave Goddard posed the only question which stumped the panelists. No one in the audience could help, either. Jerry Olson summoned from the audience to answer a couple of questions on roses also explained patenting and grading of roses. On selected other questions the panelists advised:

You're apt to burn your geranium cuttings with root hormones. Wet sand works best. Keep the humidity up and use bottom heat....A new batch of white flies hatches every few days so spraying indoors is never ending. One cure might be to take the plant outdoors for 3 weeks in summer. There are predators aplenty outdoors....A wet evil-smelling patch of bark on an oak tree on a dry day betokens oak wilt....Prune oaks in winter only....Crabgrass is one of the highest yielding protein grasses for cattle....Heritage is even better than Fall Red raspberry. September raspberry is too late....

Watch out what tomato varieties you buy. Tomatoes won't set until evening temperatures stabilize at 65 degrees. Frost comes before ones like Beefsteak amount to much. Cheyenne and New Yorker are very good varieties here....Start tomato plants about April 1. To start tomatoes use a layer of vermiculite topped with a layer of milled sphagnum. Lay the seeds on this. Use more vermiculite if needed to cover. Feed with a weak fertilizer solution until large enough to transplant into dirt (in peat pots?).

Al Mohr is recovering nicely from his recent cataract operation.

Curtis Rice, out of the hospital and convalescing from surgery, reports he has gained six pounds.

DAHLIAS ARE A MAN'S PLANT
by Fred Glasoe

"Dahlias are a man's plant" is a statement often heard, and after growing dahlias for many years I agree that not only are dahlias a man's flower, but they encourage the flower grower to become a real gardener in the full twelve-month sense. No plant can demand more of you, yet give more in return than a good variety of "A" or "B" size dahlia. Growing those huge, beautiful blooms is the epitome of summer gardening. Every gardener eventually moves his focus into one or two specialties that give his talents full sweep. Dahlias are for me that challenge. It takes more than having a few in the garden, however, to learn to understand their complex growing habits, and gardeners who have success with them once shouldn't expect to continue having that first-time luck without additional information and more hard work.

Understanding of a dahlia plant comes through growing it and working with it. No one really ever learns to be a good gardener out of a book. Most of the men's garden club members are well-versed in good basic rules that work for most plants. There are, however, some very basic, yet essential steps in dahlia raising:

1. DAHLIAS NEED GOOD, CONTINUOUS MOISTURE, yet must be grown in well-drained, well-humused soil. A heavy clay is not a good bed for dahlias.
2. DAHLIAS MUST HAVE A STRONG ROOT DEVELOPMENT before they grow too much stem and leaf area. They should never be cultivated after they have been in the ground for three weeks.
3. DAHLIAS MUST HAVE MORE THAN A HALF-DAY OF GOOD SUNLIGHT. Midday shade from the heat would be the perfect location, with good morning and late afternoon sun.
4. DAHLIAS MUST HAVE ONLY ONE MAIN STEM; never let sucker shoots come up from the roots; keep checking under the plant all summer.
5. DAHLIAS MUST BE TOPPED when they are about one foot high. "A" dahlias should be allowed to develop only three or four lateral branches. "B" dahlias can be allowed to have up to eight laterals. Don't wait too long to top the main stem, as the laterals should come from as near the ground as possible.
6. DAHLIAS MUST BE WELL-STAKED AND TIED. Too much motion in the main stalk will loosen the plant from its tuber. Wind easily breaks the lateral branches in the joints if they are not well-tied. The tie must never be tight around the branch. The branch must be allowed to expand with growth. Therefore, a tie is made at the post, brought around the branch in a "figure eight" and tied to itself again only at the post. Never wrap a tie around a growing stalk or lateral in any other fashion.
7. A GOOD DISBUDDING PROGRAM MUST BE STARTED EARLY; disbudding is done by removing the two outside buds in each group of three and allowing only the one large bud to develop. Miniatures and poms need not be disbudded except for shows.
8. DAHLIAS NEED A GOOD, REGULAR SPRAYING PROGRAM. Although they are strong plants, they are often attractive to mites, aphids, stem borers and chewing insects. Spray weekly and after heavy rains with a recommended amount of Isotox and Kelthane. Fungus is not a problem except in storage.
9. DAHLIAS ARE HEAVY EATERS AND HEAVY DRINKERS. They need far more

feeding every three weeks during the growing season is essential. In the fall use 10-10-10 and during the summer use 5-20-20. Very light soil needs more nitrogen.

10. DAHLIAS NEED A DEEP MULCH. Your best mulch will be one that can eventually be dug under after the roots have been taken up in the fall. Therefore, a good leaf compost program serves both needs with one application. Mulch early, about mid-June and keep the mulch deep, the soil fertile and moist. In very hot weather, flood the beds and don't be afraid to spray the leaves with cool water to keep the plant as wilt-free as possible.

These ten rules should give you very nice dahlias if you have started with a good variety that has been graded for size of bloom. Too often I see boxes of pre-packaged dahlia tuberous roots that are not among the top types that are available today. If they are not sized "A", "B", "C" and "Miniature" it's best to purchase your roots from a reputable dahlia grower. Don't believe that label that says "Dinner Plate Size". Most of them turn out to be dessert plate varieties.

Dahlias require considerable effort, yet they yield very satisfactory results. Once you have grown a big 14-inch bloom in your yard and everyone has admired your gardening expertise, you will be stuck on growing dahlias forever. As a well-known Twin City dahlia grower says, "Each one is a personal friend whom you see and guide all through life. You wake it up in the spring, help it grow and become strong and beautiful and then put it to bed until it's time to awaken it the next year."

SEE YOU AT THE AUCTION

Return to
THE GARDEN SPRAY of MGCM, INC.
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