

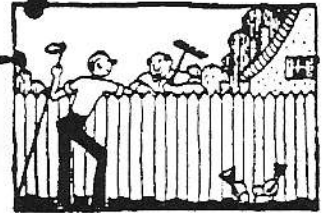
Celebrating Our 55th Year

The Garden Spray

Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

April 1997, Volume 55, Number 4



April Dinner Meeting...

Garden and Landscape Design

Our speaker will be Andrea Fiterman from Andrea Fiterman Landscapes. Andrea has graciously agreed to come to talk to us about garden and landscape design. Many MGCM members have perfect landscapes, but many others of us are not quite satisfied, and we need some advice and help in getting to a pleasing arrangement. Andrea comes recommended by Esther Filson, and is a frequent speaker at gardening organizations in the Twin Cities.

Date: Tuesday April 8, 1997

Place: Lake Harriet United Methodist Church

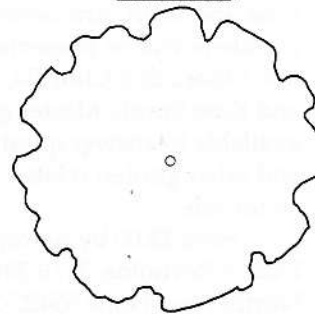
Time: Dinner 6:30 pm
Business 7:00 pm
Program 7:30 pm

Cost: \$7.00 if reserved in advance

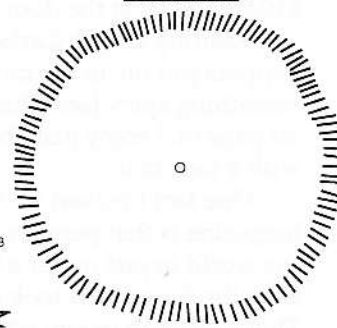
\$8.00 at the door if meals are available

TREES & SHRUBS, PLAN VIEW

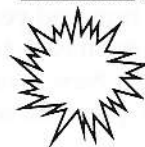
DECIDUOUS, LARGE



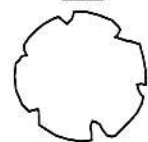
EVERGREEN, LARGE



EVERGREEN SHRUB



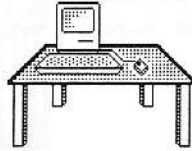
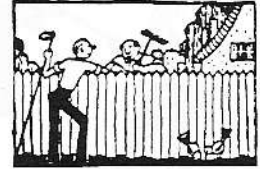
SHRUB



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Important Note about Reservations

The 1997 permanent reservation list is in effect for this meeting. Check your mailing label. If it says "nc" in the corner, you are on the permanent list. If there is no "nc" on your label, you are not on the permanent reservation list and must call Director Kay Wolfe by Friday, April 4, to be assured a place at dinner. If you are on the permanent list and will not attend, you must notify Kay by the same deadline or risk being responsible for the price of your dinner. Kay can be reached at 922-0762. Leave a message on her voice mail if you can't reach her in person.



The Editor's Desk

Andy Marlow

The Fifth District of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society is holding their annual Spring Fling Gardening Seminar on Saturday April 5, 1997. The event runs from 8:30 am until 1:30 pm at the Robbinsdale Area Community Education Center, 4139 Regent Avenue North.

Workshops will cover topics such as hostas, roses, daylilies, vegetables, perennials and lawn care. Several MGCM members will be presenters, including Dr. Bob Olson, Bob Churilla, Duane Reynolds and Russ Smith. Master gardeners will be available to answer questions, and books and other garden related merchandise will be for sale.

Save \$2.00 by preregistering with Duane Reynolds, 7119 39th Avenue North, New Hope 55427-1303, or call him at 537-6512. Preregistration admission is \$10.00, \$12.00 at the door.

Reading Chuck Carlson's column on peppers put me in the mood for something spicy (see Chuck's Chestnuts on page 6). I enjoy just about anything with a kick to it.

One fact I picked up from *Chile Pepper* magazine is that peppers spread around the world in just under a hundred years after the Europeans took them back home. That's faster than any other New World food, including tomatoes, potatoes, corn, etc.

Think how cuisines around the world have benefited from the dispersion of the pepper. What would Indian, Thai, Vietnamese, Italian, and certain Chinese cuisines be without the added kick of hot peppers? How about Hungarians without paprika for their goulash?

Coming Attractions

Tuesday, April 1 – 7:30 pm
Board of Directors' Meeting
Walt Muehlegger's House

Wednesday April 2 – 7:00 pm
Plant Auction Committee
Westwood Lutheran Church
9001 Cedar Lake Road
St. Louis Park

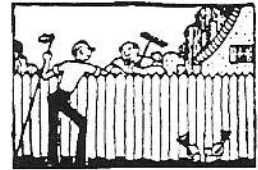
Saturday, April 5 – 8:30 to 1:30
Spring Fling Gardening Seminar
MSHS Fifth District
Robbinsdale Community Ed Center
4139 Regent Avenue North
Robbinsdale

Tuesday, April 8 – 6:30 pm
MGCM Dinner Meeting
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church
49th & Chowen Avenue South

Tuesday, April 29 – 7:30 pm
Board of Directors' Meeting
Howard Berg's House

The Garden Spray is published monthly by the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc., for its members and friends. The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis is a not-for-profit, equal opportunity organization.

Editor.....Andrew J. Marlow
Staff.....Chuck Carlson,
Richard Coldren, Sher Curry and
Robert Olson



Maury's Musings

by Maury Lindblom, President, MGCM

This year, particularly, all of us are eagerly awaiting the arrival of spring. The winter has been long and arduous and it hasn't given up yet. As this is written, we are accumulating 4" of wet snow! Fortunately, the temperatures the rest of the week are supposed to be in the fifties.

But spring will come; it always does. And with its arrival, there are a lot of things we have to do to get ready for a new season of gardening. If we look at the



Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

south side of the house, we may be surprised to see that tulips and daffodils are several inches high. Some have been growing for several weeks, despite the weather. This is one of the lessons we learn from flowers that I spoke of last month. Removing winter cover from our bulb plant-

ings and other areas of the garden is a task we can start on soon. Gradual removal is a technique I have found works beneath it. The ground will remain frozen and the thaw will take longer if the winter cover is left in place too long.

Winter cover removal is only one of the "cleanup" tasks we face in the spring, but one which I find enjoyable because of the discoveries of emerging life that one finds. Last spring I discovered a nest of mallard eggs in the rock garden and guarded them carefully (or so I thought),

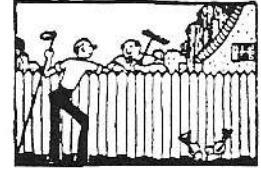
and was distressed to find one day that our resident red fox had eaten all of them. No nest so far this year, but I am awaiting the appearance of the scilla and the winter aconite.

Animal predation is usually thought of in the type of thing I described above, but our gardens are often preyed upon as well. I, like many of you, have a deer problem. They really like those first tender shoots of tulips, etc., until the buds in the woods begin to swell and their natural food supply becomes more abundant. Starting to use repellent measures can't begin too early in the spring. I have used all the repellents, and this year am going to start a "natural repellent"—coyote urine. I'll let you know later how it worked.

We all know about cleanup tasks; the raking, sweeping, and pruning, but do we give enough thought to getting into good physical condition to be able to perform these tasks without undue soreness? Gradual increase in our exercise should be done now to avoid problems later.

Of course, we all may get a little sore from time to time, but the great thing about gardening is that you can most always rest whenever you please. It has been called the original "puttering" hobby—you can work when you please for as long you please.

The intensity of our interest in our gardens is rising these days like the sap rising in the trees. I know that we will all see a lot of wonderful results this summer from all of our spring labors



Monthly Program Report

by Andy Marlow

It can be said of nearly any MGCM event that a good time was had by all. This year at the annual foray to the Dayton's Bachman's flower show, a good time was had by more people than ever. A record



Dale Bachman
Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

number of members and their guests partook of good food, a short but effective presentation by Dale Bachman, and the best flower show in recent memory.

Dale explained that Bachman's and Dayton's chose the theme honoring Vienna's famous composers because of both organizations' strong ties to the Minnesota Orchestra and the Minnesota Opera.

Vienna is dotted with parks and monuments honoring such luminaries as Beethoven, Mozart, Strauss and Schubert. Alas, Schubert, who would be celebrating his 200th birthday this year, had to be left out of the show because of space limitations. But reproductions and recreations honoring the others

were the focus of the show, including the arches of St. Mark's cemetery where Beethoven is buried, a mural depicting the Strauss statue in Stat Park, and primrose surrounding the recreation of Mozart memorial. And, of course, visitors are surrounded by the music of the city—we entered to the strains of the "Blue Danube

Waltz".

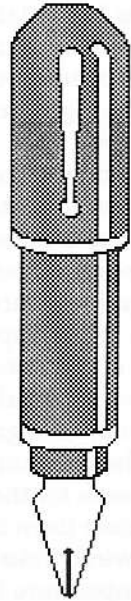
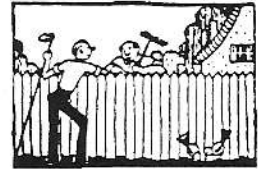
The show is built on a bed of 150 cubic yards of soil, with literally thousands of red and white tulips and other flowering bulbs. Huge 'Yellow Sun' daffodils lived up to their name by spreading a sunny glow throughout the eighth floor auditorium. The fragrance of the hyacinths beckoned to us while we were still on the tenth floor escalator. All of the bulbs in the show were forced at the Bachman's greenhouse facility in Lakeville.

Except for the giant arches and a cozy cafe in the center of the auditorium, there was little in the way of structure to block one's view of the entire garden. The openness made it seem more garden-like than in previous years.

Some of my highlights: seeing edelweiss in bloom, several clever and healthy looking topiaries, a pair of container grown "Dawn" redwoods and the numerous colorful azaleas and rhododendrons.

Many of the plants for the show are brought in from the West Coast. Dale had warned us that some of them had been delayed in transit by a snow storm and suffered some frost damage, including a three tiered boxwood swan topiary. It was still impressive and quite beautiful.

Dale said he took a trip to Vienna in February, after the show was planned and set. He said he thought they did pretty well. Those of us who couldn't make the trip to the real Vienna were pleased to be sharing the next best thing.



Board Meeting Minutes

Mary Maynard, Vice President

March 11, 1997

The meeting was called to order by Maury Lindblom at 7:35 p.m. All Officers and Directors were present except Secretary Walt Muehlegger

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the February Board meeting were approved on motion by Mary Maynard, seconded by Chuck Carlson.

Treasurer's Report: Report was approved as presented on motion by Kay, second by Mary.

Vice President's Report: Possible future program topics include preparation for the FFF show, garden photography, garden structures, and lawn care.

Committee Reports

Arbor Day: Charles Benson reports that the date is set for Saturday, May 10. This is later than usual, which should help with availability of planting materials. Will be planting four trees in the vicinity of the new perennial garden near Lake Harriet.

FFF Show: First committee meeting is scheduled for March 20.

Perennial Garden: Bill Jepson reports that Chuck Carlson and Henry Orfield met with Mary Lerman of the Park Board on March 6. Also present were three growers and the landscape designer from Noremburg Gardens.

The committee identified a list of plants that will be grown at the University

in field rows as well as in the garden setting that we will be working on. The U of M will purchase all plant materials, and the Park Board will take care of plot preparation, labels and watering. MGCM is responsible for planting and maintenance. All workers will need to sign and register with the Park Board.

Plant Auction: Howard Berg reports that some plants are already ordered from a grower in Nebraska. The Auction will be held at Westwood Lutheran Church (east of 169 on Cedar Lake Road). Next committee meeting is April 2 at the Church.

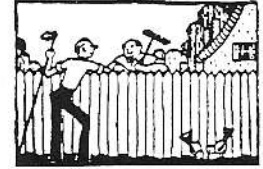
New Business

Rose Society Convention: Hand-outs will be provided at next club meeting again. Several MGCM members are instrumental in this convention.

Discovery Center: We received a request for donation to the J.D. Rivers Urban Outdoor Discovery Center at Theodore With Park. They are planning to build wheelchair-accessible raised beds for therapeutic horticultural programming for adults with disabilities. Since this was not in our 1997 budget plan, the board decided, on motion by Mary and second by Bob Stepan, to table this request until later in the year, when we could assess our financial situation.

New Member: The Board approved application for membership by Rich Van Sickle.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 on motion by Bill, second by Kay. Next meeting on April 1 at Walt Muehlegger's.



Chuck's Chestnuts

by Chuck Carlson

Peppers have been getting more attention lately. It's probably due to the eating habits of this generation. We have been eating more Mexican, Italian and Greek food, all of which use peppers abundantly.

Did you know that peppers are native to the New World? It is a native of the tropics of Central and South America. Supposedly Columbus was responsible for the name Pepper; he thought the flavor was similar to black pepper (*piper nigrum*) which was already being used in Europe. Columbus took some American peppers back to Spain, where they became very popular. From there they spread throughout Europe, England, North America and the world.

There are sweet peppers and hot peppers, but they are all part of the species *Capsicum annum*; in other words, an annual pepper. It is also a close relative of the tomato, potato, eggplant, petunia and tobacco—all of which are part of the *Solanaceae* family.

Sweet peppers are many: Bells, Paprika, Pimento, Sweet Banana, Sweet Hungarian, Cubanella and Sweet Cherry.

There are also a number of different kinds of hot peppers. Some are Cayenne, Red Chili, Green Chili, Hungarian Yellow Wax and Jalapeño. The really hot ones include Tepine, Pequin, Tabasco, Thai, Casabella and Habenero. For the latter you must be careful that the oils don't get rubbed into your eyes, etc. Habeneros are

about 50 times as hot as Jalapeños.

To grow peppers you must have hot weather and lots of sun. Don't plant them outdoors until the nighttime temperature is above 60 degrees.

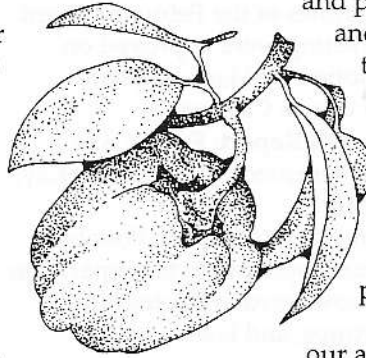
Here in Minnesota, you must start seeds indoors or buy plants since the season is so short and the soil must be 75 degrees for the seeds to germinate. Sow seeds in a fine grained starter mix and cover about 1/4 inch. Keep them moist, both before and after germination.

About 6 to 8 weeks after germination (which takes 10 days), begin hardening them off. Take them outside for short periods, 2 to 4 hours for the first few days, and protect them from the sun and wind. Take them in if the temperature falls below 70 degrees. Gradually increase the time outside until, after a week or two, they are fully adjusted to the harshness of outdoors and are ready to transplant.

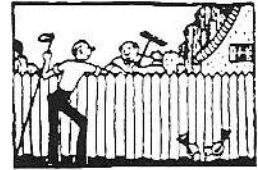
Transplanting time in our area is about June 1, so start seeds from mid-March through the first week in April.

Aphids are probably the most prevalent insect problem. Blossom drop is often caused by low temperatures. Night-time temperature below 60 degrees or above 75 degrees inhibit fruit from setting. Do not smoke near the plants and, smokers, wash your hands prior to handling the plants. Peppers are susceptible to tobacco wilt and there is no cure for it. Dispose of any infected plant material (but do not put it in the compost pile).

Peppers can be harvested any time after they reach a size that's worthwhile. But remember, sweet peppers are sweeter and hot peppers are hotter when mature.



(continued on page 9)



Saturday May 10 at 9:00 a.m.

Arbor Day Planting

The MGCM 1997 Arbor Day planting will be in Lyndale Park near our new perennial trial garden. Members will be planting a Pyramidal Tulip Tree, Serbian Spruce, Emerald Fountain Hemlock and Butterflies Magnolia. According to Mary Maguire Lerman of the Park Board, "These trees will be scattered throughout the arboretum in Lyndale Park, but the Tulip Tree will be installed adjacent to the existing tulip tree which adjoins the perennial trail garden area."

Arbor Day started in Nebraska in 1872, the brainchild of J. Sterling Morton. He wanted Nebraskans, and later all Americans, to plant trees to provide firewood, fence posts, lumber, fruits and nuts, shade and tranquility. The National Arbor Day Foundation carries on Morton's work today, including caring for Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City, NE.

National Flower and Vegetable Named

The Flower Food and Foto Show Committee has designated salvia as the National Flower and the pepper as the National Vegetable for this year's show (August 9 and 10 at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum). Special ribbons from TGOA/MGCA are awarded to exhibitors showing the best specimen in each category. For some tips on growing peppers, see *Chucks' Chestnuts* on page 6. Information on salvia will be coming in a future issue of the *Garden Spray*.

Start your seeds now!



It's coming . . .

The 1997 Plant Auction will

be held Tuesday, May 6 at

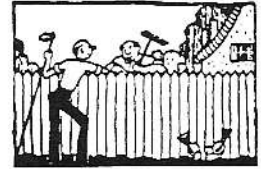
Westwood Lutheran

Church in St. Louis Park.

Details to follow in May's

Garden Spray.





Perennial Trial Garden Update

by Chuck Carlson

Our new perennial trial garden project is off and running. As reported in the January *Spray*, this garden is a joint venture between the University of Minnesota (U of M), the Minneapolis Park and Recreation System (MP&RS) and MGCM.

A kickoff meeting to plan the 500 foot garden was held March 6. There were attendees from MGCM, MP&RS, and the U of M plus Arla Carmichiel of Noremburg Gardens and several local growers.

The duties of the three partners were defined as follows:

- MGCM—Design (shared with MP&RS), planting and maintenance
- MP&RS—Design (shared with MGCM), site preparation and watering
- U of M—Funding, plant procurement, evaluation and data collection

Each group brought to the meeting a list of ten perennials they thought should be included in the garden for evaluation. From these, the following list of perennial species was developed:

Agastache
Ajuga
Artemisia
Asclepias
Aster
Astilbe
Astrantia
Baptisia
Campanula
Coreopsis
Echinacea
Geranium
Helleborus

Heuchera
Nepeta
Penstemon
Perovskia
Phlox
Platycondon
Pulmonaria
Sanguisorba
Sedum
Stachys
Tricyrtis

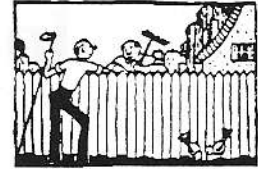
A number of cultivars from each species will be grown in the garden. Other perennials will be used as a background for the various test groups.

As a backup and a second test bed, the U of M will have the same plants in the gardens at the St. Paul campus. The St. Paul beds will be planted in rows rather than the garden setting at our Lake Harriet site. In the future the U of M may add a site further north for zone 3 testing.

By the time you read this, other meetings will have been held to consider the design, specific plant varieties and other details of the project.

Those of us involved to date feel this is a terrific project for MGCM. We expect all those who signed up for the Community Garden Committee to participate, but all MGCM members are encouraged to take part in planning, planting and maintenance of the garden. If you have any ideas to contribute contact one of the committee cochairs, Dave Moehnke or Bob Redmond.

This is a project from which we can all gain and learn more about perennials. The more you participate, the more you will learn. Plus it should be a real show-piece when we host the TGOA/MGCA national convention in 2003!



Chestnuts

(continued from page 6)

They are tender, so pick all of them if a frost is expected.

Peppers are high in vitamins A and C and potassium, but are low in calories.

Here are some varieties to try. I have grown some and other looked interesting in the catalogs. The number is days to maturity (after transplanting).

Sweet Peppers

Bells are the most common. They are fat and have three or four lobes on the bottom. Excellent for salads, or stuffed and baked.

- 'Ace', 50-70, green to red
- 'Big Bertha', 72, very large, green to red
- 'Valencia', 70-90, green to orange
- 'Orabelle', 70-90, green to yellow
- 'Islander', 56-81, lavender to red
- 'Secret', 60-85, purple to red
- 'Sweet Chocolate', 58-78, green to brown
- 'Park's Whopper', 71, green to red

Paprikas are dried and ground for the spice flavor.

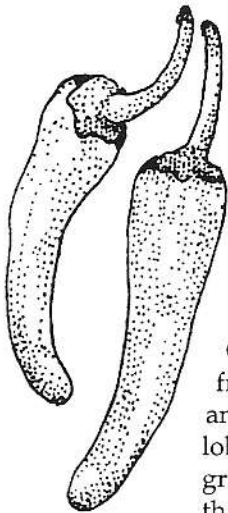
- 'Paprika Supreme', 55-80, green to red

Pimentos are very mild with thick walls. Eat them fresh or stuff olives with them.

- 'Apple', 57-77, green to red

Banana, Sweet Hungarian or Cubanellas are referred to as sweet frying or pickling peppers. They are long and narrow, tapering to one, two or three lobes. They are picked when yellow or green and have a lower water content than other peppers.

- 'Sweet Banana', AAS winner, yellow
- 'Gypsy', 65, AAS winner, green-yellow to orange
- 'Biscayne', 60-85, pale green to red, a Cubanelle.



Hot Peppers

Cayenne are slim and hot. They bare two to eight inches long and are usually dried.

- 'Cherrytime', 53-73, green to red

Red Chili is small (one to three inches) and conical. Often is dried and used for chili powder but can be used fresh in your favorite chili recipe. Medium hot.

- 'Super Chili', 50-70, AAS winner, green to red

Green Chili, also called Anaheim, is a long slender chili (seven to eight inches), usually roasted or grilled, then skinned. Mildly hot. Used for Chiles Rellenos.

- 'Ortega', 70-90, green to red

Hungarian Yellow Wax is also called Hot Banana. One of the mildest hot peppers, it is good for canning or pickling.

- 'Hungarian Hot Wax', 58-83, pale yellow to red

Extra Hots

Jalapeño peppers are two to three inches long, thick walled and pungent. A Mexican favorite.

- 'Delicias', 65-85, green to red, a mild Jalapeño
- 'Early Jalapeño', 65-85, green to red, a hot Jalapeño

Thai peppers are hotter than Jalapeños.

- 'Thai Dragon', 70, green to red, five times hotter than Jalapeño

Habeñero is a *Capsicum, chinese* pepper known in Jamaica as Scotch Bonnet. It is the key ingredient in jerk sauces. It is hot, hot, hot—50 times hotter than Jalapeño. Growing this pepper is somewhat erratic in the north.

Inside:

Page 2/	Editor's Column Events Calendar
Page 3/	President's Column
Page 4/	March Program Report
Page 5/	Board Meeting Minutes
Page 6/	Chuck's Chestnut
Page 7/	Arbor Day News Nat'l Flower and Vegetable
Page 8/	Perennial Trial Garden News

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