

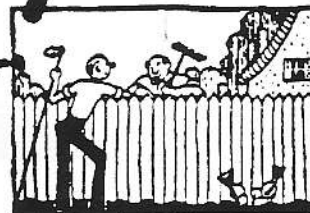


# The Garden Spray

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

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

February 1996, Volume 54, Number 2



## February Dinner Meeting

### Celebrate MGCM Membership Milestones

Help us honor our latest honorary members:

Larry Corbett will celebrate his 50th year and Lloyd Bachman his 46th year as members of MGCM.

Plus our dinner program:

### What's New at the Arboretum?

with Peter Olin, Director of the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

Peter will talk about recent developments and plans for the future at the Arboretum and show slides of warm summer scenes.



Date: Tuesday, February 13

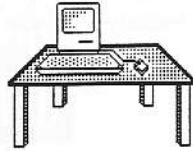
Place: Lake Harriet United  
Methodist Church  
4901 Chowen Avenue South  
Minneapolis

Times: 6:30 p.m. Dinner  
7:00 p.m. Business Meeting  
7:30 p.m. Speaker

Cost: \$7.00 with advance  
reservation

\$8.00 at the door  
(if places are available)

The 1996 permanent reservation list will be in effect for this meeting. If you received a reservation card in this issue of the *Garden Spray*, you are not on the permanent reservation list and must mail your card back to Secretary Mary Maynard by Friday, February 9, to be assured a place at dinner. If you are on the permanent list and will not attend, you must notify Mary by the same deadline or risk being responsible for the price of your dinner. You will still be able to sign up for the 1996 permanent reservation list at the February meeting.



### The Editor's Desk

Andy Marlow

Lots of things are going on despite our recent spell of unseasonably (even for Minnesota) cold weather. It always helps me to remember that my perennials are snuggled down under the snow just waiting for the warmer conditions of spring. Sometimes I need to think of a particularly choice plant to get the warm feelings flowing through me—at 25 below thinking of an average plant just doesn't do it.

Both Larry Corbett and Lloyd Bachman were approved as honorary members of MGCM at the January dinner meeting. Talk about perennials that give you a nice warm feeling—Larry has been a member for 50 years and Lloyd for 46 years.

Members have been busy being published, too. Clyde and Virginia Thompson's garden was on the cover of the *Minnesota Horticulturist* while a photo by Henry Orfield graced the cover of *The Gardener*. In the same issue of *The Gardener* we were treated to a treatise on lilies by Duane Reynolds.

Finally, the real harbinger of spring – the Minneapolis Home and Garden Show – is just around the corner. It runs March 6 through 9 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Can April showers and May flowers be far behind?

If you were at the January meeting, you should have picked up your 1996 MGCM directory. If you weren't there, one should accompany this issue of the *Garden Spray*. If you didn't get one by either method, I'll bring all the leftovers to the February meeting.



## Coming Attractions

**Tuesday, February 6 – 7:30 pm**  
Board of Directors  
Bob Stepan's House

**Tuesday, February 13 – 6:30 pm**  
Dinner Meeting  
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church  
49th & Chowen Ave. So.

**Tuesday, March 5 – 7:30 pm**  
Board of Directors  
Maurice Lindblom's House

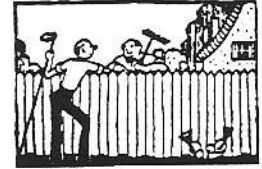
**Tuesday, March 19**  
Dayton's – Bachman's Flower Show  
Dayton's Skyroom  
12th Floor – Eighth & Nicollet Mall

**Tuesday, April 2 – 7:30 pm**  
Board of Directors  
Mary Maynard's House

**Tuesday, April 9 – 6:30 pm**  
Dinner Meeting  
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church  
49th & Chowen Ave. So.

*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.....Ed Biren, Chuck Carlson, Dale Fisher, Mary Maynard, Derrill Pankow, Merle Pulley



# Tips and Snips

by Bob Stepan, President, MGCM

At the February dinner meeting we will be honoring Lawrence Corbett for his 50 years of membership in MGCM. What a great contribution he has made to the Club over a span of half a century. This singular feat has not been accomplished by anyone else to my knowledge. We are all grateful to Larry for all he's brought to the Club, and wish him many more years ahead.



Photo by  
Ted Olson

"What's new?" That's the number one question asked by gardeners at Home and Garden Shows across the country. What they mean is "What do you have that's different, that I can grow, that will get people excited about my garden?"

Let me begin with a few new ideas I picked up thumbing through gardening magazines. One in particular had an article with color photographs of new varieties of roses, annuals and perennials for 1996. A couple of the roses looked enticing. *Zebra* is a novelty item that looked good in the picture, with a combination of vertical stripes. The photo looked like it was pink on white, but the article listed it as red and white. It's a hybrid tea with an excellent production of blooms and a long vase life. *Classy* is a bright red hybrid tea that produces very large heads of up to 50 petals. It has exceptional foliage, consistently long stems and no discoloration. *Lydia* is a light cream-pink spray rose with stem lengths reaching 20-24 inches. It has a vase life of 10-12 days, which is excellent. *Obsession*, which claims to be the finest new red hybrid on the market, has striking 2 inch buds that elegantly spiral in 4-1/2 inch blooms. Each blossom has 25-30 rich petals. Stems are consistently

long and blooms have an excellent vase life.

The 1996 A. A. R. S. selections for 1996 include *Living-Easy*, a salmon pink floribunda with 20-30 petals; *Carefree Delight* pink shrub rose with 5 petals; *St. Patrick's*, a yellow hybrid tea with 30-35 petals; and *Mount Hood*, a white grandiflora with 40-45 petals.

Some other new flowers which looked interesting were *Riviera Midnight Blue Lobelia*. It has deep blue flowers with bronze foliage, and offers extra early flowering with good garden performance. *Showstopper* is a familiar impatiens for many of us, but it has three new colors: rose, apricot and blue. Petunias keep coming out with new colors. *Fantasy Pink Morn* looks like a good one to try. *Fantasy* is a dwarf cultivar which takes less space and is a milliflora.

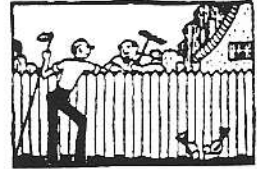
Happy planting! Give a new variety a try this season. Let your fellow garden club members know how new varieties worked for you. We'd like to see them on a garden tour or entered in the Flower, Food and Foto Show this summer.

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## I'll Bet You Didn't Know...

that MGCM was chartered on October 1, 1942, by the Men's Garden Clubs of America, Inc., with 60 original members. They are all deceased now, but when I joined in 1952 several were still active whom I can remember well. They could be deservedly described as giants in the earth and laid a great foundation for our club.

Bill Hull, Historian



## Monthly Program Report

by Andy Marlow

When Susan Holtan moved from climate zone 7 to Minnesota's less hospitable zone 4, she had to learn to



Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

garden all over. But, as she told members at the January MGCM dinner meeting, Minnesota's indoor climate is ideal for the dried flowers she loves. The warm, dry indoor air speeds the drying of flowers in her attic and preserves dried bouquets for many weeks.

Ms. Holtan, who teaches courses on dried flower preservation and arranging at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, shared many of her secrets during her talk. She also demonstrated arranging techniques.

The aim in drying plant material is to remove moisture while retaining the original form and color of the material. The two most important secrets are choosing the ideal time to pick a particular blossom and choosing the appropriate method of drying.

Each flower has its own ideal time and it would be impossible to list them all here. Susan gave her audience several handouts that, among other things, described that ideal moment for dozens of plants. She suggested *Dried Flower Designs, Vol. 30*, a handbook distributed by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden as another

excellent source of information.

Air drying, desiccant drying and glycerine treatment are the three preferred methods for preserving flowers. Air drying can be used on plant material that does not wilt easily, such as goldenrod, dock and statice. These flowers are usually hung blossom down in a warm, dry area for four to six days.

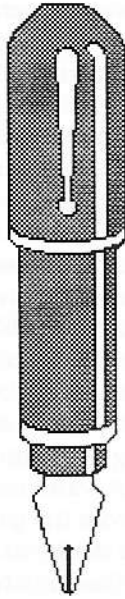
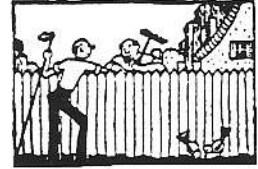
Flowers that wilt – such as roses, zinnias, dahlias – can be dried using a desiccant. The most familiar desiccant is the silica gel used to absorb moisture in packaging. The only problem is that you need a lot of it and it is expensive. Cat litter fresh from the bag is a very good (and economical) second choice. A thin layer of cat litter is put in the bottom of a box (Shoe boxes work well), the flowers are gently laid in and more cat litter is gently spooned around the flower until it is all covered. Cover, seal and store for three to four days.

Glycerine is used primarily on foliage plants and is also quite expensive. Its major advantage is that it preserves the foliage practically forever.

No matter what drying method is used, properly dried flowers should be crisp to the touch, but not brittle. Store them in cardboard boxes to preserve the color—never in plastic.

Flowers change color as they dry. White flowers will be a buff color. Reds go very dark, sometimes almost black. Susan says she does best with pinks, yellows, blues and grays. She did admit to renewing colors (only when necessary) with a light touch of spray paint.

Susan Holtan concluded her talk by completing a partial wreath she had brought with her for the demonstration and presented the final result to Burton Deane, whose birthday was the closest to the meeting date of anyone in attendance.



# Board Meeting Minutes

Mary Maynard, Secretary

January 2, 1996

Present: Howard Berg, Chuck Carlson, Bill Jepson, Maurice Lindblom, Mary Maynard, Henry Orfield, Bob Stepan, Clyde Thompson, Bob Voigt, Kay Wolfe

The meeting was called to order by Bob Voigt at 7:40 p.m.

## Old Business

### Secretary's Report:

Minutes of December meeting approved on motion by Kay, second by Chuck.

**Treasurer's Report:** Report was approved as presented on motion by Mary, second by Chuck. Joe Stenger and George McCullough are on the audit committee to review 1995 treasurers reports.

**Green Thumb Awards:** We have a large number of Green Thumb Award winners (perfect attendance in 1995) to be presented at the January meeting.

**Honorary Members:** Two nominations for honorary membership (Lloyd Bachman and Larry Corbett) will be submitted to the January club meeting for approval.

**Fragrance Garden:** Chuck has heard from Mary McGuire Lehrman that we may get some stock for the garden in 1996. Clyde will talk to Lily Society about possible donations. Bill Jepson talked to Minneapolis police department about transients that appeared to be living in the garden last year. The police expressed optimism about moving vagrants out. Bill

will also be getting back to the Society for the Blind, which has requested a map of the garden in order to prepare a braille map.

## New Business

**New Members:** One application for membership was approved on motion by Clyde, second by Howard: Sher A. Curry

**Tours:** Dave Johnson (of Golden Valley) will head up committee for the public fundraising tour in July. Kay Wolfe will handle the August tour. The public tour will be July 13-14, the August tour on August 18.

**Book Bequest:** Floyd Ashley left his gardening library to MGCM. Chet Groger has a list of the books. The club will ask Kent Petterson to assign a value to the library, then the Board will decide what to do next.

**Finances:** Treasurer Berg requested approval to close small passbook savings account (\$91.01) and deposit funds in checking account. Approved on motion by Bill, second by Mary.

**Assistant Historian:** Bill Hull is looking for someone to help him with historian duties.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 on motion by Clyde, second by Bill.

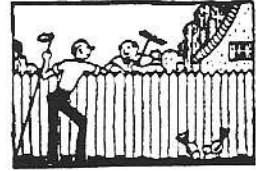
Next meeting on February 6 at Bob Stepan's.

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## New Member

Sher A. Curry  
6907 Hill Place North  
Crystal, MN 55427





# Chuck's Chestnuts

by Chuck Carlson

## The Chestnut

Last month I gave a short introduction on propagation in general. This month I'll give more details on sexual propagation.

### Sexual Propagation

Sexual propagation is starting of plants from seeds. There are a number of reasons to start plants from seed, including necessity, cost and personal satisfaction. Necessity arises from the fact that certain plant varieties are available only by seed. Sometimes they are only available at locations having climatic conditions so unlike those of your locality that the plants will not do well as transplants.

Once you have decided to sow seeds, you must decide if the germination should take place indoors or outdoors. Some factors to consider are space availability, light availability and work time availability. In general these all favor outdoor germination. Indoors you need to use artificial light. Space outside is relatively unlimited whereas many flats of plants growing inside take a lot of space and consume more time to nurture the plants. Better germination is achieved inside but plants must be hardened off. Transplanting can be a problem for some plants, a problem that is eliminated if seeded in situ (in place). The biggest reason for starting plants inside in our area is to increase the variety of plants which can be grown since many are long maturing or not very hardy in our climate.

### Germination

There are a number of external factors that influence seed germination,

including moisture, temperature, oxygen and light. Not only do these nurture the plants but also help trigger the seed's natural delay mechanisms.

The following tips pertain to starting plants inside but generally apply to growing them outside as well.

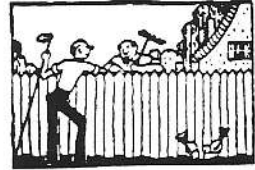
**Containers:** The kind is not as important as is its cleanliness—they should all be washed before using. A good wash is a 10% solution of bleach in water. Plastic containers can be just washed but clay pots must be soaked for at least 30 minutes, scrubbed, rinsed and dried.

**Propagating Medium:** Any fine, good draining but water retentive soil is acceptable. Soil from the garden can be used but must be sterilized. Today almost everyone uses soilless mixtures. There is no need for sterilization and it even has some disease preventive properties. You can use a seed starter mixture for germination and later a soilless potting mix for transplanting.

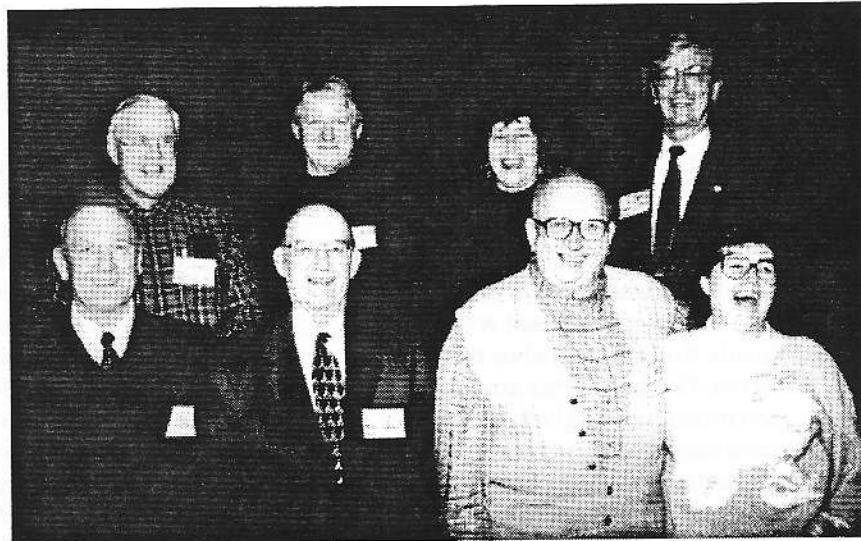
**Sowing the Seeds:** The time to start sowing is the recommended weeks before your area's frost free date plus 2 weeks for hardening off. If one has a cold frame or some other protected outside area, the starting date could be a couple of weeks earlier. Follow the directions on the seed packet for general procedures such as planting depth, etc. After seeding, cover the container with glass or plastic until germination has occurred. For those seeds that need darkness to germinate something opaque must be over the seeds. The best way to water is bottom watering. Keep the soil damp but not soggy, and never let it completely dry out. If the seed requires warmth to germinate, bottom heat can be used.

**Damping Off:** This is a major factor in losing plants right after germination has taken place. Here are a few suggestions to reduce the loss: sterilize all

*(continued on page 8)*



## 1996 MGCM Officers

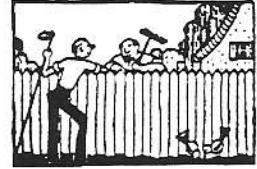


1996 Officers and Directors from left to right, (front row) President Bob Stepan, Vice President Maurice Lindblom, Treasurer Howard Berg, Secretary Mary Maynard, (back row) Director Chuck Carlson, Director Henry Orfield, Director Kay Wolfe, and Past President Bob Voigt. Director Bill Jepson was not present when this photo was taken. (photo by Lloyd Wittstock)

## 1995 Green Thumb Winners



Green Thumb Awards for perfect attendance at MGCM meetings in 1995 were presented to (left to right) Chuck Benson, Bob Voigt, Chuck Carlson, Dave Johnson, Mary Maynard, Kay Wolfe and Andy Marlow. (Photo by Lloyd Wittstock)



## Chestnuts

(continued from page 6)

containers; use only sterile growing media; have air circulation; use fungicides (such as Subdue); water from below and do not use fertilizer before the development of a least two true leaves. If a plant or plants develop damping off, they must be removed and put in the garbage.

**After Germination:** Remove any cover that was in place during germination and keep the plant well lighted. Inside this means inches from artificial lights. The best lights are fluorescent since too much heat is given off by incandescents. Keep on bottom watering. No fertilizer should be used until after transplanting. Bottom heat, if used during germination, should also be removed at this time.

**Transplanting:** When one or two sets of true leaves have appeared you should transplant in order to separate the plants. Never wait beyond two sets of true leaves to begin transplanting. At this time a soilless potting mixture should be used rather than the seed starting mix. Prick out the plants using a sharp object. I use a popsicle stick sharpened to a point but anything could be used, even a pencil. Be careful not to apply too much pressure to the plant when handling it. Hold the leaves, never the stem. Better yet, transfer the plant using the pricking out stick. Keep the plants watered. A weak (1/3rd strength) water soluble fertilizer should be used in the water after the third set of true leaves have appeared. Most plants will grow best if the temperature is kept at around 65 degrees. They tend to get lanky if the temperature is too high. If the plants outgrow the container, sometimes a second transplanting to individual containers is necessary. In some cases a second or third transplanting seems to

induce growing. This method is sometimes used to promote a large tomato crop.

**Hardening Off:** This process takes about 2 weeks. Most plants do best if kept inside until the soil is warm. Plants should be moved outside gradually. During the first week of this process cease feeding and reduce watering slightly. If they are not in individual sections or containers, cut around each plant so each has its own root ball. This cutting also promotes growth of feeder roots. At the end of the first week start taking the plants outside. The first time outside should be just a few hours (4 maximum). Increase the time out each day. To assure success try to choose a rainy or cloudy day with little wind for the first day out. If it is sunny and windy, shade the plants and put up wind break for the first couple of days.

**Transplanting to the garden:** After hardening off, the plants can be moved to the garden. It's best to do this on a cloudy day. It also helps to transplant late in the day so the plants have a night to recover from the transplant shock. Also water the area and shade the plant for a couple of days.

Next month asexual propagation.

### The Tip

Dutch researchers found hydro priming boosts germination rates of vegetable seeds. I see no reason it shouldn't work for flowers too. Soak the seeds in water for a few hours, then seal them in a container at 100% humidity for a day or two. High humidity can be achieved by putting a damp paper towel in the bottom of the container.

Remember "to plant a seed is a noble deed" and "all great things come from small seeds". So get out those seed catalogs and pick a few to add to your garden. Did you know that a seed catalog is a "Kernel Journal".



# 1995 MGCM Scholarship Winners

by Kent Petterson

In 1995, MGCM awarded three \$1000 academic scholarships to students of horticulture. The winners were chosen by a committee consisting of Kent Petterson, Dave Johnson, Merle Thomas Pulley and Andy Marlow and confirmed by the Board of Directors in August. These scholarships are the latest in a total of ten awards given over the past four years for a total of \$10,000. Congratulations and thanks are extended to the entire club for their support of this program.

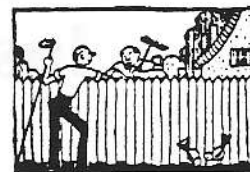
The three 1995 recipients were Jill MacKenzie, Ginny Coyle and Steve Roos, all students at the University of Minnesota. Each had been invited along with a guest to join us at the Holiday Party, but conflicts with final exams prevented them from attending. The following is a short profile of each student and their involvement with horticulture.

Steve Roos resides in Rochester and is a student of landscape architecture in his junior year. Some of you may know Steve through his participation in Minnesota State Horticultural Society programs, the Minnesota chapter of the American Rock Garden Society or Master Gardener activities. Steve has most recently worked for Nature's Way Landscape Nursery in Rochester as a landscape designer certified by the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association.

Jill MacKenzie is a student in the University's Environmental Horticulture Program. Her principal area of interest is woody plants and the sustainability of

urban and rural forests. Jill is a senior and worked at the Arboretum this past spring and currently is on staff at the Dial-U Clinic.

Ginny Coyle is a senior in the Nursery Management, Turf and Landscape program. Her application for our scholarship was accompanied by an essay of sorts entitled "Sunburnt and Happy". A gardener must be contained in the spirit of this woman. Her career goal is to manage a retail garden center. Ginny has written for the *Minnesota Horticulturist* and currently is on staff at Dial-U.



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## Biennial Tour Meeting Set

The committee that will be organizing the biennial public gardens tours to benefit the MGCM scholarship program will hold a planning meeting on February 20. The meeting will convene at 7:00 pm at the home of Dave and Delores Johnson, 220 Cutacross Road in Golden Valley. Anyone interested in working on the tour is invited to attend!

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## TGOA/MGCA News

Mailing of the 1996 TGOA/MGCA annual membership cards has been delayed by a snafu at the printer. They will be mailed by February 1. All life members received permanent plastic membership cards last year and will no longer be issued annual cards.

The TGOA/MGCA *Leadership Bulletin* also says participants in the newly revived seed testing program can expect their seed packets to arrive by early February.

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# The Garden Spray

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