

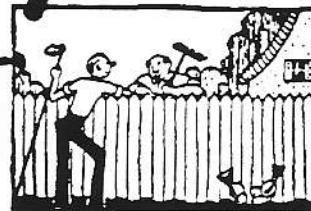


The Garden Spray

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

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

July 1998, Volume 56, Number 7



MGCM Biennial Scholarship Tour

A Public Tour of MGCM member's gardens
Saturday and Sunday July 11 and 12

Bus Tour

Date:

Saturday, July 11

Time and Place:

The bus leaves at 10 AM at Westwood Lutheran Church,
9001 Cedar Lake Road, St. Louis Park
(Just east of Highway 169)

Cost:

\$28 includes 6 gardens (one a Wayzata estate)
and a box lunch

Drive Yourself Tour

Date:

Saturday and Sunday, July 11 and 12

Time:

Noon to 5 PM each day

Cost:

\$10

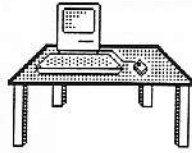
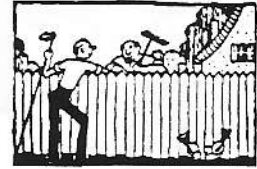
The Gardens:

Carol Ann and Doug Brekke
Archie and Jean Caple
Gary and JoAnn Geister
Lee and Rose Gilligan
Dave and Delores Johnson
Jerry and Lee Shannon
Lynette and Jerry Uzzell



In the future we'll be touring gardens by light rail.

If you need more tickets or information call 822-4109 or 835-5785



The Editor's Desk

Chuck Carlson
Managing Editor

July and August are the months for our garden tours and the Flower, Food and Foto Show. I can't wait to see the gardens, even those I have seen before. It is also the time we can envision the effort that goes into each garden. We thank those that allow us tread through and mat down their grass. Those on the July tour are truly gardens of distinction and are above and beyond normal gardens. It reminded me of an article I saw in the magazine *Garden Design*, called garden madness. Its theme was the question, "Is gardening a healthy pastime or an all consuming passion?" Writer Chris Woods provided some glimpses of the normal gardener (NG) and the obsessed gardener (OG). Here are a few:

NG—You won't leave town when your tulips are blooming.

OG—or your lilacs, your roses, your asters, your dahlias, your mums....

NG—You have a compost heap.

OG—You take it's temperature every day.

NG—You know the virtues of hand weeding.

OG—You've weeded after dark.

NG—You value all things great and small.

OG—You cheered when Bambi's mother died.

(continued on page 7)

Coming Attractions

Tuesday, July 7—7:30 PM
Board of Directors meeting
Ritchie Miller's house

Saturday & Sunday July 11 & 12
MGCM's Public Tour

Tuesday July 21—7:30 PM
Flow, Food and Foto Show Committee
Margaret Hibberd's house
1850 Roselawn Ave. W Falcon Heights
Bonus: See her garden and impressive weeds

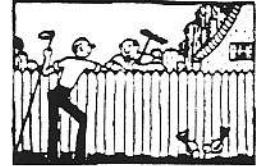
Monday July 27
Photo entries due for
Flower, Food and Foto Show

Tuesday, August 4—7:30 PM
Board of Directors meeting
Kay Wolfe's house

Sunday August 9
Club Garden Tour
Details to be announced

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.

Managing Editor Chuck Carlson
Production Manager ... Andy Marlow
Staff Tim McCauley,
Mary Maynard, Margaret Hibberd
Howard Berg, and Bob Stepan.



Mary's Meanderings

by Mary Maynard, President MGCM

It's summer now! Officially started over Fathers Day weekend, although our gardens almost certainly were in full summer mode much before then! I have mid-season weeds flourishing throughout our property.

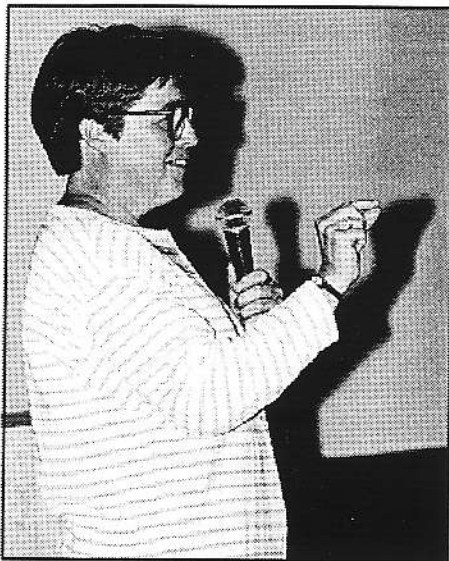


Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

It's disorienting, somehow, to see the first strawberries around Memorial Day instead of Flag Day, but we got over it and ate shortcake for days. Those of us who are thinking ahead to the Flower, Food and Foto Show and the State Fair Flower Show are wondering if any flowers will be left in our gardens by

the end of August, since everything seems so far ahead of schedule. Should have some dandy vegetables!

Earlier this spring I got up on the roof to clean out the gutters, and realized that a seat on the roof-line provides an excellent view of the backyard garden. I was able to see where some perennials needed more space, and where there were bare spots that could justify another shopping trip to Savory's or Kelley and Kelley. And the weeds are not that noticeable from the roof. So I sat up there for about an hour admiring the view. I used to worry about the what my neighbors would think about me sitting on the roof for an hour, but I've lived there eleven years now, and it's too late to improve on their impression of me now!

It looks like our tour committee publicity is going well. We got some special attention in the Home and Garden section of the *StarTribune* a couple of weeks ago, and the Sun newspapers are going to do some articles on our tour, featuring the gardeners in their circulation areas. I believe Mavis Voigt has been spearheading the publicity effort, and it's paying off very well.

I'm really looking forward to our public tour this year. As you know, these have been a big success over the years since we did the first one as part of our 50th Anniversary observation in 1992. It's great to see how these tours have increased our visibility in the community. We owe a great deal to the tour committees and the gardeners who have agreed to be on tours over the years.

We're making progress at the Perennial Trial Gardens, although we'd all like to see more planting materials. (It's difficult to be too hard on the Minneapolis Park Board for not getting us more materials when we look at all the trees down on park property throughout the City.) Kay Wolfe and I went through a half-gallon of Roundup trying to keep the bindweed away from our new shrubs. Better Gardening Through Chemistry, I guess!

See you at the tours!

Thorns and Roses

You can complain because roses have thorns—or you can rejoice because thorns come with roses

Monthly Program Report

by *Tim McCauley*

June Program... Conifers

What are conifers? Are they evergreens? That's what people want to know when they visit Bob Livingston's garden. Conifer means 'to bear cones' and while not all conifers are evergreen (larch and bald cypress drop their needles) most all bear cones (exceptions are junipers and yews). The terms are nearly synonymous, so Bob suggests people use whichever they feel comfortable with.

Dwarf conifers come primarily from bud mutations called 'witches brooms', which occur occasionally on normal trees. Most varieties are propagated by cuttings and grafting, not from seed—one reason that some are expensive.

Conifers come in a variety of forms—tall, skinny, broad, round or culturally modified (pruned into a desired shape). Colors may be dark green, light green, gray, gold, yellow, variegated or even purple. Needles may be prickly, soft or fan shaped. Plants are sized according to inches of growth per year: Miniature – up to three inches; Dwarf – three to six inches; Intermediate – six to twelve inches; and Large – over twelve inches per year.

Very small, slow growing specimens may take a long time to get big and when still little are susceptible to some hazards, including people's feet, heavy snow and severe winter cold. Bob has not had good luck with one year old grafts and suggests

buying older plants from local nurseries that guarantee their plants

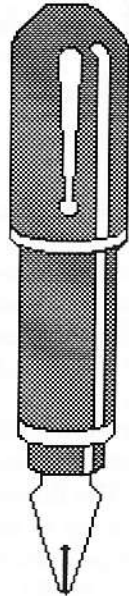
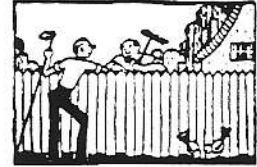
Bob and his wife Alice started growing conifers about 25 years ago with the purchase of a 'Montgomery' spruce. In 1971, some soil left over from the construction of an addition to the house was used to build a berm next to the driveway—an alternative to paying to have it hauled away. Eldon Hugelen (who was so young at the time that his business card read 'Boy Landscape Architect') was called upon and drew up a plan that included a row of dwarf mugo pines on top of the berm. Ultimately the mugos outgrew their location and have been replaced with slower growing plants, many purchased locally.

Ideal for a small garden or rock garden setting, dwarf conifers are easy to transplant, easy to grow and their size lends them to a variety of uses. They may be used as accent plants in perennial borders or planted in combination with hostas, lilies, ornamental grasses, azaleas, rhododendrons—the list goes on and on. With over five hundred varieties hardy in this area, one can see why these plants are increasing in popularity.

While conifers sound like the perfect garden plants they are not foolproof. As with any new planting, the soil should be the first priority. If it's too heavy or too sandy, amend with organic material. Bob also recommends adding gravel or grit to the soil. The plants should be mulched to help retain moisture.

Site selection also plays an important part in conifer growing. While summer sun loving, some conifers will be injured or die from exposure to winter sun (Alberta Spruce for example). Bob protects some of his plants by building cylinders of wire fencing with plastic burlap sewn around them. Placed around the taller plants they provide shade and protection





Board Meeting Minutes

Walt Muehlegger, Secretary

June 2, 1998

Present: Howard Berg, Chuck Carlson, Eldon Hugelen, Mary Maynard, Tim McCauley, Ritchie Miller, Walt Muehlegger, Kay Wolfe
Absent: Maury Lindblom

The meeting was called to order by Mary Maynard at 7:30 p.m.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of April 28, 1998 Board meeting discussed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: May 31, 1998 report was approved as presented.

Committee Reports

Flower, Food and Foto Show: Mary reports there will be a meeting in July Tuesday, July 21 at Margaret Hibberd's at 7:30 p.m. Photo contest forms were given to Board members.

Garden Spray: Chuck Carlson reports that he could use some material from members.

Plant Auction: Tim McCauley reports that we had a very good Plant Auction.

Tours: Mary Maynard reports everything under control. Tickets were sent to members.

Old Business

Survey: Forms are completed and should be handed out at the June 9, 1998 meeting.

New Business

There was discussion on club dues for 1999.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.. Next board meeting Tuesday, July 7, 1998 at Ritchie Miller's home at 7:30 p.m.

Directory Changes

Address Correction

John M Ceryes
5253 Zenith Ave. S
Minneapolis MN 55410-2136

E-mail changes

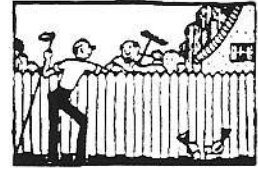
Tim McCauley
tmccauley@scicom.com

Warren Nordley
wnordley@NWDTS.com

All I need to know I learned from gardening

- It's ok to be a late bloomer.
- One man's garbage is another's compost.
- Stay away from seedy characters.
- We've all got our own row to hoe.
- Always call a spade a spade.

From the *Growing News*



Missed But Not Forgotten... Dr. William W. Jepson

1926-1998

To us in the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis (MGCM) he was known as Bill—an outdoors man who loved fishing, hunting, trees and gardening. Bill served on a number of MGCM committees (most notably Photography and Holiday Party) and served as a director on the board.

As a psychiatrist he was a healer of minds. I feel his gardening and other outdoor activities were healers of his mind. He was also a seeker of knowledge. I can't remember a time when we met that he didn't have a question about something.

He graduated from Swarthmore College in 1946 and Cornell Medical School in 1950. His last position before his retirement in 1992 was Chief of Psychiatry at Hennepin County General Hospital.

Bill will be missed at our meetings and other functions as that quiet-jovial gentlemen gardener. We hope the ducks are flying, the fish are biting, the trees are swaying and the flowers are blooming at his present abode. Bill is survived by his wife Nancy (also a member of MGCM) and many other relatives.

Good wishes to you Bill and condolences to Nancy, who we know will miss you dearly.

Pinching—A pruning method developed by the Italians

Flower of the Month Tithonia

By Chuck Carlson

This flower is also known as the Golden Flower of the Incas or the Mexican Sunflower. In our part of the north country (USDA zones 3 and 4) we grow *Tithonia, ratundifolia* as a tender annual. In other places, it is grown as a shrub or woody perennial herb.

It is a tall sunflower-like plant with about ten varieties native to Mexico and Central America. The flower is three inches wide with a ray or disk-like shape somewhat like single dahlias or small sunflowers. It's color is bright orange, sometimes shading to yellow or light red. The plant grows to two to four feet tall at maturity.

Tithonia is propagated by seed only. Seeds should be surface seeded and can be started inside six to eight weeks before the frost free date or sown directly into the soil after the danger of frost has passed. Germination is five to ten days and light is beneficial. Space plants about two feet apart in light soil.

This plant is easy to grow and tolerates drought. It only needs to be watered during dry spells. It blooms all summer without deadheading. They do get quite tall and sometimes may flop over in summer storms.

If you feel you're growing old, remember you're not aging. You just need repotting.



Belated Thanks

Remember last month in the "thanks" column, I said I hated to name people because I probably would miss someone? Well, I did. Two people went out and bought some Iris and donated them to the plant sale. Hats off to Patti Lee and Lloyd Weber. Sorry you were missed the first time around. Many thanks for your help in making the plant sale a success.

Conifers

(continued from page 4)

from drying winds. Smaller plants are protected by plastic flower pots held in place with a brick. Make sure plants don't dry out over winter by watering well until the ground freezes.

After *Dwarf Conifer 101*, Bob showed slides of many plants growing in his garden and others in the metro area. He also passed around some conifer books and flyers, urging anyone interested to read further on the subject and to join the American Conifer Society. Thanks to Bob for a very interesting, informative and entertaining evening.

Classifieds

Wanted

Articles for the *Spray*. Send typed, E-mail or even handwritten articles to Chuck Carlson. Have computer, will edit.

Plant Sale and Auction

The results are in. 68 people bought plants. Profits were about \$3,388.00. A big thanks to all for making the function a success. The Country Store, the Raffle and the Silent Auction all exceeded previous years profits, with the auction slightly less than previous years. The Country Store made the biggest increase in profits.

All on the committee are commended for their efforts. The plant material at the Country Store was great and the selections were above and beyond expectation. Eldon did a fantastic job pulling it together. I am sure others helped, too, and members brought in some very interesting plants.

The largest buyers were Randii Gilligan, Ruth Berg and Doug Whitney.

Editor's Column

(continued from page 2)

NG—You know the Latin name for all your plants.

OG—You use them in everyday conversation

NG—You've had a soil test

OG—You studied for it.

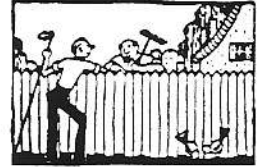
NG—You have dirt under your fingernails.

OG—What fingernails?

NG—You have given vegetables to all you friends.

OG—You've broken into strangers cars and filled them with Zucchini.

Have a good month gardening and enjoy our tour.



Blast Those Damnable Weeds!

by Bill Hull

Last summer I wrote that all summer weeds had been a very serious problem in both the vegetable garden and perennial bed. I pointed out that to my memory I was host (still am) to an unfriendly, aggressive weed which no one seems to be able to identify without getting violent!

Yes, we've had them for the 26 years we've lived in this house. The Indians who came here a century before us probably also had that weed; in fact they probably brought it into this territory stuck to their lodge poles.

We have a good tilthy soil in spite of all the work and money invested in trying to control that weed. This plant has a small creamy flower, which grows on a spreading bush of a foot or so in size and is the greatest seed-producing pest ever known to mankind. It quickly grows to a spreading mass which engulfs the whole garden. Last year it even smothered some fast growing huge cucurbits which promised the possibility of 500-pound pumpkins. Ouch! That hurt to lose those few strong appearing vines.

One spring a skilled caretaker, Roger, had a crew treat the vegetable garden, cover it with a plastic sheet to keep the killing fumes in the soil for a couple of weeks and violá!—no weeds that season. But the next year—stand back. The plant came roaring back like godzilla hell bent for destruction—and won.

I recall my parents laboring in our backyard veggie garden when I was a boy. Every evening they scuffled the topsoil to rid it of that day's new weeds. But I didn't learn much from them, being a twentieth century stubborn gardener. Last summer this weed made my garden look like a

roadbed along the railroad tracks where I used to hunt rabbits as a kid. This damned plant made me look like the fool, that I am, in trying to have a good garden in a weedpile.

Now where do I turn? In spite of a good clean up last autumn, I'm in trouble. My friend, Roger, has sold his business and apparently can't help me this year; otherwise the spray and cover treatment might help again. Would it help to spray the entire veggie garden now or would the spray kill any seedlings like tomato plants, or corn seed which I should plant very soon? Would the residue of a weed killer be as strongly effective as if I were spraying it on newly transplanted tomato and pepper plants? What in the devil do I do? I'm growing seedlings but have no place to plant them. Help.

Three of our several masterful Master Gardeners – Stan, Archie and Russ – counseled me last year. But I must be too stupid to follow directions, plus some surgery on August 5. Am I, a lifetime successful gardener, forced to purchase my veggies from a gal in a kiosk this year

Archie said "I don't hoe. I just pull the weeds by hand." I could have used a pre-emergence product like Preen, as a lot of people do, but I didn't. I also could just throw in the sponge and never use that good garden spot again—or turn my back on my perennial bed where the weed is also showing up by the hundreds of little plants? I could have married a lady who likes to sit in the garden and pull weeds by the handful, but I didn't. I married a lovely gal who finds her hips hurt as much as my back does when either of us tries to keep ahead of the weed by that technique. *(continued on page 9)*

Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum Garden Party

Thursday July 9 4:30 to 8:30 PM

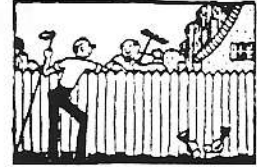
You are invited to Dave & Delores Johnson's for an evening, of flowers, fellowship, and food. The Friends of the Linnaeus Arboretum at Gustavus Adolphus College are sponsoring this function. As you know the college and grounds were devastated in this years storm. Come and visit, meet the arboretum's director Jim Gilbert, herbalist Jane Thompson and enjoy a few Swedish delicacies. Bring a friend. A \$10 donation is requested. All proceeds go to the college arboretum for its reconstruction and re-planting.

KEEY

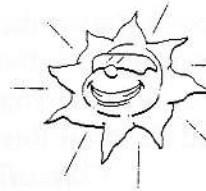
KEEY stands for Kids, Education, the Environment and You

Ruth Bannerman sent me some information on KEEY. Normally we don't publicize other groups in the *Spray*. But since Ruth is one of our members and is involved, I made an exception.

This is a program for elementary school children. They have planted on the State Capitol Grounds, Nicollet Mall and Peavy Plaza. The mission of KEEY is to help children have pride in the environment and to take care of it. It also promotes gardening and an brings in a little science knowledge at the same time. Currently 40,000 children are involved nationwide. If you want to be involved chat with Ruth at one of our next meetings.



Let the Sun Shine



Walt Gustafson again spent some time in the hospital for some corrective surgery. All seems to be progressing well. Dwight Stone, long time member, is also in the hospital for a quad bypass. Dwight needs all your thoughts and prayers so let the sun shine

Weeds

(continued from page 8)

Is there anything left other than throwing kerosene all over the garden and tossing a lighted match into it? No, that's too dangerous, stupid and illegal.

Well, Kiosk Lady, here I come to buy my roasting ears and tomatoes from you .

(Editor's Note: Bill has been a member of MGCM 1952, one of our longest-term members. He lives with his wife Carol, also an MGCM member, in Edina. Bill was and still is fond of Hibiscus and had some beauties. Maybe he still does. He is a past president of the Men's Garden Clubs of America and our local MGCM. He was awarded the Bronze Medal in 1965.

I believe Bill has served on just about every committee but he is best known to most of us as the leader of the Parade of Turkeys at the annual Holiday Party, and as the master inductor for our club. If you've ever been inducted by Bill you've been inducted. He is also the club historian.)

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Sunshine Report

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