

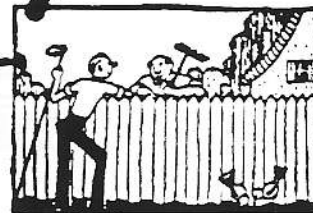


# The Garden Spray

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

Affiliated with Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

March 1999, Volume 57, Number 3



March Meeting

Tuesday, March 23

## Dayton's—Bachman's Flower Show

*Alice in Wonderland*



### Schedule:

- 5:30 to 6:00 p. m. Dinner  
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church  
49th and Chowen Avenue South
- 6:10 p. m.. Program  
Dale Bachman, speaker
- 6:30 to 6:40 p. m. Load buses for Dayton's  
drop off at 8th and LaSalle
- 7:00 to 8:00 p. m. View the Show
- 8:30 p. m. Bus Leaves Dayton's  
pickup at 8th and LaSalle
- 9:00 p. m.. Bus arrives at Lake Harriet United Methodist Church

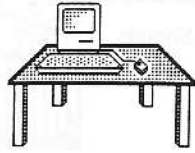
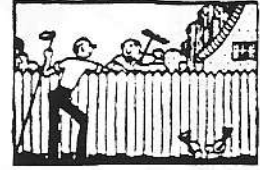
**Cost: \$14.00 for dinner and bus**

**Note: The permanent reservation list is not in effect. Your reservations must be received by Friday, March 19. The reservation form is on page 11.**

Payment must accompany the reservation.

Cancellations can be made until March 19. After this date, refunds will not be made.

Reservations will be cut off at 104 (two bus capacity).



### The Editor's Desk

Chuck Carlson  
Managing Editor

First of all I want to remind you of the one day seminar of the Mid-America Region of the Gardeners of America/ Men's Garden Clubs of America. It is hosted by the Regional directors and officers, and the Men's Garden Club of North Iowa. Here's the schedule:

Date: Saturday, April 10, 1999

Place: North Iowa Community College  
Mason City, IA

Time: 8:30 AM to 3:30 p. m.

Programs:

- Gardening on the Internet
- Water Gardening
- Garden Photography
- Rambling Roses

Why not reserve the date and take a two hour drive to northern Iowa? It should be fun and we can visit with some other gardeners. Maybe you can get a car pool going.

### Gleanings From Brooklyn Botanic Gardens *Plants and Garden News*

- Experiments have found that foliar sprays containing only fertilizers can induce the plant to resist some major plant diseases. To be effective it must contain phosphates.
- A new slug control is on the market. It's called Escar-Go. It can be found at Gardens Alive and has a low health risk for people and pets.
- There's also a new deer deterrent without resorting to the hot lead treatment. It is called Plant Pro-Tec. It works by releasing garlic oil vapors for up to eight months. It has possibilities for other pests also.

(continued on page 4)

## Coming Attractions

**Tuesday, March 2, 7:30 p.m.**

Board of Directors meeting  
Margaret Hibberd's house

**Tuesday, March 23, 5:30 p.m.**

Dayton Bachman Flower Show  
and dinner

**Tuesday, April 6, 7:30 p.m.**

Board of Directors meeting  
Howard Berg's house

**Saturday, April 10**

Mid-America Region Conference  
Mason City, Iowa

**Tuesday, April 13, 6:30 p.m.**

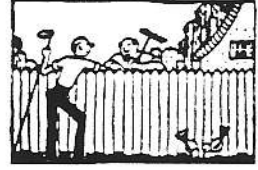
MGCM Dinner Meeting  
Lake Harriet United Methodist Church  
49th & Chowen Avenue South

**Saturday, April 17**

Garden Club Fair at the  
Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

*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.

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Production Manager ... Andy Marlow  
The committee.....H Berg, M. Brummer,  
Sher Curry, C Cutter, D Hendel, M  
Maynard, R Olson, and R Van Sickle



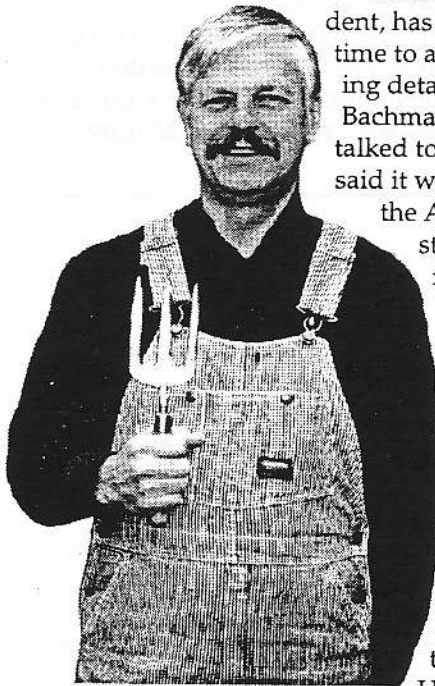
# Overall In The Garden

by Eldon Hugelen, President MGCM

To me overalls are work clothes. It occurred to me at our February meeting, many members are in their *work clothes*. Over All this is what I saw:

Patti and Lloyd Weber put together and presented a great program.

Ritchie Miller, Vice President, has been working overtime to arrange the ever changing details of the Dayton's-Bachman's Flower Show. I talked to Fred Glasoe and he said it would be good to know the Alice in Wonderland story to appreciate the many details and animated characters in the show. Fred is also privileged to see the many Magnolias, Rhododendrons and other special plants being brought into bloom at Bachmans for the show.



Many of you have volunteered for the Minnesota State Horticulture Society's

part in the *Home and Garden Show*. Jerry Shannon indicated we have staffed the entire Friday evening plus some on other shifts.

Clyde Thompson informed us of the seminar by the Mid America Region being held in Mason City, Iowa.

Barb Berosik was filling shifts to represent our club during the Garden Club Fair at the Arboretum on April 17th. Bob Livingston will be giving a program

on Conifers that day also.

Then there are those who came early to set up chairs and tables. Howard Berg, Kay Wolfe and Joe Stenger who collect money and keep track of how many are coming for dinner. Phil and Eleanor Peterson subbed for John Moon to give out name tags and greet you at the door.

It didn't stop there; on the way out you noticed a table full of members planning the Food Flower and Foto Show.

So *Over All* a meeting of MGCM is special, with a lot of effort from many people. It is an event never to be repeated but to be appreciated. Thanks to all, who give their time.

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**The National Flower and Vegetable for the August Flower, Food and Foto Show are the Snapdragon and the Onion.**

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## Ask The Gardener

Gary asked "How do you get rid of lilies in a pond?" Our gardener responded, "I am not sure, but there is a product called Rodeo. It is Roundup with no soap and apparently not harmful to fish. It is used for weeds on lakes, but I don't know if it is available to the public."

Clyde asked "What will the funny unseasonably warm weather do to my perennials?" Our gardener answered, "You could probably answer this yourself. I don't know and I don't think anyone else does either. We did have a relatively slow cool down and then a good snow cover, which should help."

*(Editor's comment: If anyone has anything to add, has a different solution or wants to ask a question, please send them to the editor.)*

# Monthly Program Report

by Sher Curry

Dr. Lloyd Weber gave a fantastic presentation on his passion for the Iris. You could see right away that Lloyd has a bad case of the *I Love Iris* virus. His knowledge and understanding of this



(Dr. Lloyd Weber  
Photo by Lloyd Wittstock)

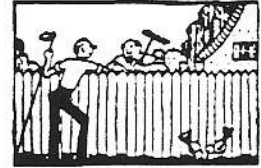
rainbow flower was much in evidence.

He discussed the six classes of the bearded iris, and had a wonderful collection of slides and a handout to go along with the lecture.

My favorite slides were those showing the Broken Color collection. These have a tendency toward unusual, and sometimes extreme, color patterns.

Bacterial rot is the most serious disease of the iris, and Lloyd's excellent handout covers this problem along with leaf spot and iris borer. I was happy to see new methods of control listed for the iris borer as I cannot use Cygon II-E. The two new methods include the use of beneficial nematodes and a product called ProTeKt from Dyna-Gro Corporation. They have a web page at <http://www.dyna-gro.com>

Also noted in the handout are color catalog contacts for the tall bearded iris and three local growers. Lloyd suggests the web page to start with would be the American Iris Society at <http://www.isomedia.com/homes/ais>



*Dusky Challenger* (Schreiner's '86), a dark purple bearded iris is the most popular iris right now. The blooms can reach six inches in diameter and are displayed on a tall stalk. *Dynamite* is the iris closest to a true fire engine red and looks mighty spectacular on the slide. I found the list of the 100 most popular irises fun to look over just to see the different and unique names. Lloyd's favorite iris is *The Life of Riley* which concluded our slide presentation and was the only one I noticed that had a Lady Bug perched on one of the falls.

Lloyd has invited us to come for a visit and tour their iris collection this spring whether he and Patti are around or not. His address is in the MGCM directory.

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## Editor's Column

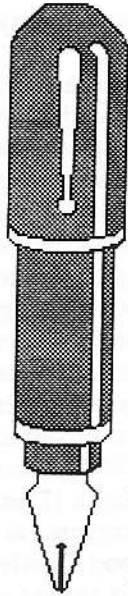
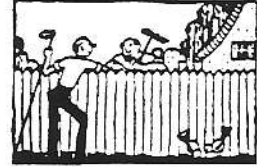
(continued from page 2)

- Do you want a fast acting weed and grass killer? It was developed by a company called Ecoval US Inc. It is a patented formula containing acetic acid. It's made from vinegar and lemon juice. If you like to experiment, try some mixing your own—or buy some from Ecoval.

### Gleanings from Avant Gardener

- Flamingos are out Plantheads are in.
- Perennials for sunny damp areas  
irises, daylily, Turk cap lily, Cardinal Flower, Coneflower and Rudbeckia submentosa
- Perennials for shady damp areas;  
Filipendula, Astilbe, Trollius europaeus and Masterwort *Astrantia major*. (Make sure you check the hardiness before buying.)
- Paphs are the new rage for houseplants. Paphiopediums Asian

(concluded on page 8)



## Board Meeting Summary

Margaret Hibberd, Secretary

February 2, 1999

Present: Howard Berg, Chuck Carlson, Dave Johnson (Fridley), Margaret Hibberd, Eldon Hugelen, Mary Maynard, Ritchie Miller, Kay Wolfe. Absent Tim McCauley.

The meeting was called to order by President, Eldon Hugelen.

Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were given and approved. Howard also presented a letter from Joe Stenger indicating that a financial audit was made and approved.

The Vice President reported that the February Meeting program is set and will be Iris by Lloyd and Patti Weber. The March meeting will be the Dayton's-Bachman's Flower Show on March 23. The cost for dinner and bus to Dayton's will be 14 dollars.

### Old Business

- Holiday party gratuity was discussed. Because nothing was in the agreement with the caterer and the party lost money, none will be paid.

- Members voted not to disaffiliate from TGOA /MGCA by a 54 to 11 margin at the January meeting.

- It was suggested that we should sign up for the Home and Garden Show. March 5 was selected as the date.

- The brochure for prospective members will be updated and 200 will be ordered.

### New Business

- The Mid America Region requested a grant of two dollars per member. The board decided that, because of low cash availability and because it is not in the budget, it cannot be done at this time.

- It was voted that the cost for dinner will be increased to nine dollars. We have been losing over one dollar per person per meeting. This includes church rental and the caterer's charges.

- The next Director's meeting will be at Margaret Hibberd's home on March 2, 1999.

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## A Little Gossip

By Flavus Baptisia

Russ Smith's son Bruce called from Long Island where he lives and told about a tree and some branches that had blown down at his place during a December storm. As he was cutting up the fallen tree, he noted what appeared to be some type of growth on one of the branches. He wondered if it could be a fungus. His final determination proved it to actually be a salt water starfish and it was still alive. Could it be we have an air breathing sea creature? How it got there is still a mystery.

In answers to last month's question—Jessie's accountant is Lloyd Mikkleson.

Did you see the picture of Dave and Delores Johnson on the elephant? Looks like they had a good time on their trip.



# Confessions of a Lazy Gardener

By Mary Maynard

It's time to order seeds already, and even the Lazy Gardeners among us are tempted to grow our own. While it's much easier to buy plants at garden stores or our club's Plant Auction, there are advantages to starting some things from seed:

## Variety

You can find things in seed catalogs that might not show up at your local garden center. The peppers that my husband, Phil, grows come to mind. When was the last time you saw a pack of 'Bulgarian Carrot' or 'Mirasol' peppers around town? Or 'Biscayne' or 'Jung's Yellow Belle'? And some things like Ageratum 'Blue Horizon' are spotty—you might find them and you might not, depending on when and where you look. Or the Blitz impatiens series. The list goes on....

## Cost

This might be deceptive. Sometimes it's not all that much cheaper to start seeds, once you count the cost of seeds, starting mix, electricity to run the heat and lights, etc. But it seems like it should be cheaper.

## Starting Early

Let's face it. By mid-March, we're ready to see some green stuff, even if it's down in the basement and not outdoors. It also gives you the opportunity to be the first to have a flower or the first tomato or to just have a longer growing season here in the North.

So, here are a few things that I've

learned (mostly the hard way) about starting seeds:

- Start with easy plants to grow. If something is listed as challenging to germinate in the seed catalog, I don't even bother! It's frustrating to spend \$3.00 for a packet of seeds and then have 0% germination—or one sickly thing that might be a weed. And I won't go through a long series of complicated steps. I stick to things like peppers, snapdragons, petunias, marigolds, ageratum, etc. *Salvia argentea* is a record-holder for me: so far I've had 100% germination for two years straight. (This can be a bad thing. *Salvia argentea* is a pretty big plant, and nobody really needs 15 of them. But I had 15, so I planted 15.)
- Start with clean containers. I wash them in warm soapy water with a little bleach. It seems silly to wash something just to put dirt in it, but it makes a noticeable difference in the damping-off prevention game. I haven't tried washing trays and cell packs in the dishwasher—not sure the dishwasher would ever be the same; or the containers.
- Use sterilized starting mix or potting soil. I buy this. There are a few people (and you know who you are) who sterilize their own mix by heating it in their ovens, but I know I would never get it done. Plus, I've heard that there's a definite aroma when baking soil mixes. So I settle for one of the popular soilless seed starting mixes. I have a preference for something like Jiffy Mix, which has some nutrients added, but it's been hard to find recently. I hate to shop, so I do the expedient thing, which is to buy whatever I can find at the store I happen to be in! I like the

(continued on page 9)



# Clematis

By Lillian Maroushek

Edited by Eldon Hugelen

*(Editor's note: The following information on growing Clematis in Minnesota came from Lillian Maroushek, a long time gardener and respected plantswoman. She and her late husband owned and operated a plant nursery in Hastings. She conserves her energy today for her family, but we are grateful that she would share her notes and comments with us.)*

## The Clematis Family

The genus Clematis consists of about 230 species of perennial herbs or woody climbing vines native to the northern temperate zone. There are over 300 hybrids, but only a few dozen varieties are available in the trade. Clematis belongs to the Ranunculaceae or Buttercup plant family.

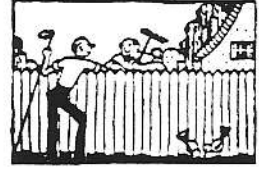
Leaves are opposite in pairs, mostly compound, but sometimes simple, with three to five leaflets. The leaf stalk acts as tendrils to attach to a support.

Flowers have no petals, but have generally four, sometimes up to eight, petal-like sepals. Stamens are numerous and some are sterile.

Fruit consists of one-seeded achenes, each with a plumed, feathery, and often showy, tail-like appendage.

Colors include white, yellow, pink, red, lavender, mauve, violet, purple and a host of intermediate shades. Color photos of some varieties are deceiving. Most of them are not as brilliant as pictured. Soil conditions have an effect on color. Some soils tend to make the variety paler than it would normally be. Flower shapes are diverse but fall into three general forms:

- A type with small flowers in panicles, or loose and irregular spreading clusters, as in *C. terniflora* 'Sweet Autumn'.



- One with bell-shaped or urn-shaped flowers, such as *C. texensis*.
- One with more or less flat/open flowers, such as *C. jackmanii*.

## Groups

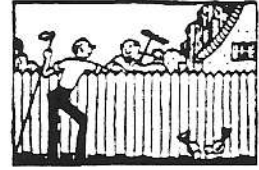
In this report Clematis are segregated into six groups, with the divisions based on the kind of growth and the time of blossoming. These are Small-Flowering Vines, the Patens group, the Florida group, the Jackmanii /lanuginosa group, The Jackmanii /viticella group and Dwarf Bush varieties. Each group will be discussed and a few varieties listed for each to further define the group.

## Small-Flowering Vines

The species Clematis are the earliest to flower but there are also some that flower in midsummer and fall. These varieties flower from old wood and should not be pruned. If thinning is necessary, it should be done directly after the blooming period ends. This will give them all summer to reestablish their growth for next season's flower show. In this native or woodland group are:

- *C. terniflora* 'Sweet Autumn' has pure white, small flowers which bloom in September. It grows 12 to 15 feet tall.
- *C. texensis* has deep red bell shaped flowers. It is a strong growing parent of 'Duchess of Albany' and dies to the ground each year.
- *C. tangutica*, also called Golden Chinese Clematis, has a small dainty golden-yellow bloom which gives it its name. It flowers heavily in midsummer with recurring blooms in early fall. An easy one to grow and it can reseed itself.
- 'Duchess of Albany' A pink, lily type plant that flowers in great profusion over a long period of time. It is semi-herbaceous and dies down to the

*(continued on page 8)*



## Clematis

(continued from page 7)

ground each winter. Blooms on new growth. Fine for dainty corsages. A great grower that extends ten feet or more.

- 'Betty Corning' Its flowers are fragrant bells in lavender-blue. Much sought after but rarely available.
- C. montana is a vigorous small-flowering group that is not hardy in zone 4.
- C. virginiana is a Minnesota native also called Virgin's Bower. It has small white flowers and tangled leaves which vine over fences

### The Patens Group

This group is the next group of Clematis to flower. They produce enormous blooms on old wood. No spring pruning is necessary. If pruning or thinning is needed, it should be done immediately after blooming ends. Here are a few varieties:

- 'Miss Bateman' is early flowering with creamy white flowers. Eight sepals with a purple center.
- 'Nellie Moser' has spectacular eight to nine inch blooms with eight pink sepals with a broad band of deep carmine down the center. Color is brighter if located where it receives partial shade from intense sun. Not a good bloomer.
- 'Bees Jubilee' is floriferous but has small blooms.
- 'The President' has royal purple blooms up to eight feet high on the vine. They appear first on old wood, and after these have finished, the young wood starts to grow. It will produce many flowers during the rest of the summer. The flowers have eight pointed sepals with dark

purple centers.

### The Florida Group

This group blooms at the same time as the Patens and needs about the same treatment. They produce double flowers in early summer on the old wood while single flowers often appear on the young wood in late summer. This group grows best in zones six or seven. The doubles never had more than two or three blooms and eventually died here in Minnesota.

- 'Duchess of Edinburgh' is a very double white with a slight fragrance. Grows eight to ten feet tall.
- 'Belle of Woking' has silvery-lavender double blooms, recurrent from June to October.

*(Editors comment: Next month this series on Clematis will continue with the dependable large flowering Jackmanii and Dwarf Bush Varieties groups. Succeeding months will cover cultural information and propagation.)*

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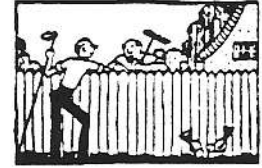
## Editor's Column

(continued from page 4)

(Phaps) are tropical lady slippers and are adapted to low light conditions, cool nights and high humidity.

- Are you looking for the best of new plants? Try the Great Plant Company, 208 Bruning Road, New Hartford CT 06057. They are also on the internet at <http://www.greatplants.com>.





## Confessions

(continued from page 6)

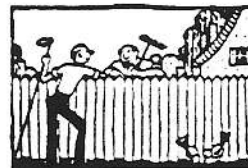
mixes that are not too coarse, especially for starting smaller seeds.

- Pay some attention to the temperature at which that seeds should be started, but don't get too worked up about it for the easy seeds. Snapdragons, for instance, are supposed to prefer temperatures around 55-60 degrees for germination, but I have found that they start just fine at 70-75., maybe even a little better. Remember—we're talking about the seeds that germinate easily. If they were that picky about temperature, they would not be in the **easy** category to start with.
- Think about how many seedlings you might have if you get a good germination rate. Are you prepared to have 200 nicotiana sylvestris if all those tiny dust-like seeds come up? (And they will. Like grass.) If not, think about trying a few seeds and seeing how it goes. Or plan to bring a lot of something to our MGCM's Plant Auction. Or, you can compost some of the extras, if you can stand to. I can't stand to do that, which is why I have about 20 filipendula vulgaris in my border. (Anybody need any? Free to a good home.)
- Easy on the fertilizer. I don't use much fertilizer on my seedlings. Since I'm not sure what I'm doing, I tend to burn the plants when I fertilize. Most of the easy stuff seems to do just fine without it.
- Keep the lights close. Most of these things need a lot of light, so keep the shop lights right on top of them. I am too lazy to put the lights on a timer, so they are on 24 hours/day. Some

people say seedlings do better on a timed cycle, but full time lights work fine for me. Plus, the basement glows eerily in the predawn hours.

- Don't overwater. It's amazing what kind of drought seedlings can recover from, although I don't recommend putting them to the test. But careful watering will reduce the risk of damping-off, which can wipe out a lot of stuff in a hurry. I think it's better to run slightly on the dry side, although I expect I could get an argument on that.
- Water from the bottom. Unless you're very good, it's hard to pour water on top of a tray of small seedlings without flooding them out. I keep the seedling containers in larger 10x20 trays without holes in the bottom, and then just pour water in the larger tray. You need to watch to make sure the seedling packs don't end up standing in water too long, of course.
- Don't cave in to damping-off. Fungicides can help. I can't ever remember the ones that the good gardeners use, but I sprayed some Funginex around my germination table when I had a damping-off problem, and it did not spread further.
- Use plastic covers to conserve moisture. It is possible – but not necessarily recommended – to leave your seedlings under plastic covers for 10 days while you go to Honolulu and bask on the beach. You'll probably have pepper plants crowding up against the top of the covers when you get back, but you'll have an excellent tan.

Happy Gardening! Winter is almost over!



# Flower of the Month

by Chuck Carlson and Rodger Sefelt

This month Hydrangea has been selected. Some might say it is not a flower, but a deciduous or evergreen shrub. That is true but it flowers prolifically for a single plant and has some of very large flowers. It is also known as Hortensia, the name of a sweetheart of the French botanist Philbert Commerson who first described the plant.

Hydrangea is native to North and South America and eastern Asia. According to the National Gardening Association's *Dictionary of Horticulture*, there are a total of 23 species. In Minnesota, we are limited to the varieties available and hardy in our zone. When selecting a variety to plant in this area, we are always introduced to *H. paniculata* Grandiflora 'Pee Gee' and sometimes *H. paniculata* 'Tardiva'. These we know are hardy in zone 4, but there are many listed in catalogs as hardy to zone 5 such as 'Nikko Blue', 'Annebelle', 'Pink Diamond' and 'Unique'. A lot of us want a blue or a pink in our gardens but their winter hardiness is suspect at best.

MGCM member Rodger Sefelt has been experimenting with and trying to find additional Hydrangeas that are hardy in our area. Roger lives in Northeast Minneapolis and has twelve varieties growing on his residential lot. He provided a summary of those he has growing and his findings. (See Rodger's Hydrangea List below.)

I also found a few others listed in the Rice Creek Gardens catalog. Hopefully this will give you the nudge to try a new variety and report your findings to the group. The Hydrangea is a plant that will

provide you with a centerpiece for your garden that will be noticed. One which will always be noticed is the standard or tree form of 'Pee Gee'.

A note to the wise: Most all Hydrangeas like their soil on the acid side. This is particularly true if you want colors other than white, especially the blues. To get the blue or purple colors you must have the pH below 6.0. Experiments have shown this is because aluminum is necessary to obtain the blue color and the low pH is necessary to make it available to the plant. Sulfur and aluminum sulfate can be added to the soil to bring about the desirable conditions. There is also data available that suggests adding lime or superphosphate produces an alkaline soil condition that can change whites to pinks.

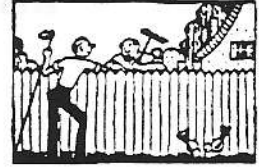
Try a Hydrangea in your garden. You may like them.

## Rodger's Hydrangea List

(See key at end of the list for abbreviations.)

- H. Macrophylla 'All Summer Beauty'**  
Color Blue, height 3 to 4 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota, WP=CM
- H. anomala petiolaria**  
A climbing or vining Hydrangea color white, height 40 to 50 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota, WP=none
- H. arborescens 'Annabelle'**  
Color white, height 3 to 5 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota, WP=C/M
- H. macrophylla 'Buttons 'N' Bows Monrey'**  
Color deep pink with white edge, height 3 to 4 feet, BT for hardiness and WP
- H. Macrophylla 'Hortensia'**  
Color deep pink, height varies, BT

(continued on page 11)



## Rodger's list

*continued from page 10*

for hardeness and WP

### H. Macrophylla 'Hortensia'

Color deep pink with white center, height unknown, BT for hardeness and WP

### H. Macrophylla 'Lanarth White'

Color white, height 3 to 4 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota. WP=C/M

### H. Macrophylla 'Nikko Blue'

Color blue, height 3 to 5 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota. WP=C/M

### H. paniculata Grandiflora 'PeeGee'

Color white changes to pink bronze, height 3 to 5 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota, WP=none

### H. paniculata 'Pink Diamond'

Color pink, height 3 Feet, BT for hardeness and WP.

### H. paniculata 'Tardiva'

Color white, height 6 to 8 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota, WP=C/M

### H. paniculata 'Unique'

Color white, height 8 feet, has overwintered in Minnesota. WP=C/M

### Key:

BT = Being Tested

WP = Winter Protection

CM = Chop and Mound.

Chop means cut top growth to 3 to 6 inches above ground. Mound means create a mound over the cut growth using dirt, leaves or other mulch.

He who plants a garden plants happiness.  
Garden Art to one person is lawn trash to another.

**Please reserve a place for my guests and me  
for the Dayton's-Bachman's Flower Show and dinner  
on March 23, 1999**

See the front page for the schedule and details

Members Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \_\_\_\_\_ dinners @ \$14.00 each for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Reservation and payment must be received no later than March 19. Send to Kay Wolfe,  
2740 Florida Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55426-3330

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## MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

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