

The Garden Spray

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

2013, Volume 71, Number 2

February

Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event
Feb 12	LHC	Populating Border Design: Mary Lehrman
Mar 12	LHC	Woody Plants: Bert Swanson
Apr TBD	TBD	Bachman's/Macy's Flower Show
May 14	WLC	Plant Sale and Auction
June TBD	TBD	TBD
July TBD	TBD	Club Tour?
Aug 17-18	Arb	Flower, Food & Foto Show

LHC = Lake Harriet Church, 4901 Chowen Ave S., Mpls. (Lower level)

WLC = Westwood Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park

ARB = University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

Feb. 12 Schedule:

6:00 p.m. Informal social hour

6:30 p.m. Catered dinner

~7:15 p.m. Short business meeting

~7:30 p.m. Program

Note: Permanent reservations are in effect. Dinner is \$12.

Reservations or cancellations are required by Friday, Feb. 8 – **no later!** Call or e-mail Carole Ann Brekke (952-435-6029, numsix24@comcast.net) for your reservation or cancellation.

For last minute cancellations, call Nancy Bjerke at 612-353-5220. If she can sell it, you won't be billed.

February Program Perennial Border Design Part 2: Populating Your Garden Design- Combining Natives, Tropicals, Annuals and Perennials With Mary Maguire Lerman

At the January meeting, we enjoyed the program presented by Mary Lerman, the current chair of the Minnesota Horticulture Society, on microclimates. She demonstrated her knowledge and practical approach to gardening with humor and common sense. She told us how she 'bargain shopped' for shrubs at local garden shops. She indicated it doesn't matter where your plant material comes from; it's what you make of it that counts.

Mary will also be speaking at our February meeting. She will talk about combining natives, tropicals, annuals and perennials in your garden. I'm sure she will bring the same sense of humor, common sense and practical approach to this program as she did in January.

Mary is an independent horticultural consultant and the current chair of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society.

Before becoming a consultant, Mary was the environmental coordinator of horticulture, and is now archivist, at the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. She also acts as the education officer for the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory. Outside of her professional endeavors she puts her expertise to work in her own garden.

February Dinner Menu on Page 2



Notes from the Prez:

-- Sandra Abraham

Gardening Ideas for February or WWPPD Do?

Will Punxsutawney Phil see his shadow? Odds are he will and that means 6 more weeks of winter-like weather for us. What is a gardener to do? A true gardener isn't stopped by the cold so February is for taking stock of what worked and what did not last year. Which plants performed well and which plants bombed?

February is also a time for planning and perusing those seed catalogues for new and improved varieties of flowers and vegetables to try in 2013. Remember that the MWCGM will hold their annual plant sale May 14, 2013 where you can purchase plants for your gardens.

Now is the time to get your garden tools in order. Get those pruners and trimmers sharpened and oiled. March is a great time to prune if the weather allows.

Keep an eye on those houseplants. They may need to be cleaned up and even repotted. Start fertilizing with a mild fertilizer and watch them grow. You may even be able to propagate from cuttings. Grow some bulbs indoors for a colorful and cheery pick-me-up. Plant a terrarium.

Attend gardening classes and garden club meetings, visit conservatories and arboretums, participate in the Home and Garden Show and leave the groundhog alone in his den.



From the Editor

-- Mary Maynard

I feel like I've forgotten something. After scrambling to squeeze everything into the January issue, this one seems to have plenty of space. So, I went back into the Lazy Gardener Archives and pulled out an early article about building a heat bench for seed germination. It brought back memories! And I'm still using that setup. Rube Goldberg would be proud.

I look forward to next summer when our Lyndale Park garden will include Minnesota-bred lilies. See Kay's notes and photos starting on Page 5.

Plus - did you know that we have an "Ask the Experts" table now? It's staffed at every meeting before dinner. Why don't you bring your hard questions to the February meeting and see if you can stump our experts? Thanks to Rog Sefeldt, Mollie Dean, Dave McKeen and Tim Rosener for volunteering to take on our problems!



February Dinner Menu

Tuscan Chicken with sautéed vegetables over fettuccine noodles
Bread Sticks
Lettuce Salad
Pre Valentine Dessert



Treasurer's Snapshot

As of 1-16-2013

Checking balance	\$17,847.54
Designated Funds	
Memorials/Park Garden	\$1,716.72
Scholarship	\$5,383.94
Working Balance	\$10,746.87
CD	\$5,210.22

Membership Corner

As of this month, MWGCM has 81 members. In conjunction with the Marketing and Publicity committee we are beginning to try several different ways to boost membership. Anyone who can think of someone they might introduce to the club will be doing a great service to all of us.

2013 Board Sworn In

Left to right: Don Trocke, Director; Judi Brooke, Director; Jean Strande, Membership Secretary; Laurie Levin, Recording Secretary; Margaret Hibberd and Nancy Bjerke, Co-Treasurers; Randi Larson, Vice President; Sandra Abraham, President; Robert Kean, Past President; Mary Maynard, Pledge Reader.



MWGCM Board Pledge

I pledge my life to the club,
 As long as I can serve and not flub.
 With a heart that is true
 I will work with this crew,
 And when finished I can soak in the tub.
 --Bob Olson, 2012

Photo by Lloyd Wittstock

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<http://www.mwgcm.org>



Marketing and Publicity Committee Update

-- Judy Brooke

The new Marketing & Publicity committee is off and running. Members include Lynda Carlson, Bob Olson, Andy Marlow, Tom McKusick, Kay Wolfe and Judy Brooke, chair. The Committee's goal is to Promote and market the Club to recruit new members. Duties include promoting the Club and its activities and programs to the general public through print, broadcast, direct outreach, on-line website and social media; collaborating with Club committees to promote Club activities and programs and produce marketing materials for recruitment.

Submitting information about our January program to various publications paid off. Four guests from different neighborhoods saw the write ups and joined us that evening. We got acquainted and will be sending each guest the Club's newsletter for the next 3 months. This will give the guests an opportunity to learn more about the Club's activities. Hopefully our guests will decide to join the Club.

Currently we're lining up Club members to represent MWGCM at the Mpls. Home & Garden Show. They will be promoting the Club and answering questions about gardening. The Club volunteers will represent us there on Friday Mar. 1st from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM, Sat, Mar. 2nd from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM and Sunday, Mar. 3rd from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM. A big thank you goes to the members who have signed up to help with this. They are: Roger Sefelt, Carol Schreier, Steve Shubick, Bob Olson, Mary Maynard, Gary Geister, Sandra Abraham and Judy Berglund.

The Marketing and Publicity Committee has more projects in the works. Stay tuned.

**FFF Featured Flower and Vegetable for
2013: Snapdragons and Peppers!**

Scholarship Challenge Extended

Jan Johnson has extended her \$500 Scholarship matching challenge until March. If we haven't matched her \$500 challenge by then, her donation goes somewhere else. If you've been meaning to donate, our Treasurers will be happy to take your money!



Lyndale Park Garden News: Lilies!

-- Kay Wolfe

MWGCM has started a new collaboration with the North Star Lily Society and the Minneapolis Park Board. Last fall we planted six varieties of lily bulbs in the Perennial Trial and Mixed Border Garden in Lyndale Park, all donated by the Lily Society. The lily varieties that will be featured have all been created and registered by Minnesota hybridizers. The Lily Society is dedicated to keeping these "Minnesota Hybrid Lilies" growing. At present Minnesota Hybrid lilies are being shown in two public gardens: Arneson Acres in Edina, and the University of Minnesota Arboretum. Read about the hybridizers and see photos of their creations at www.northstarlilysociety.com.

Six varieties of Asiatic lilies were planted in the fall off 2012 in the Lyndale Park Garden.

Check out the lily photos!

Photos courtesy of Bob Bauer (North Star Lily Society)



Cultivar: Cocker Seedling

Color: Red with bronze reverse

Hybridizer: Hugh and Ruth Cocker

Cultivar: 'Hayride'

Color: Green/yellow with pencil marks

Hybridizer: Mrs. V. Matthe



More photos on next page

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<http://www.mwqcm.org>



Lilies in Lyndale Park -- Continued



Cultivar: 'Sunrise Ridge'

Color: Pink edge/yellow center/spots

Hybridizer: Julius Wadekamper

Cultivar: 'Honeywind'

Color: Yellow pink & yellow/spots

Hybridizer: Pearl Whipple



Cultivar: 'Indian Brave'

Color: Yellow/spots

Hybridizer: Hartle-Gilman Gardens

Cultivar: 'Misty Moon'

Color: Cream/spots and lines

Hybridizer: Tim Wadekamper





FFF Featured Flower for 2013: Snapdragons



Every year, MWGCM's Flower Food and Foto Show in August features one flower and one vegetable. In 2013, the featured flower is snapdragons (*Antirrhinum majus*). As far as we can tell, snapdragons have never been the featured flower at our show, even though they are easy to grow, drought resistant and reliable bloomers as long as we deadhead them once in a while.

For cut flowers, the show schedule calls for three spikes of flowers. There are separate categories for tall and dwarf varieties (Section A, Classes 22A and 22B in the show schedule). Snapdragons grown in containers or hanging baskets (Section E, Classes E28 and E33) will also be considered for the featured flower award.

Snapdragons can be grown easily from seed and, of course, are readily available at local garden stores. Why don't you plan to incorporate a few snapdragons into your garden plan for 2013?



Photos courtesy of Park Seed



MWGCM Board Meeting Highlights **January 7, 2013**

-- Laurie Levin, Recording Secretary

In attendance: Sandra Abraham, Randi Larson, Laurie Levin, Nancy Bjerke, Margaret Hibberd, Jean Strande, Robert Kean, Judy Brooke, Don Trocke,

Guests: Andy Marlow

The Board has identified several initiatives for the coming year, including:

- the establishment of a Marketing and Publicity Committee, chaired by Judy Brooke, that will focus on increasing club membership
- reviewing and revising the Club's by-laws
- identifying new summer tour activities
- participating in the Minneapolis Home and Garden Show

The budget for 2013-14 has been approved, and despite concerns about getting new members and retaining our current members we had a surplus in funds for the 2012-13 year.

Please consider making a contribution to the Scholarship Fund at this time – your generosity will be appreciated!

Complete copies of the monthly minutes are available from Laurie Levin:

levinlaurie@hotmail.com, or 763.542.8037.

ANNOUNCING!! Garden Question/Answer Table at Meetings!

Stop by the "Ask the Expert" Garden Question & Answer Table before club meetings. Chat up some of the club gardeners—and share your knowledge. Look for their Peanut's Lucy 'The Gardener Is In' sign. Those volunteering are Rog Sefelt, Dave McKeen, Tim Rosener, and Mollie Dean. If you would like to join them, just pull up a chair. No registration or sign up needed for this exciting experience!



Photos from January Meeting

Lloyd Wittstock



Top row: Robert Kean signs off as 2012 president. Thank you, Robert! Prez Sandra Abraham and speaker Mary Lerman. Below: Mary answers more questions after her presentation.

This Month's Contributors: Thank You!

Printed Content: Sandra Abraham, Nancy Bjerke, Judy Brooke, Bonnie Haehn, Randi Larson, Laurie Levin, Jean Strande, Kay Wolfe, Mary Maynard

Photography: Lloyd Wittstock, Bob Bauer, Mary Maynard



From the Lazy Gardener Archives:

Seed Starting the Hard way: Building a Seed Starting Box

-- Mary Maynard

As you know, warmth speeds seed germination. These days, the best way to get heat to your plants is probably one of those heat mats on which you set your seedling trays. Back in the Pleistocene Age when I was starting out, those mats seemed kind of an expensive, sissy way to go. So, I built a seed starting box with a heating cable buried in sand, and I use it extensively each spring. Based on my experience, pretty much anybody can build one of these if there's enough old plywood and scrap lumber lying around.

Here's what I did:

First, I needed a strong table, since I wanted this to end up at working level. It just so happened that the previous owners of our house left a huge old workshop table in the garage, and it was definitely strong enough to hold a big box full of sand. And it is quite ugly, which fits into the general decorating scheme in our basement. (If it had been made of orange velour, it would have fit in perfectly, but we can't have everything in life.)

Next, I needed to figure out the dimensions of this box. Most people would do this by deciding how many shop lights to use and determining the optimum illumination pattern, or figure out how many 10x20 trays they'd like to start at once. I chose another path: I had an old piece of plywood that was about 3.5'x4', so that's what the dimensions of the box turned out to be. I used that for the base, then found some boards that had been used in a mistaken attempt to remodel the windows in the house (they were painted lime green or turquoise, except for the ones that had been covered with plaid wallpaper). I think they are just standard 1x4 boards. I cut them to fit the length and width of the plywood. To join all the pieces together, I used little angle iron braces from the hardware store. No fancy mitered joints or anything like that. It's ugly, but it works.

Next, I lined the box with heavy plastic -- with enough on the sides to overlap the outside. For people with more solidly-built boxes, the plastic is primarily a moisture barrier -- to keep water from leaking all over when you spill. In my case, I also needed it to hold the sand in the box.

Then, I put about an inch of sand in the bottom of the box. NOTE: it is important to have the box in its final location before you start putting sand in it! Even mild-mannered husbands get a little cranky when they get roped into projects involving lifting sand-filled boxes up onto shop tables. Especially if all the sand shifts to their end, and they're standing perilously close to the cat's litter box.

-- Continued on next page



Lazy Gardener – Continued.

Next, you need to arrange a 48" heating cable in the sand, without having it twist or cross over itself. At first glance, it seems impossible. And it nearly is, but it can be done. Turning on the cable and letting it warm up helps it to behave a little better. Or, if you were a snake charmer in a former life, you might have an advantage. When the cable is all arranged, cover everything with another inch of sand. Make sure all of the cable is buried, especially the little thermostat unit.

Hang some shop lights above this contraption, and you're basically done. I put down 10x20 trays without holes directly on the sand, and then put smaller seedling containers in the trays and water from the bottom. It really does work pretty well.

The main problem I've had with this system over the years is my cat. No, she doesn't see this as a second litter box (thankfully), but she does like to sleep on that nice warm sand under blinding fluorescence. I have no problem with this unless she ends up sleeping on top of a whole flat of celosia. Which has happened.

Would I do this again? No. I'd buy a mat. But since I have it and it works just fine, I'll keep it until something major fails. Not sure what that would be, since there aren't any "major" components! And it would be a real pain to empty out all that sand!



Author's Note: I wrote this article about 12 years ago, and I'm still using my seed starting bench. Here's a disgusting photo of it as it sits right now. I will do some cleanup before starting seeds – but not a lot! I have also added a small fan to keep air moving in the area to help prevent damp-off and other diseases. Also, I leave the lights on 24 hours/day. I used to have a timer for the lights, but when it quit working I didn't replace it. Germination seems to work just fine with lights on all the time.

P.S. Note the jute twine I used to hang the shop lights! I've always been meaning to replace that with something "real". But it keeps on working!

MEN'S and WOMEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.



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The Spray

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First Class Mail

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