



The Garden Spray

Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc
2005, Volume 63, Number 4



Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event
Apr. 12	LHC	Dwarf Conifers
May 3	WLC	Plant Auction (see pg. 10 for details)
June		TBA
July		Tours
Aug. 20-21	Arb.	FFF
Aug (TBD)		Club Tour
Sep.	LHC	Flower Arranging
Oct.	LHC	Wildflower Gardening
Nov.	LHC	Landscaping Wildlife

LHC = Lake Harriet Church

WLC = Westwood Lutheran Church

MF = Marshall Field's Downtown

Arb. = U of M Landscape Arboretum

FFF MEETING NOTICE:

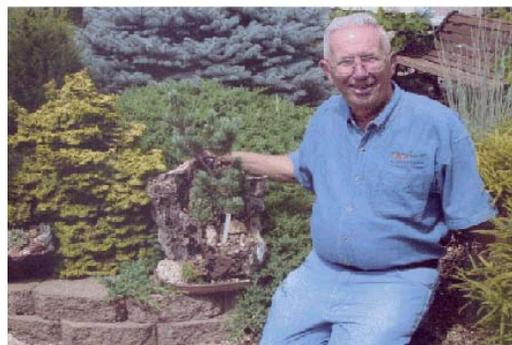
FFF Committee will have a short meeting after the club meeting on April 12

April Dinner Meeting April 12, 2005

Gathering and Conversation	-----6:00 pm
Dinner	-----6:30 pm
Business Meeting	----- Approx. 7:00 pm
Program	----- Approx. 7:30 pm

April Speaker:

Gary Whittenbaugh
"Gardening with Conifers"



From the tried and true to the odd and unusual, Gary Whittenbaugh will take us on a tour through the world of conifer gardening.
(read Gary's bio on page 7)

Dinner Reservations

Permanent reservations for the April dinner meeting are in effect. Permanent reservations are shown by the "p" on the mailing label or by the email message for those receiving the newsletter by email.

Reservations or cancellations are required by the Friday before the meeting. Call or e-mail Carole Anne Brekke (952-435-6029, numsix24@comcast.net) for your reservation or cancellation.

For last-minute cancellations, call LeRoy Cech (952 435-7621). If he can sell it, you won't be billed.



A Word from the President

A Note from the Editor

by David McKeen

Greetings,

Ah, the 70's, A full head of hair and polyester, and yes, my nickname in highschool was "Fro."

The club had a great time recently going downtown to the Marshall Feilds/Bachmans flower show. We had a full bus of 50 and several others drove down to meet us at the show. The show was interesting and beautiful as usual. For me, the underwater garden was fun to look through.

I hope many of you will give seed starting a try this spring. Several of you mentioned to me that you have purchased the seed starting kits that I use. Good luck! Please plan on giving reports back to the club on your seed starting adventures. It's always fun to learn from other members experiences, and don't forget to bring all your extra little plants to the country store to sell on May 3.

It was a privilege for me recently to attend the funeral of club member Mel Anderson. I sat with several other club members in "gardeners row." Although Mel and I rarely crossed paths in club activities, he always had a warm smile and a gentle greeting for me when we met. Mel was a longtime member of our club and a friend to many. May the Lord bless the Anderson family in their time of grief.

I hope to see everyone at our next club meeting April 12.



Dave (aka 'Fro')

TRIP TO SPRING

My fiance, Sarah, and I drove to Chicago during the last snow storm. Checking the Weather Channel before we left, it looked like the snow was moving northeast crossing over highway 94 in Wisconsin. It was snowing as we left and the going was slow out of town. The snow kept coming down harder, but I kept thinking, we just need to make it past Eau Claire and we will be out of it. But it kept getting worse - tens of cars in the ditch and five jack-knived semis.

Suddenly, after four hours of bare-knuckled driving, snow turned to rain and we made good time to Chicago. When we woke up in the morning, it was like there hadn't been a storm. It was spring time in Chicago, with tulips pushing out of the soil and snow-drops blooming.

We made the passage from winter to spring in the amount of time it takes to listen to movements of a Vivaldi concerto.

Now the warmer temperatures are taking effect here, too, and none too soon. Rutting around in the leaves today I discovered an earthworm and a caterpillar amongst the green and red sprouts of the peonies. Spring will come after all.

May your drive into Spring be uneventful!

Jason Rathe

Getting To Know Our Board

Don Stuewe is Membership Secretary

I have recovered from being a Hostaholic (I am still a member of the MN Hosta Society). In my Hosta collection, I have approximately 120 different Hostas. I can name 80 of them (always, always plot the name of the new plant on a map). Our back yard is mostly shade, so I am trying to diversify the plant selection. Sue, my wife, does the arrangement in the front yard. Spring comes to our property at least two weeks later than the neighbors across the street. The reason is that our property slopes facing the north. It is a form of a micro environment. For the first time, I forced some bulbs (Tulips, Daffodils, and Amaryllis) to grow. It was fun to see annuals blooming in January.

In the past, I have been a member of two garden clubs. The Lone Oak Garden Club meets in members' homes around the Eden Prairie area. I was the treasurer for the Diggers Garden Club in Robbinsdale, which met in the community room in the basement of the Robbinsdale Police station. These two clubs gave me a helpful introduction to the horticulture club world.

Sue works for Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank as a Training and Develop Coordinator. Before I met her, she had the Pomeranian. Kasey (the wonder dog) is smart, strong-willed, vindictive, and untrained. She is a tremendous alarm dog (10 pounds of ferociousness – actually 5lbs of hair, 4 lbs of heart and one lb of pretending to be tough) So, if I behave, I get to be second in command in the household.

I grew up on a small dairy farm in Carver County. Not surprisingly, I attended a parochial grade school and high school. St. Cloud State was a big step coming from a small school background. Now, we live in the big metro area (Minnetonka).

I work for the City of Minneapolis in the Engineering Services Department as a surveyor (we are one of the few couples that use the 394 express lanes to work).



Our dept. deals with civil engineering surveying (as opposed to private land surveying). That means that I can provide very little guidance on your property line questions and/or disputes with neighbors. Most people do not think of surveying in the urban setting. It definitely is interesting going into the diverse neighborhoods.

I have a moonlighting job, owner operator of Mr. "Hosta" garden design, installation, and maintenance service etc., etc., etc. Spring and fall clean-up, tree trimming, light landscaping, retaining walls is/are the activities (but not limited to) in the etc., etc., etc.

For winter activities, I do spinning classes on the stationery bicycle and water aerobics (trying to keep the poundage off). By the time you read this, you may have started your spring clean-up (after digging out of the March 18th snowstorm). It will be good to be outside and playing in our dirt.

*Green fingers are the
extension of a
verdant heart.*

~Russell Page

Bachman's & Marshall Field's 42nd Annual Flowershow



Pictures by Lloyd Wittstock and Chuck Carlson

On March 15th the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis hopped on the bus and drove to downtown Minneapolis to take in the colors and smells at the Bachman's and Field's 42nd Annual Flowershow, called *Music in the Garden*. The pictures taken by Lloyd and Chuck convey the vibrant colors and interesting scenes put together by designer Julie Julie Moir Messervy but you had to be there to breathe in the hyacinths and hear the interesting musical technology of Tod Machover. Following are comments from members on the show.



Arches evoking the Cote D'Azur



Waves of blue cineraria

"The colors were striking, particularly the blues, reds and oranges. I thought the palms were spectacular."
- Marion Carlson

"I thoroughly enjoyed this years flower show. In my opinion, it was the best ever."
- Leroy Cech



“The wave of blues and the building facades were two things that caught my eyes. But the underwater depiction was the highlight.

“Ho-Hum on the pianos and the drums. The wind chimes were interesting but would have been better in a room by themselves. I guess I would rather have some soft music, benches and a glass of wine to enjoy a respite among the flowers. I suppose this sounds like an old fogy who likes more peace and quiet than the hubbub of noise and activity.”

-Chuck Carlson



The Johnson's take a rest

The underwater garden was outstanding -- so very creative and beautifully done. Overall, the display was excellent.

*The interactive music was interesting and definitely drew people in, but I agree with Chuck that I'd trade all the interactive music devices for a glass of wine and nice bench!
It will be spring soon!*



Underwater scene





A New Foliage Plant

by Phil Smith

Stromanthe Sanguinea 'Trio Star' is a new foliage or house plant which has been recently introduced here in south Florida. It is one of the prettiest and most stunning plants I have ever seen, the large leaves having splashes of crimson, dark green and ivory white on top and bright red undersides.

Two local garden centers carry the plant but offer conflicting information about where it came from and how best to grow it. The ones offered for sale locally are about 24" high, in 10" pots and rather expensive (about \$40). However, in visiting a nursery I have been to before in the Homestead area west of Miami, I found equal size plants for \$10.

The origin of the plant seems mysterious in that the information I have obtained is conflicting or stated by a nursery to be likely unreliable. One source says that it is a cross between a *Calathea* and a ginger, while another says it is a cross between a *Ti* plant (*Cordyline*) and a *Calathea*. A further source reports that it is not a hybrid but a new species of *Stromanthe* in the *Marantacea* family (which includes several genera such as *Marantas*, *Cten-anthe* and *Calatheas*) discovered in the jungles of Brazil.



Since the plant is new and untested, the three garden centers or nurseries where I have seen it are hesitant to provide cultural recommendations or even to say it will survive the summers outdoors in far south Florida. The place in Homestead where I bought it said that it likes humid-

ity, temps above 55 deg. F., shade with only mottled sun, and a moist and rich humus type soil. It was recommended that the plant remain potted and not-planted out in a shady garden, since it does not like any root competition. All of this information seems daunting, but the plant is so unusual and beautiful that I could not resist trying it. Since the plant is so unusual and striking, I rather expect that it will show up in Minnesota as a pot plant for shady areas, perhaps to be wintered in a humid green house.



The plant I purchased is about 24" high and wide, with the mature leaves 3-4" wide and about 12-15" long. They are sort of a pointed - paddle shape like the tropical *Ti* plant, but with much variation in color. The newer leaves have stripes of ivory white merging into dark green, with pink to darker red overtones. The underneath sides of all the leaves vary from dark pink for younger leaves to a bloodish dark red for the older leaves, likely leading to the species name *sanguinea*. I repotted my plant in a 12" clay pot, with a soil mix containing lots of humus, and have been careful to not

(cont. on page 7)



(cont. from page 7)

let it dry out. As of this writing in early January, I have had the plant for six weeks on our screened porch or lanai facing east, where the temps have varied between lows of 52 deg. and highs of 83 deg.F. Assuming that it survives until I head north in May, I plan to leave it potted and place it in a sheltered area of my shade garden here, where it will get water three times a week from the sprinklers.

If any readers learn anything more or helpful about this very pretty new plant, the writer will be appreciative of receiving any information, particularly as to culture. Email: wsmith3190@aol.com.

Phil Smith

Terrace Horticultural Books Spring Open House - April 2nd

Member Kent Petterson's Terrace Horticultural Books is having its Spring Open House on Saturday, April 2nd, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Lynn Steiner, formerly Editor of Northern Gardener for MSHS, will be there to sign her newly released book *Landscaping with Native Plants of Minnesota* from 11 a.m. -1 p.m..

Member Andy Marlow has been helping with their new website. It is currently still under construction, but get a preview at: <http://www.terracehorticultural-books.com>

Directions: Terrace is located at 503 St. Clair Ave. (between W. 7th St. and 35E) in St. Paul. Going south on 35E there is an exit to St. Clair. Turn left and go to 503. People can call Kent at 651-222-5536 for directions or information. They are generally there most weekdays after 4PM for a couple hours or leave a message if people want information before the April 2nd open house.

A Short Bio of Gary Whittenbaugh

Gary retired president and former co owner of Service Center Inc. Oelwein. Has been gardening for over 30 years with emphasis on dwarf, slow growing and unusual conifers for the past 15 years. Currently president of the American Conifer Society Central Region, on the board of directors and state representative of Iowa for the American Conifer Society. He is an Iowa Master Gardener and on the advisory board of the Iowa Master Gardeners and Roots Board Member of The Bickelhaupt Arboretum.

Their small gardens in Oelwein IA (his brother Tom helps) of conifers, companion plants and many trough gardens host many visitors every year. The garden received the first place award for the best landscape given by the Oelwein area Chamber of Commerce and several photos of the garden have appeared in Garden Gate Magazine.

NEW MGCM Website!

Andy Marlow is glad to announce the garden club website has been moved to its own server. The new address is:
www.minneapolismensgardenclub.org

Remembering Mel Anderson



We Remember Mel Anderson

MGCM member Mel Anderson died on March 9. Mel joined the club in 1988 after his son picked up a brochure at the Flower and Vegetable show and urged him to join. He served as a director in 1990 and was club treasurer from 1991 to 1995. With his friend Duane Johnson, Mel created the FFF Show in the format it is today. And he won the Bronze Medal in 1994. He served on many committees over the years, and was an active participant in all the club activities. Mel was known for all of his entries in the FFF show. While he had only a small garden, he made use of it all, and won many awards for his containers, and especially his superb caladiums. He will be sorely missed.

Here are a few words about Mel from our members:

“We are so sorry to hear of Mel Anderson’s death. He was a dedicated member of the club, who thought enough of our club to bring his wife Vivian and sons to our events. Always ready, always present. He had been a devoted member since 1988, serving as club treasurer for a long term including when I was President. His dedication to the club, enjoying and supporting club activities, was unsurpassed. From the flower and veg. show to the perennial garden he served the club and this was acknowledged when he won our Bronze Medal (now Outstanding Service Award) in 1994. Recent years for him were difficult due to family health problems. Mel will always be remembered by me as a man of great character.”

-- Kent Petterson

“Mel was an honorable and loving man.”

“Each person has many roles offered to them in



Mel Anderson with prize winning caladiums

life. We are children, sons, daughters, brothers and sisters. Some are offered the roles of mother and father. We are members of our families and also members of our community.

“We may be asked to take care of our family members and also be active in our community- offering our gifts and talents to others.

“Mel cared deeply about his family, always showing a silent smiling pride in his family -- he was the spitting image of his grand child (both were bald) -- he wore his “Grandpa” t-shirt with pride.

“Mel was always at the State Fair in both 4H and the Plant Show. He made arrangements to have company for his wife while he walked the hard concrete floors of the Ag/Hort/Bee Building.

“Mel cared deeply about his wife -- he never complained -- he set an example for us all on how to live our lives -- accept the roles we are offered and love life. An example that will be hard for me to equal, but a goal. A goal to be like Mel.”

-- Duane and Patti Reynolds



Inventive Gardening

By Tom Atoe

Our members participate in a variety of educational, social and community service activities. When Andy Marlow was editor of *The Spray*, he filed a document titled "Fallen Trough The Cracks." The article chronicled some of our club member's extra curricular activities. Do you know that many of our past and present members have also made contributions to the greater scientific community?

Corn gluten, a tough elastic plant protein substance has many uses. It is a good source of linoleic acid and is added to dog chow, bird feed and kitty litter. Our club member, J. Johnson, has found that corn gluten works well to keep squirrels away from your garden. Once you have trapped the critters, Johnson says, simply dust their feet with corn gluten meal. Now instead of taking the squirrels for a five-mile ride, you can dump them at four miles.

Most of us remember the Reynold's Pomato. A very handy plant for smaller gardens, producing delicious blemish-free tomatoes on the vines and beautiful baseball-sized potatoes around the roots. Look for it at Bachman's. Also look for the 2005 introduction of the Carlson Cabbage. Everything you need for zesty coleslaw grows right inside the head. Simply mince and add liquid.

Certain newer varieties need more tweaking. The Hardy Banana tree shows promise. Yes, it survives the harsh Midwest winters. In the springtime a new ki-ki shoots up alongside the old tree stump and produces several nice hands of bananas. The only problem is that the mature bananas turn from green to black, skipping yellow. But they are delicious in banana bread, and to a lesser degree, banana pancakes. Incidentally, new scientific research has proven that bananas contain no potassium, so eat your broccoli.

Some say our club ought to take a more pro-active ap-

proach with respect to seminars. It is asking too much of our club leadership, they say, to hold an annual informative session on rain gauges? If it freezes outside when there is rain in your gauge, it will surely burst. That problem can be avoided if members are properly educated. It would be a valuable lesson.

The Slothful Gardener, always looking for easier methods, is experimenting with an EZMT self-draining rain gauge. It's basically a six-inch length of half inch copper pipe suspended from a rod you push into the ground. Mary says the tube is maintenance free and develops a nice patina (or is it pronounced patina?)

For the gardener's who have all the gadgets and gizmos, there are new gifts, too. If someone has the perfect hosta glade, why not give the patented Olson Can-O'-Slugs? Or perhaps a package of succotash seeds.

Editor's Note: We believe Mr. Atoe has been published in the Spray before. We suspect that Tom Atoe is not his real name, and we are not surprised that he would employ a psuedonym.

MGCM Financial Report

As of 3/16/2005

Income - \$1599 (full year budget is \$19, 417)

Expenses - \$3,000.27

(full year budget is \$23, 909.79)

Club Net Worth

Cash on hand - \$100

Checking account - \$5404.66

CD's - \$10,000

Total - \$15,504.66

Total Member ship is 110. 45 attended the January meeting , 51 attended the February meeting and 37 attended the March Meeting.

PLANT SALE IN MAY!!!!

By: Douglas R. Whitney

On Tuesday, May 3, 2005, MGCM will hold its major annual fundraiser, our Plant Sale, Auction and Country Store at Westwood Lutheran Church (9001 Cedar Lake Road, Saint Louis Park). The schedule of events is as follows:

4:15 PM Country Store Volunteers who work the sale can buy in the Country Store;

4:30 PM SILENT AUCTION BEGINS

4:45 PM COUNTRY STORE OPENS TO EVERYONE;

5:45 PM Dinner is served;

6:30 PM Dinner tables cleared and stowed, chairs set up for Live Auction

6:45 PM LIVE AUCTION BEGINS

Please remember: The lion's share of the club's annual budget, between 60 % and 75 %, is raised during this event. A successful evening will help keep our annual dues at \$10 per member.

The Pre-Auction Order Forms will be available at the April 12, 2005 Club Dinner Meeting. All of the instructions concerning how to use the new order form, the prices, ordering information and other details are on the form.

The one thing that everyone can do to make this year's event even more successful is to **CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING FROM YOUR OWN GARDEN TO THE COUNTRY STORE**. If you can't bring it in ahead of time, bring it with you when you come to pick up your order or when you come for the opening of the Country Store at 4:30 PM, or to dinner at 6.

The mission of the silent auction, live auction and country store plant sale is to raise money for the annual operating budget of MGCM. We would be engag-



ing in a shameful conflict of interest to do otherwise

If there are any annuals you would like to see offered this year that do not appear on the "Pre-Auction Order Form", send me a note and I'll attempt to find it (1 flat minimum). I'll contact you if it works out. Call Dave McKeen or Tim McCauley if you have suggestions about perennials you'd like to buy at the Country Store. For specialty and premium materials you think would be interesting or exciting for the Silent Auction or Live Auction, we'd appreciate your help in locating the particular material you suggest. Call Bob Stepan for assistance and coordination in this.

Don't hesitate to call me (612) 724-8034 with any other questions or if you need assistance extracting or delivering plant materials from your garden for the Country Store. I'll put the arm on someone to help you.



Coleus and Squash Featured in 2005 FFF

The featured flower and vegetable at the 2005 Flower, Food and Foto Show will be Coleus and Squash. Both cut specimens and containers of Coleus will be considered for the flower award, and both winter and summer squash entries will be considered for the vegetable award. Start picking out your coleus and squash varieties and be ready for the Show!

Confessions of a Lazy Gardener:

Dahlias from the Hardware Store

by Mary Maynard

In a weak moment last spring, I bought dahlia tubers at the hardware store -- from one of those seasonal displays of pre-packaged plants and bulbs that often look dried out, moldy or dead. I almost never do this, because the varieties are usually kind of generic, sometimes not appropriate for Zone 4, and the post-sale support from the hardware store staff is minimal.

But, things were 50% off, and the packages said they were "Border Dahlias", growing only 24 inches high and needing no staking. So I bit and bought three. Here's what I learned.

Claudette. *This was a lovely purple-pink decorative dahlia, with flowers at least five inches across. I brought some prize-winning specimens to the FFF show in August. I am very happy with this dahlia -- except for the fact that it grew to be five feet tall. Needless to say, it was out of place at the very front of my border. (Fortunately, the stuff behind it wasn't all that attractive, so it could have been worse.) I did a google check on 'Claudette', and all the descriptions say it only grows 15 inches high, so I'm assuming that the tuber I got was actually something else. (That doesn't mean I won't enter it as 'Claudette' in FFF this year if I have a good specimen. All's fair in love and flower shows.)*



Dahlia 'Ecstasy'

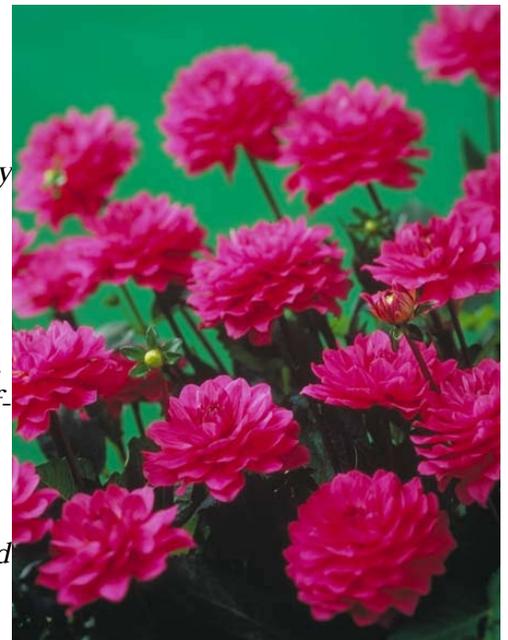
Rosabella. *This one grew only about 18 inches high, so I didn't have the height problem I had with 'Claudette'. Unfortunately, it also seemed to be a grasshopper magnet. Grasshoppers weren't common in other parts of the garden, but a family of them made them-*



selves at home on 'Rosabella' and feasted on flowers for months. Even though it bloomed well and there were always flowers on the neat, low, shrubby plant, I never got a flower that wasn't chewed up. I can't really even describe the blooms, because I never saw a good one.

Ecstasy. *The third tuber I bought was 'Ecstasy', and I am ecstatic about this one. It grew about 24 inches tall, formed a big bushy plant and it bloomed like there was no tomorrow. The peach-colored decorative flow-*

ers had a nice gold tone in the center on good stems for cutting. It was very free-flowering and vigorous. I'm hoping the tubers hold up well this winter, because I'm definitely growing this one again. If my tubers haven't survived the winter, I'll have to haunt hardware stores again this spring to get a replacement.



Dahlia 'Claudette'

So, I guess there's a lesson here somewhere. If you're a perfectionist, it's probably not worth the risk to buy bulbs in a box. But if you like a little adventure in your life and can enjoy the unexpected, it can be fun to see what happens. And, you might just come across a worthy addition to your borders. At 50 percent off.



Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

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First Class Mail

