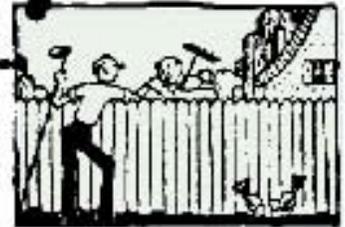




Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc
 2005, Volume 63, Number 2



Upcoming Events

February Meeting Topic: Herbs!

Date	Location	Event
Feb. 8	LHC	Herbs

Speaker: Gloria Danielson

Mar. 15	LHC/MF	Marshall Field's and Bachman's Flower Show
Apr. 12	LHC	Dwarf Conifers

Gloria has been a member of the Minnesota Herb Society since 1967. She has a large herb garden and a yard which has many different types of flowers and vegetation. She works in the herb garden at the MN Arboretum and has given many talks on herbs through the years.

LHC = Lake Harriet Church
 MF = Marshall Field's Downtown

Dinner Reservations

Permanent reservations for the February 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.

February Dinner Meeting Feb. 8, 2004

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

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

by David McKeen

Greetings,

I trust everyone is finding time to curl up and look through the many seed and plant catalogs that come in the mail this time of year.

Early in January I was able to spend three days down at the convention center attending the Green Expo. This is a convention for people in the landscape, greenhouse and turf industry. I listened to speakers talk on rose hybridizing, new perennials for shady areas, and new annuals for containers and baskets. One of my favorite things to do is to walk through the trade show and pick up beautiful catalogs that show new annuals and different plant combinations for container gardening. Fun, fun.

A new plant I loved growing last summer was a potato vine, *Solanum dulcamara* 'Variegata', (not to be confused with the SWEET potato vine) It grew in a 24" pot on a support. It has beautiful variegated leaves and fairly insignificant flowers. I also recommend growing the upright fuchsia (*Fuchsia x hybrida*). I used this in a pot and it was very nice, carefree and interesting.

My thanks to Duane Reynolds for giving an enjoyable program on lilies at the January meeting. See you all at the February meeting.

David McKeen

Request for Submissions *A Note from the Editor*

I have only been in the club for a short time, but I am amazed at the depth and breadth of knowledge and experience represented in the club. There is so much expertise in such a wide variety of gardening subjects: containers, propagation, alpines, cactii, roses, daylilies, marginally hardy plants, cannas, hostas, lilies - the list is endless.

We encourage everyone to submit their ideas, experiences, experiments and everyday foibles to the newsletter. Your experience makes us all better gardeners.

A couple subjects you might think about:

1. My Favorite Plant: this can be especially interesting when your favorite plant calls back memories of growing up or of a favorite relative. This could also be a specific, individual plant that has earned your respect.
2. New Things I Tried Last Year: Everyone of us tries something new each year. Let us know what worked at what didn't work.
3. What I'm Going To Try This Year: Already have an idea of what is going in the front border or patio container this year? Let us know.
4. Most Embarrassing Gardening Mistake: We've all made them - hearing other people's makes us feel better about our own.

Thanks.
Jason Rathe



Getting To Know Our Board

Kris Deters is Vice President of the Garden Club

I became a gardener when I bought a house in Mendota Heights in 2000 and inherited a 45 foot by 16 foot full sun bed with only three very small spruces and four, small spirea bushes in it. I had been living in Seattle, WA after college in Duluth, MN and had become interested in plants but hadn't previously had the opportunity to garden. My aunt Mary Wahl, MGCM member, promptly brought over daylilies, grasses and *Rudbeckia* to start my garden. After that first 'Chicago Petticoats' daylily bloomed, I was hooked. Shortly afterwards, I joined the MGCM to learn about my new hobby. I have been a member of the Plant Auction committee for four years and have served on the perennial garden committee as well.

I am married to Graham, a NWA business manager, and I work for the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension as a Forensic Scientist and Crime Scene Team Member. We love to hike and camp on summer weekends and have even started traveling (by air) with our tent to places such as Montana; Banff, Canada; Arizona; Virginia; and New Mexico in the last few years. We have taken several trips to England, the Netherlands and Germany where I try to fit in a few garden tours with our sightseeing.

I am primarily interested in perennials but have dabbled in annuals which I pick up through our Plant Auction and Sale. I tend to accumulate purple and blue flowering plants with a few oranges and yellows thrown in for contrast. In addition to my full-sun bed, I have begun to create a shade garden in my backyard and am working on a rock wall and garden alongside the house. I enjoy taking photos of my plants and including them in my scrapbooking projects.



'Chicago Petticoats' Daylily

Sundry Notes

- 1) The members who are dual members with the MN State Horticultural Society through the Men's Garden Club Of Minneapolis should have received the first issue of 2005 Northern Gardener magazine.
- 2) The 2005 Membership Directory will be passed out at the next Lake Harriet Church meeting. The members who are not in attendance will be mailed the 2005 Directories shortly thereafter.
- 3) Several people have asked for the name of the poet whose work was read at Soul Cafe's performance at the Holiday Party. The poet is Mary Oliver, and the book is *New and Selected Poems*. Still in print, and worth the wait at the library, from all I've heard.
- 4) The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis website is: <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~amarlow/mgcm>. All of the meetings and plenty more information is kept updated here. A heads-up that this address may change in the near future, but we will keep you informed.



SUNSHINE COMMITTEE



Marilyn Moon is Sunshine chair. The Sunshine Committee sends cards and flowers to members who are hospitalized, ill or confined to their home. If you know of someone who needs a little sunshine, call Marilyn 952-996-0788.

Volunteer at Home and Garden Shows

Join the Minnesota State Horticultural Society at this year's St. Paul Home and Patio Show - February 17th to 20th, and the Minneapolis Home and Garden Show - March 2nd to 6th as a volunteer.

Positions available include Merchandise Assistant, Membership Sales, Will Call, Talking to folks in the garden at the Minneapolis show (which will feature hardy shrub roses from Bailey Nurseries) Introducing Speakers in the Theater, and of course set up and tear down! Shifts are 4-5 hours long.

The Minneapolis Home and Garden Show will have shuttle buses running again this year from Ridgedale, Rosedale and Burnsville Center. The cost of shuttle is \$5.00. All volunteers will receive a discount on purchases as well as a free admission for the day they volunteer. Please contact Vicky Vogels at MSHS - 651-643-3601, ext 211.

Announcements

Donal O'Donnell has died. He was a member of the garden club but had not been a member for a number of years.

Marilyn Brummer had surgery on her rotar cuff and trigger thumb. She will be out of commision for a short while.



Duane Reynolds On Lilies

January Program Report

by Mary Maynard

Duane Reynolds gave us an excellent review of Minnesota Hardy lilies. He is a member of the North Star Lily society, and he and his wife Patti are members of the North Star Lily Society, which is affiliated with the North American Lily Society. Duane presented almost 80 slides of Asiatic, Martagon, Oriental, Trumpet and Orienpet lilies. While the slides of individual cultivars were beautiful, the slides of Duane and Patti's gardens were the best part for me, reminding me again what terrific gardeners they are. Duane and Patti live in New Hope, and their lot is almost pure clay. Over the years they have trucked in tons of soil and boulders to raise their beds and provide drainage. The result is splendid.

(From the member info sheet for North Star Lily Society):

"The best time to plant or divide lily bulbs is in the fall. Select a sunny, well-drained location for Asiatics,

Trumpets, Orientals and Orienpet hybrids. Martagon lilies accept open shade and are a fine choice for woodland gardens and hosta glades.

"Martagons are the first lilies to bloom in early June, followed by Asiatics, Trumpets, Orientals and OT hybrids in late summer. Midwest gardeners may enjoy a colorful parade of lilies throughout the growing season."

Patti is the current membership secretary for the North Star Lily Society. Dues are \$10 for 2 years, and includes newsletters, a lily library, an annual lily show, and a member discount at the October bulb sale. If you'd like to join the Society, send a check for \$10 to

Patti Reynolds - NSLS Membership
7116 - 39th Avenue North
New Hope, Minnesota 55427-1303

New Member Spotlight

Nate Karol: 200 Louisiana North, Golden Valley, 55427, Home and work # 763.544.0091. Self-employed. Nate is the brother of member, Elaine Spiegel.

Hobbies: Everything outdoors.

Committees: Food, Flower & Foto Show, Plant Auction, Sunshine. On committees as needed.



New Member Nate Karol



CANNAS

by Phil Smith

For six months in the winter I garden in the Naples area of Florida which is in zone 11. In addition to bedding plants, I have become interested in colorful foliage plants, such as crotons, elephant ears, caladiums and cannas.

When I lived in Minnesota, I never grew many cannas because I did not wish to deal with storage of the bulbs or rhizomes. However, down here they grow year round and multiply quickly.

Canna varieties vary from dwarfs of about two feet to over six feet. They are quick growing and vigorous with lots of foliage and relative large flowers. Flowers vary from dark red to light pink and all of the yellow-orange colors. The flowers are quite colorful, but it is the foliage which I have come to enjoy. Leafs can be reddish purple, bronze or green, or striped variations of all thereof. Cannas are easy to care for, prefer full sun to partial shade, like generous watering and regular fertilization. The newer varieties with the brightly colored leaves are also useful for flower arrangements.

In Minnesota, one could consider using them with caladiums, castor beans, and colocasia or elephant's ears (of which there are some new beautiful purplish varieties). It seems they are most often planted in isolated beds as a landscape feature. As a tropical plant, they need to avoid frost and could be planted when doing the tomatoes. The old rhizomes or tubers may be divided, but each should have several strong eyes or buds. The tubers need to be planted deep, about 5 inches, and about 18 inches apart for mid size varieties.



Canna 'Australia'

ies. They do not like drought, and in hot weather need a thorough soaking at least once a week.

It is suggested that blooms be removed as soon as they wither. If the stem is cut below the bloom heads, a side shoot will normally soon appear with more blooms. Cannas are heavy feeders and usually thirsty.

They also like some nitrogen and seem to do best with a 10-10-10 fertilizer.

In Minnesota, the tops should be cut off after the first frost. The rhizomes need to be dug and dried in the sun for a day or so, and then stored in a cool (50 deg. F) and moderately dry (30% humidity) area. I have read that it is best to store the tubers in dry sphagnum moss, vermiculite or sand. An area for storing potatoes is about right for canna tubers. During storage, it is a good idea to protect them from insect and rot by dusting them with an insecticide-fungicide powder,

such as one part Diazinon or Sevin to one part fungicide such as Captan, Maneb, or Zineb.

The catalog I receive list several newer cultivars, many with very colorful foliage. The ones I have tried so far are: 'Tropicana', 3-4 ft., bright orange blossoms, with beautiful leaves of alternating red, yellow, green, orange or pink. 'Australia', 4-5 ft., large red flowers, and deep burgundy foliage. 'Bengal Tiger', 5-6 ft., bright orange flowers, and striped green and yellow foliage.

About the Author:

Phil Smith lives half of the year in Big Sky Montana, and half the year in Florida, so he never gets a break from gardening but doesn't seem to mind.



More on Cannas

Cannas seem to be coming into their own, and they can give a tropical punch to a Minnesota garden. One source for all of the cannas that Phil has grown is Plant Delights at Juniper Level Botanic Gardens near Raleigh, North Carolina. If you haven't read their catalog, you're missing a lot of fun. Check them out at www.plantdelights.com.



Canna 'Intrigue'
from Plant Delights

Plant Delights offers a couple other Cannas that are a lot of fun. 'Cleopatra', with large splashes of burgundy on green leaves, and 'Intrigue, which has long narrow purple leaves that make it look more like a bold grass or phormium instead of a canna.

Green Thumb Award

The Green Thumb Award is given to members who attend every garden club meeting that year. Green Thumb recipients for 2004 are: Elaine Spiegel, Nancy Bjerke, Kay Wolfe, Denise Rust, and Chuck Carlson.

The attending club members had a hard time remembering the Green Thumb Pledge so here it is:



Green Thumb Pledge

I pledge my life to the spade,
As long as I can spade in the shade.
With a heart that is clean and a
thumb that is green.
Ah, that's the life that I crave.



Green Thumb Winners: Elaine Spiegel, Denise Rust, Kay Wolfe, and Chuck Carlson (Not pictured: Nancy Bjerke)



Industrial Beautification Awards

Donovan Hamel was given an Industrial Beautification Award for the garden created along the Greenway behind Vera's Cafe on Lyndale Avenue South and 29th St. in South Minneapolis. Donovan was nominated by Bob Olson.

Tim and Debbie Lyon were given an Industrial Beautification Award for the work they did on the beautiful gardens surrounding their church, Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fridley. Debbie volunteered her time to work on the design and Tim's exacting efforts ensured professional installation of the hardscape. Congratulations to Tim and Debbie, who are currently in the middle of moving to Debbie's home state of Texas. Tim and Debbie were nominate by Chuck Carlson.



Donovan Hamel from Vera's Cafe



Tim and Debbie Lyon

Herbs & Spices

By Chuck Carlson

Doing a little web surfing I looked at the UpBeet Gardener newsletter, published by Marion Owen, who is also the co-author of **Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul**. The part that interested me was a section on herbs and spices.

She started the article by asking two questions: "What's Cookin'? Are your spices dead or alive?"

By asking these questions she was making a point that spices have a shelf life. If you have spices that have been in your cabinet for a while they may be worthless or at a minimum their flavor diminished. I liked this next statement she included. "While your spice cabinet might be harboring prehistoric spices and herbs, the good news is that they never spoil, per se. The bad news is their flavor fades. The trick is to keep

(cont. on following page)



Information on Rock Gardens

If any of you want to expand your gardening options and include rock gardens or just need a gardening fix during the winter months here are a couple options from the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS), Minnesota Chapter. Their website is: http://www.nargs.org/meet/chap_mn.html.

The Programs are FREE and OPEN to the public. (The Banquet does have a fee).

PROGRAMS 2005

February 19, 2005, Saturday *Herbs & Aromatic Plants for the Rock Garden*

Speaker: Gloria Danielson.

Ms. Danielson is a herb gardener & member of the MN Herb Society. She will introduce many interesting herbs and aromatic plants that add color & fragrance to a rock garden.

1:30 PM. Location: Hennepin Technical College, Brooklyn Park Campus, Auditorium, 9000 Brooklyn Blvd. Brooklyn Park, MN. 952-995-1300

April 3, 2005, Sunday Annual Banquet: *Special Plants- For Minnesota Garden.*

Speaker: Panayoti Kelaidis, Curator of Denver Alpine Botanical Gardens was the designer of its Rock Alpine Garden - one of the best collections of alpine plants in North America. He is an internationally known plantsman, plant hunter, lecturer, and author of numerous books. He is the recipient of many awards including the 2003 Award of Excellence from National Garden Club, Inc.

The Annual Banquet has a fee. For reservations call Djina at (651-484-7644).

Herbs & Spices

(cont. from previous page)

and use spices as long as they have flavor.” She also developed a time frame for how long to keep spices before you toss them out as worthless. Below is that summary.

Stored in airtight containers and in a dry place, spices retain their potency longer than you’d think.

As long as:

- 4 years for whole spices like peppercorns, nutmeg and cinnamon sticks
- 2 to 3 years for ground spices (such as paprika and nutmeg)
- 1 to 2 years for leafy herbs like parsley and oregano
- A long time for potent whole spices like cloves and cardamom

Looking at this one can see that dried herbs lose their flavor faster than spices. A good check is to crumble some of the herb, if it has no color, and little or no smell, don’t use them.

To check for ground spices, shake the jar, let it settle, then smell, if there is no smell, toss it. If there is fragrance left, and less than you remember, you can use it, but use more than your recipe called for. Another thing you should do, is buy small jars of ground spices rather than those cheaper but large quantity bottles.

Confessions of a Lazy Gardener:

Things Tried in 2004

by Mary Maynard

Well, the 2004 growing season is over. Wasn't it about the oddest year ever? So cold and wet in May and June, then dry in July, cold in August, beautiful in September, snapdragons blooming into November. You have to admit, gardening in Minnesota is not boring!

In general, of course, the perennials loved the cool wet spring. I don't ever expect to see hostas that large again, unless I actually fertilize them or something. But even with all the wet weather, the slugs weren't as bad as I feared: maybe they were too cold to venture out into the hostas.

Not surprisingly, many of the annuals were very disappointing. Celosia 'Punky Red', which was one of my new favorites in 2003, was almost nonexistent this year. And any of the others that needed warmth and sunlight were very slow to take off. And the cannas had to wait until September to really come into their own.

I did try a few new things this year, of course. Here's a quick overview:

Lopezia 'Pretty Rose'. This looked like a fun annual in the Thompson and Morgan catalog. Delicate little pink flowers. And it turned out to be -- fine. Germination was very good, and it was very heat-tolerant, and grew vigorously. However, the foliage reminded me



of pigweeds, and the flowers were very tiny. It might be okay for filler in a container, but otherwise I won't try it again, I don't think.

Laurentia 'Blue Star'. This is another Thompson and Morgan annual that was advertised to love the heat. Unfortunately, we didn't have much heat in the early part of the summer, and it just sat there in the ground until August or so. Finally, it produced pretty blue star-like flowers in late August and early September.



Crepis rubra

Even when it wasn't blooming, ferny foliage was attractive at the front of the border. If I have seeds left over, I may try these again, but maybe not.

Osteospermums. Osteospermums were hot hot hot in the local garden

stores this spring. And I succumbed to temptation, even though I hadn't had a lot of luck with them before. Some of the new colors just glowed in the garden stores. And they looked pretty good in my garden in May and June. Then when it got warmer, they basically disappeared, only to start blooming again in October, when it cooled down. I am too cheap to buy these again.

Crepis rubra. This is another Thompson and Morgan annual that looked intriguing. The seeds are large, and germination was phenomenal. It turns out that these had a plant structure very similar to dandelions -- basal rosette with long stems. The flowers also resemble dandelions, except that they're pink. This grew pretty well and bloomed reasonably well, although the flower stems were a little spindly. But that could have been



because the planting location wasn't ideal. I'll probably try this again, since I got millions of seeds and germination didn't look like a problem.

Marigold Tiger Eyes. Got this free from Parks or Jung's. Very nice little dwarf marigold, good flower production, nice growth habit. Bloomed steadily into October next to the house.

Nicotiana Tinkerbell. This new nicotiana variety looked interesting -- smaller, hanging blooms that were green on the outside and pink on the inside. In real life, though, it was disappointing. The flower colors were muddy, and the bloom was kind of sparse and insignificant. I was much happier with the 'Dwarf White Bedder' seedlings that came up from last year. There could be a place in another kind of garden where 'Tinkerbell' would work, but it won't be back in my garden.



Nicotiana 'Tinkerbell'

Pepper 'Early Crisp'. I thought I'd try this bell pepper because it had a very short maturity time (something like 62 days), but conditions were so unusual that I don't think I can make a judgment. The peppers were very nice, but I didn't see any until into September.

Tomato 'Pomadoro'. I think Bob Voigt brought these to the sale in May. Very nice roma tomato. Again, I didn't have any tomatoes to speak of before Labor Day, but the plants were actually quite prolific and I was canning tomatoes into October.

Grape tomato in compost pile. Another tomato that was most prolific was the grape tomato seedling that came up in my compost pile. It grew really well in the partial shade, and produced handfuls of those sweet little grape tomatoes that I'm always buying at the grocery store.

Zinnia 'Profusion White'. I've grown 'Profusion Pink' before, and was a little disappointed with the way the flowers seemed to fade and get muddy. But someone mentioned that white flowers have difficulty fading, and, indeed, 'Profusion White' did very well. It made a very nice edging to my bed of 'Pink Splendor' zinnias, and had almost no mildew. I'll definitely grow these again.

Blue felicia (*Felicia amelloides*). I bought this on impulse at Linders end-of-season sale, and it declined steadily from the day I bought it. It was completely dead in 3 weeks. I should know better.

Coleus 'Sedona'. Wow. This orange/rust coleus absolutely glows! I put this in a container with Canna 'Tropicanna', *Acalypha wilkesana* (Copperleaf Plant) and leatherleaf sedge, and the combination was an absolute knockout!

Hydrangea 'Endless Summer'. Got this at our auction in May, and so far so good. I planted it in a fair amount of shade, but it still seemed to need a lot of water, and would wilt frequently. It seemed much less vigorous than its 'Annabelle' neighbor. It did put out flowers throughout the summer, although the later ones were not nearly as stunning as the one that Dave Johnson brought to the FFF Show. I gave it a little aluminum sulphate and mulched it with about 10 inches of leaves. We'll see what we get next year.

Time to move on to the 2005 catalogs and start the list of things to try next!



Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

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