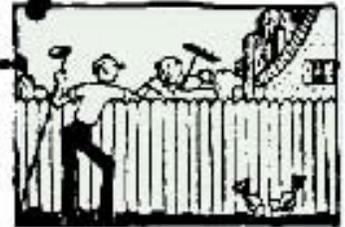




The Garden Spray

Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc
2008, Volume 66, Number 04



-APRIL SPEAKER

**Gertens Greenhouse
Tour: April 12th
see page 7
for details**

Our April Meeting will feature Jason Makoto Fischer, who is manager of Orchids Limited in Plymouth. He will talk about successful cultivation of the orchid, as well as introduce various varieties. He will bring along a few to sell as well.

Jason was raised in a family with an orchid business, and he has been working with them since age 5. He took up hybridization and lab work at age 14, and continues today with whatever he can get his hands on that is unique. Jason has lectured across the country on the topic of orchids, and was a featured speaker at the last World Orchid Conference in the U.S. He has also lectured on the topic in Japan. He has written numerous articles on the subject as well, and has a passion for orchid conservation.

April Dinner Meeting: Tuesday April 8th, 2008

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

Jason's national background is half Japanese, so he learned the Japanese language and quit college to move to Japan for a time to teach English. He has since married and eventually returned to the U.S. and the family orchid business to help out. He has opened up the Japanese orchid market to the U.S., and vice versa.

Come enjoy this knowledgeable speaker, and bring your questions!

Dinner Reservations

Permanent reservations for the dinner meeting are in effect. 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.



Thoughts from the Prez

by Larry Larson

Now that Spring is officially here, we can all think about our annual plant sale and auction that takes place May 6 at the Westwood Lutheran Church in St. Louis Park. This is one of the most important, and most fun, events that our garden club sponsors every year.

If you are a new member, I want to encourage you to attend this very special event. There are many reasons not to miss it. First, this is an opportunity for all of us to gather and welcome Spring and another planting season, something we've all waited all winter for. But there are many other reasons to attend.

The country store is an annual tradition where our club members donate plants from their garden and sell them on a first come, first serve basis. This is a rare opportunity for all members to look for new plants that you have never tried before, plants that you have heard about but never grown in your garden. There are hundreds of plant varieties here, from the common to the rare, and it is always fun to browse the tables, read the tags, and pick out those plant treasures you want to grow in your garden.

I want to thank all club members in advance for taking the time and making the effort to bring in their plants for this occasion. And if you have never donated your plants to the country store, please consider doing so. It is a rewarding experience to share your special plants with someone else.

In the March edition of the Spray, Mary Maynard included a long list of plants that club members can purchase at special rates from places like Strunks,

Malmborgs, Bachmans, Ambergate Gardens, Outback Nurseries, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and other garden centers. Please take a close look at this list and consider ordering plants from it. The club benefits by making a few dollars on each order, and you benefit by purchasing outstanding plants at reasonable prices. This will be the eighth year that I have ordered plants from this club event, and I can tell you I have never been disappointed.

Then there is the silent auction. I will be overseeing this event, so I would greatly appreciate donations from club members. If you live near a nursery and purchase plants there, please stop in and ask them to donate a gift certificate, annual basket, perennial or garden implement for the silent auction. The club earns money from this event, and club members enjoy bidding on their favorite plants. It's a win-win for everybody. If you have something to donate to the silent auction, please call and tell me, then bring it in to the church so I can put it up for bids.

The raffle is another fun event that takes place on May 6. Bob Voight does an outstanding job of obtaining items for this event. Please consider buying raffle tickets from Bob (he'll be wondering around the room doing a little arm twisting). Donations for this event are also welcomed.

We also have a plant auction, usually involving dozens of wonderful baskets, perennials, trees, shrubs and many other varieties of plants. This is another opportunity to spruce up your yard with beautiful plants. I want to thank Doug Whitney and his committee for once again heading up the plant sale and auction. I also want to thank all the club members who volunteer to make this a very special event. Without their help,

(cont. on page 3)



Prez (cont. from page 2)

this large and complicated event could never take place.

Oh yes, and we also eat dinner, have a lot of laughs and tell each other about our plans for our 2008 gardens. Yes, there's plenty to do and lots of plants to buy, so please come to our annual plant sale and auction and plan on bringing home lots of new plants. See you there!

CLUB FINANCIALS

Balance as of 3/15/08
Checking: 1,527.00
CD: 5,662.00
Cash: 100.00

A Note from the Editor

Editor's note:

I'm writing this right after shoveling four inches of snow off our driveway -- a fine way to greet the first full day of spring. I guess it's good for our gardens to have had snow cover all winter, but it's been tough to get those seeds ordered and the cannas and elephant ears out of storage. And the dahlias -- I haven't even looked to see what kind of survival rate I have.

But, despite winter storm warnings and snow coming down fast, spring is on its way. The days are getting longer, and the sun will prevail over the dark of winter. We got a taste of the tropics at the Macy's Bachmans show last week. Thanks to everyone who has sent us photos for this issue. And we have another tropical program coming up. Maybe this is the year that I'll finally break down and try an orchid. And then we have the Gertens tour on the 12th -- thanks to Larry for arranging this. Larry is taking lunch reservations up until our Tuesday meeting. And the dahlia sale at Bachmans Heritage Room is right after that.

Don't forget to get your pre-sale plant order in to Doug Whitney by April 8th as well. This is a great way to get nicely-grown annuals at a good price and support our club along the way.

See you in April!
Mary



Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event
April 8th	LHC	Orchid Care/Cultivation
April 12th	Gertens	Gertens Greenhouse Tour
May 6th	WLC	Annual Plant Sale/Auction
June 10th	LHC	Como Tropical Collection
June TBA		Tour of Perennial Trial Garden
Aug. 16-17	Arb	Flower, Food and Foto Show
Sept. 9	LHC	Baileys: New Plants
Oct. 14	LHC	Peter Olin: Years at the Arb.
Nov. 11	LHC	Monrovia: New Plants
Dec. 2nd	LHC	Holiday Party

LHC = Lake Harriet Church (4901 Chowen Ave. S., Minneapolis)

WLC = Westwood Lutheran Church

MGCM Notes:

Dahlia Society Sale

The Minnesota Dahlia Society will hold its annual tuber sale at Bachman's on Lyndale on Saturday, April 19 from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Also, check out the website where you will find a list of tubers that will be available at the Tuber Sale, @ <http://www.minnesotadahliasociety.org/tubersale.html>.

Phil Smith Recovering

Our friend Phil Smith slipped on some moss at his home in Florida and suffered serious muscle and tendon tears in one leg. He has been in a full leg cast for several weeks, but gets the cast off in early April and will be working on getting his strength back.

We'll get a chance to see Phil in person in June, since he's coming up for the Arboretum's 50th Anniversary celebration. Phil was the first president of the Arboretum, a position he held for eight years. He's also planning to join us for our regular June meeting.

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Pictures from Macy's/Bachman's Flowershow: Floranova



more pics pages 8-11

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Update from club members Ritchie and Karen Miller

“We decided in late August to put our house on the market even though the market was quite weak. It was probable that it would take several months to sell and in that time we would make the decision on where we wanted to live. Enter a little adventure into our lives. Our home sold in two weeks and we closed late in September. We had about three weeks to sell or give away a lot of stuff and we put what we wanted to keep into storage containers. Then during October we traveled a bit looking at homes and locations. We wearied of homelessness rapidly and found a home in Sun City, Arizona, that fulfilled our needs so we bought it.”

“We enlisted the help of our two boys, Craig and Timothy, to help with the move. Timothy brought our containers on a semi, picking up Craig in Colorado. We were moved in by November 1st. We have unpacked and have our home in shape so that we can welcome each of you to visit whenever you have time.”

Ritchie and Karen Miller

Our new address is: 20025 N. Signal Butte Circle
Sun City, AZ 85373-1223

Phone number: 623-328-7415

Cell number: 763-587-1599



**GERTENS TRIP PLANNED
FOR APRIL 12TH**

Gertens Trip Planned
For April 12

Our garden club will be taking a field trip to visit Gertens Garden Center on Saturday, April 12. Lou Gerten, owner of Gertens, will lead us on a tour through all his greenhouses, filled to the brim with thousands upon thousands of beautiful annuals. We will also see some of the production areas, including the automatic planting machine. Most of these areas, including the greenhouses, are never seen by the general public.

We will also be eating lunch at Gertens. Mr. Gerten has agreed to set up an eating area for our club where he will also speak and answer questions. The charge for this outing is only \$5. Please fill out the form below and indicate if you are attending the tour and also the lunch. The tour is free, the lunch is \$5. Please give the form to Larry Larson at the March 18 or

April 8 meeting indicating you are planning to attend. Payment can be accepted at this time.

You may also send the form with payment to: Larry Larson, 15225 Wild Wings, Minnetonka, Mn 55345.

Plan on arriving at Gertens at 10:45 a.m. We will be gathering in the front of the store, then move to the back corner where Lou Gerten will begin the tour at 11 a.m. There will be no bus; everyone is expected to drive to the greenhouse. The directions to Gertens are as follows: Take 494 East to exit #67, Robert St. Go 3 miles to South Robert Trail (Mn 3) and turn right. Go .1 miles to Upper 55th St. East and turn left. Go 1.3 miles to Blaine Avenue, turn left. Gertens is just ahead on the right. Address is 5500 Blaine Avenue, Inver Grove Heights.

See you there!

I will be attending the Gertens garden tour on April 12.

Name _____

Name _____

I will be attending the lunch at Gertens following the tour:

Name _____

Name _____

I have enclosed \$5 for each person attending the lunch.



... more
Floranova





...thanks to all the club members who supplied these wonderful photos.



MGCM Plant Sale and Auction

On Tuesday, May 6, 2008, MGCM will hold its major annual fundraiser, our Plant Sale, Auction and Country Store.

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 clubs annual budget, between 60 % and 75 %, is raised during this event. A successful evening will help keep our annual dues at \$10 per member.

Like last year, the "Pre-Auction Order Form" will be emailed or mailed to all members. If you don't have one, call me at 612-724-8171 or email me (dwhitney@visi.com). I will see that you get one immediately. All of the instructions concerning how to use the order form, the prices, ordering information and other details are on the form.

Please return your order to me by April 8. The sooner I can get the complete order to our supplier, the more likely it will be that nothing we order will be sold out.

Over the last three years we have been successful in our effort to streamline the auction format. We

have done this to insure that the event is interesting, well paced, ends on time, and continues to be well attended throughout the evening. It affords greater time for fellowship and for revisiting the Country Store.

We hope to build on this success. I encourage every member in the Club to help us in this effort. 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 5:45.

Each year we welcome several new members of MGCM to our annual Plant Sale and Auction. Following is some information about how the Auction part of the event proceeds. I have been asked to explain three aspects of the auction process.

We will begin the bidding from the gallery. If the pace of the event bogs down, we will shift back to minimum bids. If we do this, the minimum bid will be set below retail but above our cost. Should the high bid on any item fail to return a fair margin over cost, we will not accept that bid. Then we either hold the item(s) back for auction at a later time, or assign a price for sale at the Country Store after the Auction. However, I believe that this is unlikely to occur as everyone understands that this is a fundraiser for our Club.

In the past we have offered 8 or 10 flats of some material like geraniums, perhaps two flats each of four different colors, on the auction table. This has often resulted in the successful bidder selecting two

(cont. on page 11)

(cont. from page 10)



flats of the geraniums. Then, perhaps one or two other members select a flat at the winning bid price, log their purchase, and the Committee removes the remaining 3 to 6 flats and proceeds to the next variety of plant materials.

In the past three years we auctioned such materials by color. It didn't take any longer that way, so we will continue to do it this way. Regardless of method, the high bidder is entitled to his/her choice (1 flat minimum) of the amount and selection of the variety upon which he/she bid. The second high bidder then gets to choose from the remainder (1 flat minimum). After that, whoever else may be interested in this material may select what remains on the table at the bid price, (no less, 1 flat minimum) subject to someone else getting that color or that flat first.

If bidders choose to split a flat at this stage, that's fine, but it gets charged to the account of one member who has to collect from those with whom the flat was split. Please don't ask to have partial flats billed to a bid number account. It slows the auction and stresses our grace filled (not necessarily graceful) volunteers.

What about the remaining materials that weren't sold during the auction? Anyone with a bid number can wait around until the live auction has closed to attempt to purchase what is left over after a firm price for these materials has been set.

After that, all sales will be suspended until the Auction area clean-up is completed. No one will be allowed into the Country Store until this is done. When this phase is completed, all of those who were physically able who have fully participated in clean-up and all others can participate in the liquidation of remaining plant materials in the Country Store.

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



Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

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Vice President: Denise Rust
7933 Girard Court, Brooklyn Park
Recording Secretary: Judy Berglund
Membership Secretary: Sharla Aaseng
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Treasurer: David McKeen
2834 Vernon Ave. S., St. Louis Park
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