



# The Garden Spray

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

2006, Volume 64, Number 7



## GARDEN TOURS

Saturday, July 22nd

The July Club Bus Tour of three member gardens on Saturday afternoon, July 22, will travel south stopping at the Burnsville gardens of Leroy Cech and Mary Wahl and continue on to Roger Koopmans garden in Fairbault where we will also have dinner.

Club treasurer Leroy Cech and his wife Carol have lived in their house 18 years, but Leroy really got started on his gardens, still a work in progress, after his retirement 8 years ago. In the sunny front yard a butterfly garden is developing. He describes the back yard as half sun and half shade with the shade garden rescued from a buckthorn patch. With a

new deer-proof fence made of materials recycled from a neighbor's old fence, his Martagon lily bloomed for the first time this year. Now around the house the ugly rock mulch has been replaced with beds that we should see in bloom with annuals, lilies, coneflowers, and brown-eyed Susans.

Garden club is a family affair for Mary Wahl. She is the aunt of club president, Kris Deters, and this year her sister, Margaret Saxrud, Kris's mother joined. Mary and her husband Roger have lived in their house across from Crystal Lake for 35 years and enjoyed rearing their family only 6 houses from the beach in this friendly neighborhood. Before other construction blocked their view of another lake from the back of the house, more of their outside activities were focused on the rear of the house, but this is now mostly shade and

*(cont. on page 8)*



# A Word from the President

by Kristine Deters

We have reached the beginning of summer. I was amazed this spring at how far ahead of schedule my plants were blooming. My bearded iris always seem to bloom around my wedding anniversary of June 8th. This year, however, they bloomed in mid May. Now, with the more normal temps and little water, it seems like the garden is back on track. I lost my grandmother last year and for the funeral, we used lilies in the church. I selected Orange Pixie Asiatic lilies and planted them in my garden afterwards. They are now in bloom. The ‘May Night’ salvia are reblooming along with ‘Moonshine’ yarrow. My spring geraniums have finished but my summer blooming ‘Phillipe Vapelle’ geraniums are just getting started. Part of the fun of gardening is to see each year how the seasons unfold. I am looking forward to my daylilies blooming this month and the new oriental lilies that I planted blooming in August.

The return of summer signals a change in our club activities. Instead of getting together and learning through speakers at our monthly dinner meetings, we transition to participating in garden tours and the Flower, Food and Foto show. I am looking forward to seeing the gardens on tour in July and August. It is a wonderful way to get new ideas for our own gardens and a chance for us to visit and enjoy the wonderful summer weather together. In addition, this year I have decided to enter the FFF show on August 19 and 20th. This will be my first attempt at showing. I’m a little intimidated but with the support of MGCM members,

I know that it will be a fun experience. I hope everyone gets a chance to come out and participate in some manner: novice participant, experienced exhibitor or FFF admirer.

Kristine

## Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event
July 22	Tour	Garden Tour
Aug 19-20	Arb.	FFF Flower Show
Aug. 26	Tour	Garden Tour
Sept.	LHC	TBA
Oct..	LHC	Botanical Treasures of China with Jason Smith
Nov.	LHC	Raingardens
Dec.	LHC	HOLIDAY PARTY

- LHC = Lake Harriet Church
- MF = Marshall Field’s Downtown
- WLC = Westwood Lutheran Church



## *A Note from the Editor*

*by Mary Maynard*

Well, we are already in the heart of summer. As I was spreading mulch the other day, I noticed that even my midseason daylilies are putting up their bloom scapes. It was a jolt to realize that July is here already. How could that be? I still have nine bags of shredded leaves in the garage! Since I'm about a month behind in the garden, I keep thinking it's still May, but once we get on the tour bus, my mental calendar will adjust itself, I'm sure. I'm looking forward to seeing a couple of gardens that we haven't seen before -- and I thank Leroy Cech and Mary Wahl for agreeing to be on the tour. And I'm very much looking forward to seeing Rog and Kak Koopmans garden again. If you've never seen the Koopmans' garden, I strongly urge you to sign up for the tour immediately! It is a wonderful combination of bold, striking landscape design and meticulous gardening.

Phil Smith has sent us a second article on delphinium culture. I hope by now that it has

warmed up enough for Phil to plant out his annuals in Montana. We have our own gardening challenges in Minnesota, but at least we don't have to deal with the cold nights at 7,000 feet. I'm sure that Phil and Wanda believe it is worth it to spend the summer in the mountains. It is not too soon to think about entering the Flower, Food and Foto Show. The show is always a good time, and the veterans are more than happy to help new exhibitors. We hope to see you there!

### **Financial Snapshot**

Financial Snapshot as of June 15, 2006

Checking account - \$6,355.20

CD\_s - \$10,345.42

Cash - \$100

Total - \$16,800.62

Meeting attendance (113 Members)

January - 48 members (43%) plus 3 guests

February - 35 members (32%) plus 7 guests

March - 31 members (28%) plus 18 guests

April - 42 members (38%) plus 6 guests

May - 38 members (34%) plus 12 guests

June - 42 members (37%) plus 1 guest

# Delphiniums and their Culture

by Phil Smith

The majesty and variations in color of the delphinium have lead gardeners to name it the “Queen of the Border.” There are many delightful perennial plants for the border, but well grown delphiniums can certainly be a highlight. With a little care, the delph is relatively easily to grow and maintain in the garden.

These comments are intended to refer to the basics of delphinium culture in the northern U.S., including site, soil preparation, planting, feeding, staking and maintenance. A recent article made some suggestions on seeding techniques.

To me, the mere mention of delphiniums brings memories of those photos or paintings of thatched roof English cottages fronted by delphs in the garden. In the writer’s experience, one of the best ways to add the character of delphs to one’s garden is by growing several plants from good seed.



Most garden centers and nurseries in the northern states sell potted delphs in the spring. However, those noticed by the writer have generally been grown from the old strains of Pacific Hybrids, which have not been improved for over 30 years and are not reliably hardy in Minnesota. There are some newer seed strains, and I have had some luck with the Magic Fountains mixture of colors. There is also a newer strain named New Zealand hybrids, but the seed is quite expensive. My choice of seed has always been that available from the Delphinium Society headquartered in England as noted in the earlier article.

**SITE AND SOIL PREP.** Delphiniums do best in full sun. Early morning or late afternoon shade is acceptable, but at least six hours of full sun is needed or the plants grow too tall, spindly and weak. Delphs do well in any site where good roses are grown. The soils of Minnesota, which tend to be neutral or slightly alkaline generally suit them fine.

Delphiniums have deep fibrous roots and prefer a loose, friable well-drained soil, preferably with humus or organic amendments. The addition of well rotted manure, composted leaves or peat is highly recommended. The digging and amendment of the soil the previous autumn is encouraged. It is also good to incorporate a garden fertilizer, such as 5-10-5, in the soil when digging. Even heavy clay soils can be made quite suitable for delphs in a couple of years by the generous addition of gypsum, organic material, and perhaps some sand.

*(cont. on page 5)*



*(cont. from page 4)*

**FEEDING AND MAINTENANCE.** Delphiniums will grow and flower if given minimum feeding and care, but the quality and strength of the bloom spikes may be significantly enhanced by good feeding, pruning and pest care. Periodic foliar feeding is a good idea, perhaps alternating a balanced soluble fertilizer with a product having micro-nutrients, such as a seaweed fertilizer.

In many northern areas, such as Minnesota, the growing season is not long, following a short spring. Perennial delphiniums typically emerge the last week of April and begin blooming the last week of June. This encourages quick soft spikes, and the size and strength of the stems may be enhanced by regular feeding.

After the first year, delphs tend to send up several shoots, and it is desirable to prune to not more than three shoots the second year, not more than five the third year, and never more than seven in succeeding years. This is done when the shoots are only 2-3 inches tall, by cutting off the unwanted stems near the ground. The stronger appearing shoots, well-spaced around the plant, are left to grow into good spikes. Never pull out the unwanted shoots, as this will expose areas of the crown to fungus and encourage crown rot.

**PESTS.** Delphiniums have no more pests than other perennials, aphids probably being the most frequent problem. A periodic spray with a good insecticide is normally sufficient. Rarely, delphiniums will be disfigured by cyclamen mites, requiring a miticide spray. When such mites are present the leaves appear strange as with a virus and may turn a dark or



purple color if not soon treated. The best chemicals previously effective for cyclamen mites have been removed from the market, but there may be something newer unknown to the writer. If the effected plant or plants cannot be quickly treated, it may be best to merely dig them and discard. Slugs can sometimes also be a problem, particularly with damp weather, but various slug baits and sprays are available.

**STAKING.** All delphiniums, except perhaps the very dwarf ones, require staking, at least in the Midwest and northern regions where hard summer rains and thunderstorms seem to regularly occur. Staking chores can be time-consuming with the taller plants. For this reason, I normally discard or give away all plants which reach over about five feet. The dwarfer strains are also much easier to stake.

The best method of staking known to the writer is the

*(cont. on page 11)*



# June Club Meeting

Erin Hynes - Garden Art: Beyond Pink Flamingos



Robert Kean with an update



Margaret Landry leads the show



*Erin Hynes spoke about the pleasures and possibilities of garden art, see next page for tips!*



*(cont. on page 7)*



## KAY WOLFES ART AT GARDEN AND ART TOUR

Kay Wolfe will show some of her paintings at Tangletown Garden's "Garden & Art" Tour on Saturday, July 29. Tangletown's tours raise money for public art and gardens in the Twin Cities area. This year's tour will be of 5 or 6 gardens in St. Paul, and the proceeds will fund gardens at Lookout Park on Summit Avenue. Last year's tour of south Minneapolis gardens funded restoration of a large garden urn that had been in Armory Park in Minneapolis, but stored since 1967, awaiting restoration. The refurbished urn will be installed near the Lake Harriet bandshell.

The tour of St. Paul gardens will feature wine tasting by Solo Vino Wine Store, with different wines at each garden. Tickets are \$20 in advance, and \$25 the day of the tour. Tickets can be purchased at Tangletown Gardens. Kay's paintings will be at the garden of Sally Couser, 1173 Davern Street, in Highland Park—look for the "garden shed". Scott Endres and Dean Engelmann, owners of Tangletown, are very talented designers and horticulturalists, and Scott was one of MGCM's scholarship recipients. It is great that they are organizing a tour to support public gardens. Kay says "This is just amazing. All my loves together—art and gardening and creating public gardens. I can not NOT be there!" Please join the tour! For more info, go to [www.tangletowngardens.com](http://www.tangletowngardens.com) and click on "Tour".

## Garden Art Tips

### *What is Garden Art?*

Stuff you can have in our yard that you'd never get away with having in your house.

### *Garden Art Tips*

- \* Use garden art to fill in gaps between plants
- \* Move pieces around to find the best spot
- \* Include surprises to slow people own
- \* Try the Reuse Center for unique finds
- \* IKEA has cool garden stuff for cheap, including big, good flower pots for less
- \* The art you display tells people an awful lot about you
- \* If you love it, buy it. If you can't afford to fall in love, stay away from temptation.

### *About Pink Flamingos*

- \* Plastic manufacturer, Union Products, introduced in 1957 - about 20 million have been sold.
- \* Was the 2nd project for designer Donald Featherstone, the first was a plastic duck, which outsells the flamingo
- \* Says Featherstone, "Before plastics, only rich people could afford to have poort taste."



*(cont. from page 1)*

mosquitoes. Now most of the garden action is in front and they enjoy the views of the front garden and lake from inside and out, especially while sitting in the garden. Working from a plan drawn years ago by former MGCM member, Eldon Hugelen, Mary continues to plant for a long season of always having something in bloom in an area that can receive 10 hours of sun. Throughout the garden are garden gifts that Mary has received from family members, making it a true family garden. The neighborhood considers Mary's garden to be the "on the walking trail garden", and at least 3 of her neighbors also have planted flower gardens.

Roger and Kak Koopmans built their home many years ago and thus have had a lot of time to grow those 12 foot arborvitae hedges that form the backdrops for much of the yard where they strive

to have color from snow to fall. As a Landscape Designer, Roger's yard is a showcase for many aspects of landscaping. Because great grass is an important part of the color harmony, he grows a blend of 3 blue grasses. By July we can expect to see his 1000's of annuals in bloom and his perennial choices including 100 of the best daylilies. Roger went to the national Hosta meeting in Philadelphia in June, leaving his own large Hosta collection protected by the shade of his banana tree sculptures. He was ahead of his time in using specialties like concrete rounds and tropicals like cannas. Roger and Kak have welcomed many visitors to their gardens - some years over 1500 - and we too will be enjoying their hospitality.

Please use the registration form below to sign up for the bus tour.

**Club Tour Reservation  
July 22nd, 2006**

**Cost:** \$20.00 per person, check payable to to MGCM

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail reservations *no later* than Friay, July 14th to:

*Denise Rust*

*7933 Girard Court N.*

*Brooklyn Park, MN 55444-2070*

*(763) 560-7747*



## \* MGCM TOUR INFO \* SCHEDULE AND REGISTRATION

We will board our motorcoach on Saturday, July 22 at 1:00 PM at the SE corner of the Southtown Center lot in Bloomington (at American Blvd. W. and Knox Ave. S., by the water tower). The bus will leave Bloomington promptly at 1:15, with our first stops being at the gardens of Leroy Cech and of Mary Wahl in Burnsville.

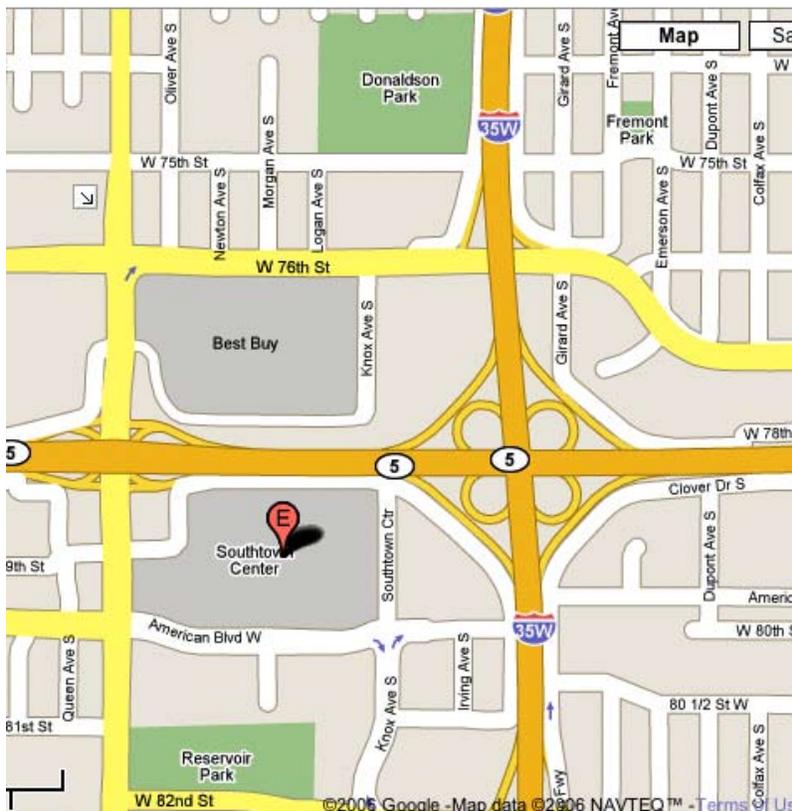
Cold beverages will be provided, and we will then proceed to Roger Koopmans' in Faribault for a leisurely look at the gardens and a fine catered meal featuring chicken and all the accompaniments. The bus will return to Southtown Center about 7:00 PM.

This promises to be a fine afternoon of wonderful gar-

den viewing and great fellowship, and lovely weather has been ordered for the day. Leroy's and Mary's gardens have never been on tour before, and Roger no doubt will have some interesting new things to share with us.

Cost is \$20 per person, which covers beverages along the way, the bus ride and a full catered meal. There is bus seating for 47, so please, make your reservation early to ensure a spot. Please send your reservation form and payment to Denise Rust, 7933 Girard Ct. N., Brooklyn Park, MN 55444-2070 so that it reaches her no later than Friday, July 14.

Map to  
Southtown  
Center



**MGCM FLOWER, FOOD AND FOTO SHOW:**

**FEATURED FLOWER  
AND VEGETABLE**

Each year, the MGCM Flower, Food and Foto Show singles out a flower and vegetable category for special recognition. This year, the featured vegetable is the pepper, and the featured flower is a collection of plants.

Peppers have always been popular for Minnesota gardeners, and in 2006 we saw the introduction of two new AAS selections: Carmen and Mariachi. Over the past few years, we've seen many new and exciting varieties, from sweet bells in every color under the sun to striking ornamentals to hot peppers with fun names like Bulgarian Carrot, Peruvian Purple, Hot Lemon, and Tangerine Dream.

The FFF show schedule calls for 3 large peppers or 7 small peppers. Stems should be left on and trimmed to a uniform length. Peppers should be wiped clean but not washed or scrubbed. When selecting specimens, lack of obvious flaws and uniformity of size,



shape and color are important.

For the featured flower in 2006, we're choosing a collection of potted plants instead of a single type of flower. Container gardening is very popular, and even those of us who don't have big gardens generally have space for a container or two.

This year, the winning entry will be selected from entries in three classes from the FFF Show schedule:

Section E (Potted plants), Class 28: Collection of three or more cacti or succulents, either one plant per pot or all in one container.

Section E, Class 29: Collection of three or more foliage or flowering plants, one plant per container.

Section E, Class 30: Collection of three or more foliage or flowering plants, all in one container.

These container collections are fun to put together and make a nice addition to the show. If you have something that's looking good this year, please bring it on in for the show.

If you have any questions about the FFF, please don't hesitate to call Mary Maynard, committee chair, at 952-926-7506. See you at the show!



*(cont. from page 5)*

to the stakes, as they will tend to break off in a storm. Of course, for first year seedlings, only one spike is produced and only one stake is used.

**CARE AFTER BLOOMING.** In the more northern areas, the method of cutting back the plants after flowering is important. Where I grew up in central Indiana, delphs regularly flowered well a second time in the fall and still lived through the following winter. However, in northern areas, if plants are cut back short after flowering, they try to send up new shoots to flower again, and do not get hardened off for the winter. Most of them will then not survive the winter. Rather than have an insignificant autumn flowering, I would prefer to have the plants survive the winter and live for several years. When I gardened in Golden Valley, MN, I often had delphs survive for 10 years.

For the above reasons, after flowering I think it best to cut the bloom spike just below the bottom florets of the spike, leaving a good portion of the spike and lateral flowers. The lateral flowers will provide a few more weeks of bloom, and the laterals are nice for flower arrangements. Then, after a good frost, the stalks are cut back to about 8 inches as the garden is tidied for winter.

**WINTER COVER.** This is not easy to recommend, since Minnesota and northern winters may vary so much in severity. Sometimes, there may be an open and very cold winter, with little snow and frost four feet below the surface. Other years, there may be ample snow cover, or sometimes a lot of snow with a wet damp spring. Obviously, if there is little or no snow cover, a few inches of covering with straw or hay will be desirable. On the other hand, if good cover is used, and there is a lot of snow and a lingering

wet spring, there is danger the plant crowns may rot.

I believe it is probably safest to use a light covering of straw, leaves or marsh hay, applied after the ground freezes in the autumn. A good loose and well drained soil also helps alleviate damage from severe cold as well as spring rotting. If gardeners have a successful method of cover for other perennials, I would recommend the same for the delphiniums.

**PROPAGATION.** It is fun to propagate cuttings from choice plants. The procedure is not always successful, but the Delphinium society has booklets which explain the various methods used to root cuttings. The cuttings need to be taken when they are about 3-4 inches high, and cut with a sharp knife right next to the crown. Before doing so, the soil needs to be removed around the top of the plant to expose the area where the shoots emerge from the crown. Some people have success taking "eye" cuttings which are only about an inch long. There are various methods for rooting the cuttings, but the simplest in my experience is to place them in a glass jar of water and keep them in a sunny window until roots emerge.

Delphiniums can be a very pleasing accent for the flower border, and may be readily and economically grown from seed, with the best seed coming from the Society noted above.



# Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

## Inside

<b>Page 1,8,9</b>	<b>Garden Tours</b>
<b>Page 2</b>	<b>Word from Prez</b>
<b>Page 3</b>	<b>Editors Note</b>
<b>Page 3</b>	<b>Meet the Board</b>
<b>Page 4,5,11</b>	<b>Delphiniums</b>
<b>Page 6-7</b>	<b>June Meeting</b>
<b>Page 7</b>	<b>Kay Wolfe art showing</b>
<b>Page 10</b>	<b>FFF Flower and Vegie</b>

### Club Officers:

**President: Kristine Deters**  
1736 Lexington Ave. S., Mendota Heights  
**Vice President: Margaret Landry**  
3542 40th Ave. S., Minneapolis  
**Recording Secretary: Denise Rust**  
7933 Girard Court, Brooklyn Park  
**Membership Secretary: Sharla Aaseng**  
1025 20th Ave. S.E., Minneapolis  
**Treasurer: LeRoy Cech**  
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**Past President: David McKeen**  
2834 Vernon Ave. S., St. Louis Park

### Directors:

**Elaine Spiegel**  
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**Elizabeth Hamilton**  
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**Don Trocke**  
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## The Garden Spray

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**First Class Mail**

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