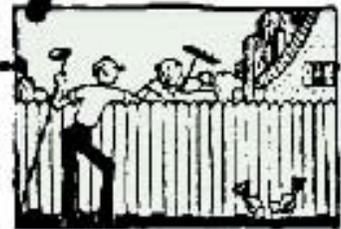




Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc
2009, Volume 67, Number 06



JUNE SPEAKER
LOU GERTEN

Our June speakers will be brothers Lou and Glen Gerten, owners of Gertens Nursery in Inver Grove Heights. They will both be discussing the best perennials for 2008 and the promising new perennials for 2009. They will be bringing plants with them to the presentation.

Gertens Nursery started in 1934 when Frank Gerten opened a small truck farm on their property in South St. Paul. He sold the produce he grew on his land to local residents. Frank eventually handed over this small company to his two sons, Bob and Jerry, who grew the business into a 12,000 square feet company and greenhouse.

In 1989, the third generation of Gertens became primary owners; Bob Gertens two sons Lewis and Glen, as well as brother-in-law Gino Pitera, took over the business. In 1996, Gertens expanded from 12,000 square feet of retail to 40,000, making it one of the largest garden centers in the state.

Larry Larson

Tuesday June 8th, 2009

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

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: Rusty Ramblings

by Denise Rust

I'm having a lot of trouble getting started on my serious planting for the season; the plants I got at the auction have not yet been put in the ground, I have not started my pot combinations and the weeds seem to be winning for the time being. I normally don't get serious until after preschool lets out for the summer; I've been out a week and still not feeling motivated. It seems to be a combination of "interesting" weather, too many other projects, extra hours at my other job, and weekend travels. I resolve to do better after Memorial Day. I know I am not alone; I was at someone's house last night and that individual has just as many flats waiting to be planted.

That being said, I hope I am done playing what I call "pick up sticks" for awhile; the wind of the last two days has dropped a lot of small branches that I've been trying to keep cleaned up. The up side of the wind is that it has blown down a lot of unopened pods from our cottonwood tree, which will make for a lot less of the white stuff later.

Well, one more regular meeting before the summer changeup; I hope you will try to come out for both an interesting program and to compare notes with your fellow garden enthusiasts. After the June meeting, look for a club tour in July (tentative date Saturday the 18th) and the FFF show at the Arboretum August 15-16.

Make some plans to get out to some great gardens

this summer as well. I am currently scheduling summer activities for my Curves red hat group and we are planning a trip to Lyndale Park, a drive to Red Wing (they have the best hanging baskets!) and a progressive garden party. I also resolve to get out to a few garden centers that I have never visited before. I don't want to regret what I didn't get around to doing over the summer come September, when life gets extra busy again; I want to be glad at what I did experience.



A Note from the Editor

Mary Maynard

Today, May 21, it is 30 degrees cooler than it was yesterday. I think my poor plants, waiting patiently on the patio, are wondering what will happen to them next.

In this issue, we're taking a look back at a few things. We are finally publishing the program notes from our March meeting. Andy sent them to me on time, and I forgot them. I plead insanity, plus being in a rush to go on vacation. And we're taking one last look at the fundraising tea that Kay Wolfe, Sharla Aaseng, Mollie Dean and Tina Scott hosted earlier this year. Those of us who were able to attend had a wonderful time. And, we're looking back at the gardening career of a longtime member who left us last month.

At the same time, gardeners are always looking forward -- to the time that the soil will be warm enough to put the dahlias and tomatoes in; to the next time it rains (if ever -- I'm beginning to wonder if succulents are the way to go),;to lilac season, and iris season, and peony season; to the first roses; to the first tomatoes; all the way to the first frost. We are looking forward to our June program and getting to meet with our friends from Gertens again. I am looking forward to getting seventeen flats of plants into the ground, so please forgive me if this note is brief!



Duane Johnson Obituary

by Mary Maynard



Duane Johnson, MGCM member since 1982 passed away on April 30. Duane was an Eagle Scout, a Master Gardener, a certified MSHS judge, a long-time Special Education teacher in Minneapolis elementary schools, an ardent University of Minnesota sports fan. He was also president of MGCM in 1989 -- the year that I joined the club as the second woman member. I remember Duane distinctly from those early days. I remember that he always took pride in the fact that he was president when the first woman joined the club.

(“What about the second woman?” I often wondered, but I guess that’s beside the point.) Duane stayed active in club activities for as long as he could before Alzheimers took him away from us. I know that Jan kept him up to date with club activities and brought each edition of the Spray to him when he could no longer come to meetings.

My favorite memories of Duane are from the days that he and Mel Anderson were co-chairs of the FFF Show Committee. I believe Duane and Mel coined the “FFF” term (for Flower, Food and Foto) when we added photography to the show. Duane and Mel presided over some of the most memorable committee meetings that I’ve ever attended. On the surface, the meetings seemed so chaotic that I couldn’t figure out

where we were supposed to be on the agenda that Mel prepared so carefully and from which Duane departed so cheerfully. But at the end of the meeting, we had all the arrangements worked out, and the FFF show went off without a hitch.

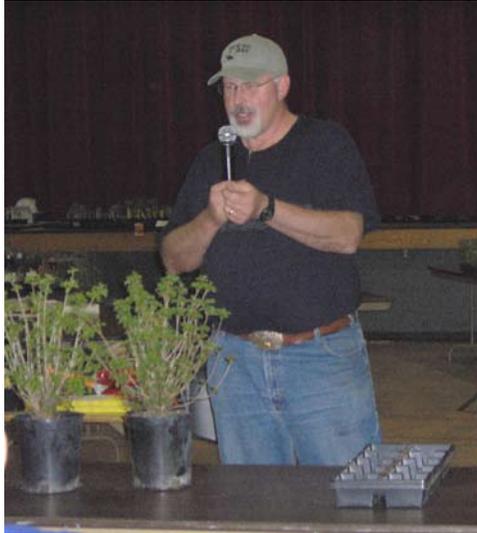
Duane and Mel often worked together as judges. They judged the MSHS Show at the State Fair, and did quite a bit of 4H judging. I’ve often wished I could have listened in on their judging sessions. They were a unique team.

We are sorry to lose a 27-year member who served the club in so many ways. We are glad that his final illness was blessedly brief. We extend our thoughts and prayers to Jan and the rest of the Johnson family, and we look forward to seeing Jan at the next club meeting.

At last month’s plant sale, I bought a couple of ‘Purple Dome’ asters that came from Duane and Jan’s garden. I will think of Duane when I plant them in my own garden.



Plant Sale Photos



Auctioneer Doug



Howard checking the prizes



FFF Featured Flower: Cosmos

Heirloom tomatoes and Cosmos will be getting special focus at the FFF Show this year. We heard earlier about heirloom tomatoes in Bob Livingston's excellent article in the March Spray. Cosmos are an easy-to-grow annual. There are about 20 different Cosmos species, but the two that we see most in cultivation are *Cosmos bipinnatus* (most notably the old-fashioned 'Sensation' series) and *Cosmos sulphureus*, which are generally orange and yellow. Both are attractive to butterflies and bloom throughout the summer, especially if dead-headed occasionally. They are also adaptable to drier conditions.



For some gardeners, *Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Sensation', which grows 3-4 feet tall, is too large. Recently, the shorter *C. bipinnatus* 'Sonata' series has come on the market. 'Sonata' fits in nicely in our small urban plots. There are also interesting variations to the basic bipinnatis flower form. 'Seashells' features slightly rolled petals, and 'Psyche' has double flowers.

Cosmos sulphureus are very striking in the garden. The recent 'Cosmic' series is a little more compact than some of the earlier varieties, but they are all very colorful, and not just in the ordinary style.

All Cosmos make great cut flowers. Try a few, and bring them to the FFF Show. According to this year's FFF Show Schedule (link: <http://minneapolisgardenclub.org/Show%20Sked%202009.pdf>), we need three blooms for *Cosmos binnatus* entries, and one spray for *Cosmos sulphureous* entries. If you have any questions about how to show any flowers or vegetables at the FFF show, let me know and I'll be more than happy to provide free advice!

FFF Show Schedule available on MGCM Website

The Flower and Vegetable portion of the FFF Show is going electronic! Unlike previous years, we are not automatically sending paper copies of the FFF Show Schedule to all members. It is available on our website at <http://minneapolisgardenclub.org/Show%20Sked%202009.pdf>. We have printed a limited number of paper schedules for those who'd like one. If you'd like a paper copy mailed to you, please call or email Mary Maynard at 952-926-7506 or maynard4375@yahoo.com.



Afternoon Tea at Kay's

By Lynda Carlson

By now some of you may have heard the “buzz” about the exquisite afternoon tea hosted by Kay Wolfe, Sharla Aaseng, Mollie Dean, and Tina Scott—all of Perennial Trial Garden fame. We may now add gracious purveyors of genteel culinary events to their resumes along with their horticultural expertise. Gary, Kay's husband, (always the loyal MGCM “Auxiliary” member) also contributed his considerable chef's talents to the success of the event.

Below is the text of a thank-you note written by yours truly expressing gratitude for the merry Sunday afternoon festivities.

March 19, 2009

Dear Kay, Mollie, Sharla, Tina and Gary:

Thank you all for the sumptuous tea on Sunday. The event rivaled and in many ways surpassed my birthday afternoon tea at The Savoy Hotel in London. The food and its presentation was extraordinary. The lovely linens, antique silver, china and crystal were straight from the pages of a Jane Austen novel.

My tea partners were perfectly delightful. I was not acquainted with Raja and Jack Kolb and soon discovered they were delightful and had lots of garden club history and other experiences to share. Mary Maynard is one of my MGCM faves, and my dear friend, Judy, fit right in with the gardening and tea crowd.

Special thanks to Tina for keeping the port and white wine flowing and to Gary always the faithful good sport, representing the MGCM Auxiliary.

Many thanks again and congratulations on staging a party worthy of The Queen herself!

*Sincerely,
Lynda*

March MGCM Program Notes

By Andy Marlow



Rain gardens not only make beautiful gardens, but they also help control run-off and pollution in urban and suburban environments. That was the message of Becky Rice, Executive Director of Metro Blooms and the speaker at the March MGCM dinner meeting.

Metro Blooms grew out of what began as Blooming Boulevards in Minneapolis. And they still carry on some of the same activities that Blooming Boulevards did, such as presenting awards to outstanding gardens – only now the awards are metro-wide. Becky showed photos of some of the 2007 award winners.

Since 2005 one of Metro Blooms prominent activities has been promoting rain gardens, and giving citizens the tools and resources to build their own rain gardens. The principal reason to have a rain garden, according to Becky, is to control run-off. In a natural environment with no man-made structures only about 10% of precipitation becomes surface run-off and the rest infiltrates the soil to provide moisture for plants and to recharge the water table.

In built-up environments the surface run-off, which can carry pollutants such as fertilizer, pet waste, petroleum, eroded soil and yard waste, make be as high as 55% of the total precipitation. She said a typical city lot and house produce almost 5,000 gallons of polluted run-off from a 1” rainfall, all of which finds its way into our rivers, lakes and streams. In fact, properties are designed to shed water so as not to flood your basement.

So rain gardens are built to catch the first inch or so of run-off and cause it to infiltrate the soil. The pollutants are trapped in the rain garden and don't make it to our public waters. After the first inch of rain the vast majority of the pollutants have been washed away. To be effective a rain garden should be located near downspouts, driveways and sump pump outlets, and a minimum of 10-20 feet down slope from the house's foundation.

Becky says bed depth is more important than the area of the bed. Six to nine inches is usually deep enough with sloped sides. Average area is about 6' X 8'. And, of course, it should be integrated into the landscape. Dig the bed and do a percolation test to make sure your rain garden bed will drain completely in 24 hours. If the soil has high clay content double dig or rototill to loosen the soil at the bottom of the rain garden and amend with compost or peat moss. Make sure the down slope edge of the garden will catch and hold or slow the release of the run-off.

A rain garden is a good place to use native plants. They will provide habitat for wildlife and their deep roots (particularly prairie plants) will hold the soil better and provide a path for water infiltration. The rain garden can be in sun or shade, just choose the appropriate plant material.

Some other things Becky suggested to capture or slow run off:

- Σ Redirect your downspouts so they go into an underground drain field
- Σ Use a water barrel to capture water for use on other

(cont. on page 9)



(cont. from page 8)

garden beds

Σ Use permeable pavers rather than impermeable paving materials like asphalt or concrete

Σ Plant native plants

Burnsville tested the rain garden concept in a neighborhood to capture street run-off. They found 80% less run-off in the areas with rain gardens than in areas without them.

Metro Blooms offers two levels of rain garden workshops: One to acquaint homeowners with the rain garden concept and a second to help them design their own rain garden. They even offer onsite consultations.

To date Metro Blooms has generated just under 1600 rain gardens in the metro area that have been installed by participants in the workshops or by friends, neighbors and family members of those participants.



JACK KOLBS GARDEN



The Kolb's Garden: Jack and Rajah Kolb may have moved to a smaller place, but clearly Jack has not given up gardening

New Member Spotlight

New member: Judy Brooke

4728 Temple Road, Minnetonka, MN 55345

H 952.944.7925

W 952.944.8145

jbrooke-co@msn.com



TREASURER REPORT

CD 5,662.00

Checking 7,402.00

Designated funds

 Park garden 1,245.00

 Scholarships 910.00

Working balance 5,247.00

Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event
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Aug 15-16th		FFF Show
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Sept.		Selecting Photographs for a National Gardening Publication with Andy Marlow and The Hosta Journal.
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LHC = Lake Harriet Church (4901 Chowen Ave. S., Minneapolis)

WLC = Westwood Lutheran Church



Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

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Club Officers:

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12070 48th Ave. N., Plymouth
Recording Secretary: Judy Berglund
Membership Secretary: Sharla Aaseng
1025 20th Ave. S.E., Minneapolis
Treasurer: David McKeen
2834 Vernon Ave. S., St. Louis Park
Past President: Larry Larson
15225 Wild Wings, Minnetonka

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The Garden Spray is published monthly by the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc. for its members. The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis is a not-for-profit, equal opportunity organization.

Return To:

The Garden Spray

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First Class Mail

June
2009