



# The Garden Spray

Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc  
2007, Volume 65, Number 11



## *Pine and Poinsettias Holiday Party*

**Tuesday, December 4, 2007**  
at 5:30 p.m.

*Lake Harriet Methodist Church*  
Dinner at approximately 6:40 p.m.  
Entertainment by Bob Ekstrand, guitar  
and Dan Newton, accordion

*The evening begins with social hour and  
bidding on items brought for the silent  
auction.*

*Please bring items in the morning, before  
5 p.m for set up or contact Elaine Spiegel,  
952-927-9539 or [elspiegs@comcast.net](mailto:elspiegs@comcast.net).  
For suggestions see page 5.*

*Party Reservation Form on page 5 due by  
November 30th.*





# Thoughts from the Prez

by Margaret Landry

Greetings!

**Bees.** When I was a kid, I loved to catch a bee in my hands and see what it would do. The honeybees didn't sting me! I didn't know it then, but honeybees die after stinging, so they reserve that action for extreme situations. Marla Spivak is a friend of mine and a University of Minnesota entomology professor specializing in bees. I can understand Marla's fascination with bees -- their ability to fly seems like an impossibility, they're cute (for insects!), they're social, and they're fun (for insects) -- especially the buzzing which reminds me of lazy summer days. It has probably been more than 10 years since she told me about bee breeding and selecting for the trait of throwing out infested larvae, to maintain a hygienic hive. Hence, the bees Marla has been breeding are known as Minnesota Hygienic.

In the last couple of years, news reports have brought the threats to honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) populations into the spotlight. Both Northern Gardener and Fine Gardening have recently published articles on bee problems. In case you've missed the threats to bees:

- varroa destructor mites: these parasites carry a number of viral diseases harmful to bees. Infestations of these mites have contributed heavily to the decrease in bee colony populations.
- tracheal mites: tracheal mites are parasites that live in the trachea of the bee and drink its bodily fluids. These are less of a problem now than they were a few years ago.
- pesticides: some pesticides are extremely toxic to bees, which may not be obvious on the label. Pesti-

cide use can have the unintentional outcome of creating pesticide-resistant mites.

- loss of habitat: we've destroyed a lot of habitat and moved to monoculture, and in cities we've created a wasteland of grass which doesn't support bees.

- Colony Collapse Disorder: whole colonies of bees disappear rapidly for no apparent reason.

Honeybees do a lot more than produce honey; they're involved in pollinating almost 1/3 of our food supply including a number of vegetables and fruits, as well as the food supply of some of the animals we eat. To do our part to help maintain bee health, we can avoid pesticides, and plant a variety of plants including fruits, vegetables and flowers, especially native species. I'm preaching to the choir again!

**MGCM.** Hmmm. Our garden club shares some traits with a beehive -- it's social and it's productive. Each member has a role to play, and each committee organizes itself to get its work done (or is it fun?). No-one in particular is in charge, and yet the club does an amazing job of service, social activities, promotion of horticulture, educational programs, and raising money for scholarships. It's busy like a hive!

Thanks for all of the good work/fun this year! I hope you can make it to our holiday party.

## CLUB FINANCIALS

As of 10-16-07  
Checking 3926.54  
Cash 100.00  
CD 5662.59



## *A Note from the Editor*

Talking about the weather has always been a convenient way of making small talk, even when there is nothing particularly remarkable to speak of. But this summer has lent quite a few exclamation points to those discussions. “Will it ever rain!?” we asked daily through early August. “Have you ever seen so much rain!?” we have asked ourselves the last couple months.

I enjoyed reading Margaret’s Prez Thoughts this month. I relate to her comparing the Garden Club to a bee hive. So much gets done in the club, a holiday party gets organized, the perennial garden is augmented and maintained, and this month we have both an interesting speaker, Steven Kelley from Kelley and Kelley nurseries, and Larry Larson has organized a trip to Gertens to see their massive pointsettia production.

Thanks to everyone who lends a hand to organizing, keeping track and making things better - we couldn’t do it without you!



Late summer light in my garden



## Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event
November 13th	LHC	Steve Kelley
November 17th		Tour of Gertens
December 4th	LHC	Holiday Party

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

WLC = Westwood Lutheran Church

### November Speaker: Steve Kelley - Kelley and Kelley Nursery

Steve Kelley, owner of Kelley and Kelley garden center in Long Lake, will discuss garden design at our November meeting. Kelley, whose garden center specializes in perennials and hostas, spoke to our garden club ten years ago, but not about garden design. His garden center was started by his grand parents in 1922 and still exists on his family's homestead.

(cont. on page 9)

## November Dinner Meeting: Tuesday November 13th, 2007

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



***Pine and Poinsettia Holiday Party***  
***December 4, 2007 at 5:30 p.m***

Please complete the following reservation form and mail to SHARLA AASENG,  
1025 20TH AVE. S.E., MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55414-2511, BY NOVEMBER 30, 2007

NAME _____
NUMBER OF GUESTS _____
TOTAL CHECK ENCLOSED (\$20 PER PERSON) _____
DESCRIPTION OF ITEM(S)* BEING SUBMITTED FOR SILENT AUCTION:
Title _____
Size (space required for display) _____
Minimum Bid _____
Submitter _____

IF YOU NEED SUGGESTIONS, think of anything someone might want, such as movie, theater, opera, sporting event tickets, hotel reservations, gift certificate for a garden center, book store, restaurant etc., home baked goods, home made craft items, tools, plants, note card sets, offer of time for special garden consulting, offer to create an item or any work of art, offer of teaching a craft, membership in a specialty garden club.



## MGCM's Efforts Acknowledged in Lyndale Park

By Kay Wolfe

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation board has installed a bronze plaque in the Lyndale Park Trial Garden that recognizes the donations of MGCM. The newly mounted plaque is on a stone at the east end of the Perennial Trial and Border Gardens. The plaque reads: "Perennial Trial & Border Garden; Donated, Designed & Maintained by the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis; Supporting Lyndale Park since 1952. In celebration of gardeners past, present, and future."

The stone is located close to a covered Lucite box containing brochure "guides" to two areas of the park, the Perennial and Annual and Trial Gardens, and the park's Arboretum. In these brochures, the history of MGCM's donations to the park are outlined. "In 1952, two hundred crabapples were planted ..... by the MGCM." This planting celebrated the tenth anniversary of the club. Another story reads: "On June 14, 1981 a severe tornado struck the Lake Harriet area without warning. The stormwinds uprooted and twisted ninety trees in the Arboretum. The MGCM offered to assist with a new design for the Arboretum

and funds for planting. MGCM member Ray Marshall, a landscape architect, created the new plan and organized the club's efforts."

Our present Lyndale Park Garden committee is



*Perennial garden in bloom*



*New plaque in the garden*

carrying on MGCM's efforts of donating to Lyndale Park. The Perennial Trial Garden is one of five sites in Minnesota where perennials are evaluated for winter hardiness. The MGCM Border Garden backs the Trial Bed, and is being planted with shrubs, perennials and ornamental grasses that club donations have funded. The committee is designing this garden to display new cultivars of low maintenance, hardy plants that homeowners can dependably plant in their own yards. The brochure guides explain these projects and also list MGCM's website. Take a walk at Lyndale Park—the Mammoth Mums introduced by the University of MN are in the front of the border and are still in bloom!



## MY 2007 BOULEVARD GARDEN

By Margaret Hibberd

One of my pleasant gardening surprises of the hot, dry summer was the success of and nice compliments about my new boulevard garden experiment. Because we live on Roselawn, west of Fairview in Falcon Heights, hundreds of people walk, bike, run or drive by each day. Every time I'm out tending to it, people stop and comment, including Falcon Heights resident, MGCM member and daily walker by my house, Peter Olin. The picture is the garden in early August.

I turned garden plans into action in May by hiring Jason Rathe's crew to prepare the 46' x 40" bed between the curb and asphalt sidewalk and transplanting my cannas and dahlias and some big annuals. The 'Rose Queen' Cleome, Nicotiana sylvestris, and red selection of castor bean flew out of the ground and started blooming in a few weeks. Then people who thought the variegated leaves of the cannas were enough were amazed that they also bloomed. When the white Datura's bloomed, people thought they were special. I hung a laminated plant list on the mailbox and learned something when my Master Gardener cousin from L.A. pointed out that the castor bean (*Ricinus*) is the source of the ricin poison. I had only added the fact that it is poisonous.

As the summer became hotter and drier, there was some plant suffering despite weekly use of the soaker hose and 18 gallons of water once or twice per week beyond that. I didn't believe we got full sun plus on the boulevard until I saw the 10-12 hours each day. 5 of the 6 potentially 36" tall 'Whopper Lighthouse' salvia dried up at about 10". The dahlias all looked



*Boulevard garden in August*

like stunted succulents with thick leaves and a few dry flowers until the rain started in mid-August and now in September all are blooming. The coleus I chose also needed it cooler and wetter. The surviving winners were the heat and somewhat drought tolerant, so it was really the year of the cleome, castor bean, Nicotiana and best of all, the canna, answering the question of, do we have climate changes and can the tropicals grow well here? The picture shows the redder than usual 'Tropicana' canna at the right and the 'Cleopatra' with yellow and red flowers farther down and finally, barely visible, the yellow and green 'Pretoria'. As of Sept. 24 most things were still blooming well, so I deem this a success.

(cont. on page 8)



(cont. from page 7)

Fortunately I received really good advice on boulevard garden preparation. At Tangletown they suggested removing the sod, digging out an additional 3” and then replacing that with a good soil mix. Jason pointed out that it should also be concave so water does not run off. In the 2 weeks before the sod was removed, I sprayed it twice with Round-up, and the weeds and grass were good and dead. The crew replaced sod and dirt under it with a mixture of 50-50 composted manure and compost. Then I tilled it with my Mantis tiller to get some mixing of the layer below. The end of May, I transplanted, added bulb food, encapsulated fertilizer, a little Preen, and shredded leaf mulch. Beyond watering, maintenance was pretty low with only a little weeding of purslane and crabgrass, deadheading, and finally a little staking after wind and hard rains. I had no insect and disease problems. One last task after clean-up will be to somehow cover the ground to protect it from the sand and salt.



*Boulevard garden - early on*

MGCM members will probably not find my plants so amazing, but the public in my neighborhood certainly did – and they liked the big things. And I learned to choose plants that also look good and bloom for a long time. I’m already thinking of next year which involves overwintering the blood banana that I bought from Chuck Levine that’s been growing in a hot sunny spot by my garage. Fortunately the Sept/Oct 2007 issue of Garden Gate magazine tells how to do this. And what about some perennials...



## Steve Kelley - cont.

(cont. from page 4)

“Fall is a great time to assess our garden’s merits,” Kelley said. “What were you really happy with; what were its weaknesses? How can that little shady garden by the terrace be brought out of the doldrums? How about the pots near the front door? How can they be jazzed up so they look more inviting?”

Half the fun of gardening comes from experimenting with colors, combinations and forms, Kelley said. “But I think we can be happier and more content in our gardens if we understand and follow some rudimentary principles of design.”

Kelley will focus on these principles in his presentation. “While I will stress the importance of these building blocks, I will also emphasize the need to make the garden one’s own,” he said. “This can be done by studying how others have successfully used garden design principles and then incorporating them into your own approach, creating a style all your own.”

MGCM Renewal time!!!!

Thank you to all of you who have so promptly renewed your MGCM membership for 2008. If you have not yet done it, please do soon! You can download the renewal information from the website and mail or email it to me.

Thanks all, Sharla Aaseng



Sharla Aaseng with new member Reyna Sharpe



## **Fields of Pointsettias: Gerten's Field Trip November 17th**

The Men's Garden Club will be traveling to Gerten's Garden Center in Inver Grove Heights on Saturday, November 17 for an exclusive look at more than 50,000 poinsettias grown by Gertens. Owner Lou Gerten will give us this tour of his poinsettia wonderland and discuss growing these colorful holiday flowers in his greenhouses.

Everyone who plans to attend this field trip should meet at the front door of Gertens between 11:15 and 11:30 a.m. on November 17. All garden club members must drive themselves to Gertens or ride with a friend. No bus will be provided for this tour.

When the tour has been completed, we will go to Al Baker's restaurant in Eagan for lunch, probably around 1 p.m. A reservation has been made in Larry Larson's name.

Please call Larry at 952-949-9668 or email him at [daddu777@msn.com](mailto:daddu777@msn.com) to confirm you are attending this tour and lunch. It is important to know how many people will be attending this event in order to tell Lou Gerten how many people are coming to Gertens and how many people are going to Al Baker's for lunch.

The directions 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 Street East and turn left, go 1.3 miles to Blaine Avenue, turn left. Gertens is just ahead on Blaine Avenue, 5500 Glaine Avenue, Inver Grove Heights.

The directions to Al Baker's restaurant are as follows: From Gertens, turn right onto Upper 55th



*October Speaker -  
Steven Risan from Tonkadale*

Street East, go 1.3 miles to South Robert Trail and take the exit onto 494 West. Go 3.2 miles to I35E South (Albert Lea exit), go 2.7 miles to exit 97B, Yankee Doodle Rd, turn right on Yankee Doodles Rd (CR-28W), go .2 miles to Washington Drive, turn left on Washington Drive to the restaurant, 3434 Washington Drive, Eagan. It sounds difficult but it isn't!

See you there!  
Larry Larson



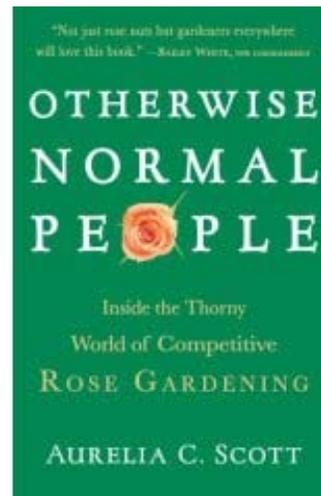
Otherwise Normal People: Inside the Thorny World of Competitive Rose Gardening,  
by Aurelia C. Scott.

Review by Mary Maynard

This is an affectionate look at some of the practices and personalities of the big-time rose exhibitors. Ms. Scott starts in her own neighborhood with Clarence Rhodes, who grows 200 hybrid teas in cut-off wheeled trash cans that he can wheel into the garage over the winter in Portland, Maine. Then she travels to California and points between to interview more prominent growers and exhibitors. And the Minnesota Tip gets a page or two with an interview with Lois Ann Helgeson in New Brighton, who grows 565 roses and buries most of them for winter protection.

Those of you who think Margaret Hibberd and I go to unusual lengths to invent transport mechanisms to bring flowers to the FFF Show should read this book for a look at the people who transport dozens of specimens across country to compete for big prizes (but no money, I don't think) in regional and national rose shows. I am amazed at the dedication of these folks. Growing the perfect rose is tough enough, but transporting it and staging it so that it is perfect when the judges come by is even tougher.

Some of our rose growers will probably recognize some of the folks covered in this book. For the rest of us who enjoy roses and the fun of exhibiting on a smaller scale, it's a look inside another world.





# Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

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### Club Officers:

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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**

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