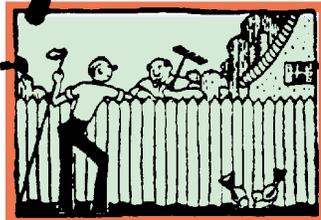




The Garden Spray



Bulletin of the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc
Affiliated with The Gardeners of America and the Minnesota State Horticultural Society
December, 2001, Volume 59, Number 12

Tuesday, December 4 Holiday Party

Social hour - 6:00 PM

Punch and Conversation

Dinner - 6:30 PM

A catered Turkey Dinner

Entertainment and awards - 7:30 PM

The South High Pop Singers

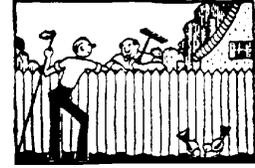
MGCM Yearly Awards

As is our tradition,
please bring nonperishable food items for the food shelf.
Attendance by reservation only



Future Club Events

January 8, 2002 ---Dinner meeting & program-



Editorial Enticements

By Chuck Carlson
Editor

December is the month for gifts. I hope you receive the gifts you want. There are many gifts one could wish for and they range from peace to good health to some expensive material gift. But, I think MGCM members would also list that gardens are one of the better gifts. Not only is it a gift to the gardener, it can be a gift to the people who partake in its bounty either as eye candy or as a treat for the palate.

There are many quotes that indicate gardens or gardening is truly a gift. Sheryl Landon says, "Gardening is a self-prescribed preventative medicine, good for all ills". Whereas, Marie Curie expressed her desire by the quote, "More and more I feel the need for a house with a garden." Henry Van Dyke also gets in the act where he brings in a neighbor's garden, "One should learn to enjoy the neighbor's garden, however small; the roses straggling over the fence, the scent of lilacs across the road". Luther Burbank also must have thought gardens were a gift for he once wrote 'Flowers are the sunshine, food and Medicine for the soul'. As an end to this I will close on two quotes. First one by Ralph Waldo Emerson "Flowers and fruits are always fit presents", and finally one by Jamie Jobb "The best things that come out of any garden are gifts for other people".

The above quotes were found in a book titled *The Gardener's Guide to Life*, a gift given to me by our President Carole Ann. This may have been preaching to the choir since I know you all love gardening but, this is what popped into my mind for

the December editorial.

This is the last editorial for 2001 so I will close with this, Merry Christmas and remember the reason for the season.

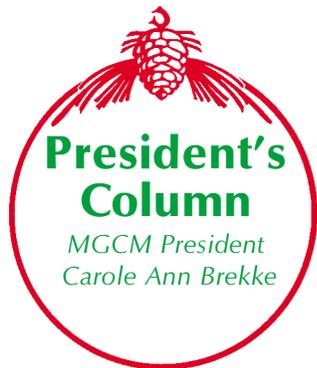


MGCM Scholarships

By Kent Petterson

For the year 2001, the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis awarded four \$1,000.00 academic scholarships to students of Horticulture. The winners were chosen in July by club committee members Kent Petterson, Dave Johnson of Golden Valley, Patti Reynolds, Andy Marlow and Merle Pulley. These scholarships are the latest in a total of nineteen awards over the past ten years totaling \$29,000.00. Congratulations are extended to the entire club membership for their ongoing support of this program. The committee extends it's thanks to the tour committee for their dedicated work on the biennial tours. The success of our biennial tours has assured funding for the awards established as a club gift to the community during the club's 50th Anniversary.

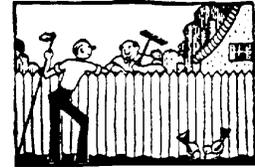
The four recipients, all students at the University Of Minnesota, were Susan Wilkins of Minneapolis a senior in Landscape Design/Ecology and a repeat winner from last year, Jonah Reyes of Lakefield, Minnesota, a Junior in Environmental Horticulture/Landscape Design, Lisa van Dyke of Minneapolis, a sophomore in Landscape Design/Horticultural Science, and Kyla Zaro-Moore of Minneapolis, a Freshman in Community Gardening.



It was the fall of 1999 when Mary Maynard called to ask if I would be willing to be Vice President the year 2000, and President in 2001. "Are you sure the club wants a short lady President the year we host the National Convention?, was my reaction. And, does that mean I have to write an article, with a catchy title, every month?"

The Convention was a great success, Chuck has received twelve President's Columns and my year as your President is soon over. Thank you for giving me the opportunity! When I look back. I have the fondest memories of our club and all of you. The time and energy necessary to be President is just like gardening. We reap what we sow and I have had a great harvest. I have learned much about the history and workings that hold MCGM together. I was put in positions I never could have imagined several years ago and grew in the experience. Serving on the Board gave me a much closer look at the hard working and dedicated members we have. Ritchie tried his best to keep me within Roberts Rules. Howard kept me informed and up on all the financial and tax stuff. I am so glad that the President is never asked to take the minutes of our meetings when Margaret has been gone. Jackie has been cheerful and upbeat in the midst of her health, and I marvel at it.

Warren is almost finished with his Vice Presidential duties of Program and

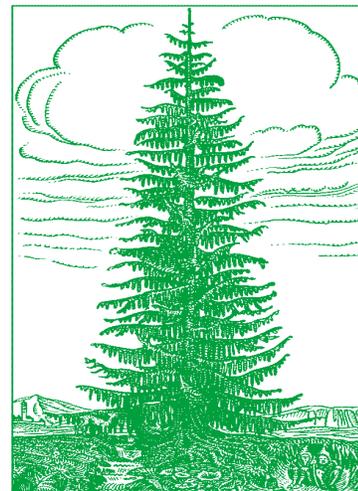


will be trying on my shoes...I hope they fit well! I value the input Dave, Tim and Wayne have given as Directors (I also enjoyed their wives desserts!).

I sincerely appreciate the shared plants, challenges, insights, laughter, encouragement and help everyone has given me this year. I am a richer person because of your friendships.

My 1959 Webster's Dictionary defines memory as: the power of the mind by which it retains the knowledge of previous occurrences, facts, thoughts, etc. and recalls them and also that which is remembered. To the entire Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, "Thanks for the memories!"

If I am missing
check my garden!
Carole Ann
December 2001



Editors note: Cicero said, "A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all other virtues." Carole Ann deserves all of our thanks for her three year committment. I hope she didn't forget she is now the past president. I will give you my thanks and hope others will remember you also. Chuck



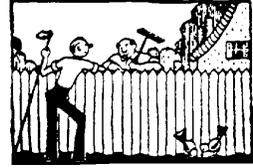
Last Month's Program

By Tim McCauley

This time of year is normally the start of my vacation away from the garden. Because of my habit of leaving too many projects undone 'til fall, I am usually burned out by the time the snow flies and am ready for a little rest. So it was with some surprise that I realized I had come down with a major case of spring fever after Debbie Lonnee's presentation on New and Unusual Perennials at the November meeting. With the unseasonably warm weather and the early arrival of the Thompson and Morgan seed catalog in my mailbox, it took about three slides of "I must have that in my garden" plants to put me right over the edge.

Debbie Lonnee is employed by Bailey's Nursery and tests many of the latest developments received from plant breeders all over the country. Not only were many of the plants she described grown in her South St. Paul garden (where she has a tendency to be skeptical about published hardiness zones), but the majority of the pictures were taken there as well. It was pointed out that not all of these plants will be available at every garden center. With the introduction of so many new plants every year and the reluctance of the gardening public to try anything different, it might require some searching at smaller specialty nurseries to find some of these plants.

Lonnee said gardeners want perennials that don't have to be hidden because of their boring or ugly foliage after their short bloom period is over. Recently,



plant breeders have been developing double-duty perennials that have interesting or colorful foliage to go along with what we want from these plants, guaranteed beautiful flowers year after year. The first part of her presentation focused on a group of these plants, most of which do best with an eastern exposure or a semi-shady location. I made particular notice of the following:

- **Aquilegia 'Lime Frost'** This particular Columbine has purple flowers to go along with silver variegated leaves. The variegation of the foliage actually helps camouflage leaf miner damage that is common to many Columbines. Comes true from seed.
- **Geranium 'Blue Sunrise'** Blue flowers and chartreuse foliage. Not tall and leggy like so many of the hardy geraniums.
- **Polemonium 'Brise 'd Anjou'** A beautiful green and white variety of the common Jacob's Ladder that is not tolerant of extreme heat.
- **Dicentra 'Gold Heart'** Pink flowered Bleeding Heart with striking gold foliage.
- **Campanula 'Dickson's Gold'** Think 'Blue Clips' with yellow foliage.
- **Brunnera 'Jack Frost'** When I first saw the slide of this plant I thought it was a Heuchera. Not so, it's a Brunnera with silver foliage. Ms. Lonnee's pick as the most exciting new plant in her garden this year.
- **Phlox paniculata 'Crème de Menthe'** We were shown several new variegated forms of phlox. This one has white edged foliage topped by pale pink flowers with a dark pink eye. Resistant to powdery mildew.

To complete the evening's program,
(Continued On Page 11)



Meeting Date: November 6, 2001
All board members present except
Wayne Engelman and Warren Nordley.

President's Report

Thank you letters were from Peter Olin of the Arboretum and Harold Pellet of the Landscape Plant Development Center for the \$300 donations the club gave each of these organizations as we had budgeted for 2001. These will be posted at the next dinner meeting.

Howard received an Arboretum membership to which we are entitled as a member club of the Arboretum. He will exchange this for the 10 daily entry passes that the board agreed we would rather have and can raffle these off. Also reported there was nothing new from the vice President except that the November meeting program by Debbie Lonnie is ready.

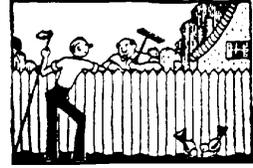
Other Reports

Secretary and Treasurer

These reports were given and approved. As part of the treasurers report, it was noted we received \$400 for the club's work at Valley Fair.

Membership

The Membership Secretary reported and the Board voted to accept into membership Elizabeth Hamilton and Karen Cain. Also reported that 84 renewals have been received. Seven have indicated they are not renewing. Jackie is making phone calls and has sent out second forms to



those not responding.

Calendars

198 calendars have been sold which is about on track for last year.

Perennial Garden

A response was received from Mary Lerman and several committee members will meet with her November 8.

Old Business

60th Anniversary Committee

Twelve people have signed up on the membership renewal form to work on the committee, so it looks like this will be a viable ad hoc committee for 2002.

Fine Gardening Discount

Nancy Bjerke has organized this and with 19 people participating thus far, they are getting a price of \$23.96 per year.

Holiday Party

Jan Johnson reported this committee is requesting a club subsidy to defray expenses, so they can reduce the cost. At \$20 they received comments that it is too expensive. Since it's too late to decide for this year, the Board will consider this next year.

MGCM Handbooks

Jackie reported we received the order and she has placed them in the new member packets and others are available as needed, especially to new board members.

Dinner Reservations

Lois Engelman has agreed to take reservations as part of Hospitality Committee.

New Business

Turkey Parade: The tradition of this beloved march at the Holiday Party will continue with some new twists.

Next Board Meeting

The November 27 meeting will be at home of either Carole Ann Brekke or Jackie Overom depending on the construction status at Carole Ann's home.



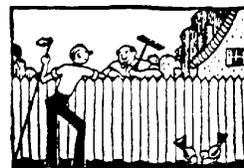
Green or Brown? Plants Do Their Work

For some of us, there comes an interesting time in life when we become dissatisfied with our careers. Doing psychotherapy for a number of years had kept up my skills, but to enjoy my work more, I decided to open my own practice in a wonderful new office.

On a warm September day soon after, I held an open house to celebrate my good fortune. In addition to trays of food and drink, green plants helped commemorate the occasion. Friends brought baskets of flowers, a terrarium and planters. One of the newcomers was a *Ficus Benjamina*, a fig tree which stood nearly five feet high.

This plant's penchant for dropping its leaves when moved was known to me, yet I was optimistic about its survival in the sunny office. In the coming weeks I watered my tree, adjusted the mini-blinds to regulate sunlight, and added plant food in mild doses. Each day I would clear away a handful of cast off leaves. Each day I would reassure myself that this was predictable and normal. Each day clients would comment on the tree's condition, as branch after branch lost leaves.

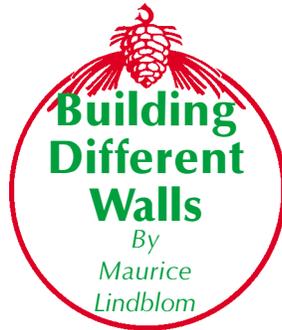
Waterings became more erratic as I reluctantly admitted to reality. Discouraged, I dragged the leafless tree by its pot, out of the office into the waiting room, on the first leg of the trip to the garbage bin downstairs.



After finishing a session the following morning, I entered the waiting room to notice a small torn-paper note anchored like a leaf to one of the branches. Outside it said "Peek." Inside it read, "Every time you smile you tickle someone's soul." After the next hour, I was surprised again to find the "Peek" note joined by another missive, this time a paper heart, painstakingly ripped into the familiar shape. Within a week, the tree was an object of art. It held bells, a teddy-bear mobile, a brass moon and star, a pink Thai ornament of yarn-wrapped toothpicks, and an Easter egg. Last to appear was a wide red ribbon—tied like a bow around the tree's trunk. This strange and wonderful blossoming had become the topic of entries and exits from the office each day.

As time passed the tree and its story became seeds for other growth. One young artist made presents for her sister in New York out of small branches, mailed across the country. Each meticulously decorated branch represented a childhood memory or words of encouragement to the younger sister starting college. In the same silent way, other 'trees' materialized, in the form of tree puzzles. I was soon to receive a wooden oak puzzle. Near Christmas came a forest green tree puzzle, housing three colorful gingerbread persons in its compact boughs. A third tiny puzzle held birds with open wings ready to soar. These puzzles became vehicles for making friends with a silent four-year old child who one day asked to do the 'trees'. The last tree, a star-topped spruce tree puzzle, came from a couple who had worked hard for a happier marriage.

Transforming a dead *Ficus* into a Christmas surprise, nature again has worked its magic.



Building Different Walls

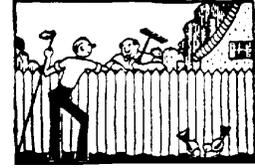
By
Maurice
Lindblom

As you may recall, in my October article I spoke of saving the sod I dug for another project in my yard. My ongoing project all summer was the completion of a series of retaining walls to curb a severe erosion problem on the slope just off my patio. There is a large ash tree right in the middle of the slope and many of its roots are exposed.

I wanted to control the erosion and also make that area available for plantings. It is mostly in the shade as you may surmise, and since I had never had a true shade garden, that possibility intrigued me.

I decided to build four walls going down the slope, all of them rather low so I wouldn't be getting into a major construction project. The first wall was built on a foundation of crushed rock that had been placed in a trench I dug. On top of the rock I placed two courses of "edgers" I got at Home Depot. These were 18" long of cast concrete, about as wide as a brick, but thicker. They had a bull nose on one end and the other end was concave, so they fit together very nicely.

Some root removal was needed, and my son-in-law helped me out here with



his axe. On top of the edgers I placed two courses of "wavy pavers" also from Home Depot. These looked like bricks, but were bigger and heavier and also were of cast concrete. Both the edgers and the pavers were in various shades of reddish black. All of this was dry wall construction, no mortar was used. I back filled behind the wall with topsoil to create a suitable planting area.

Since the line for the next wall was close to the trunk of the tree, I opted not to try to dig a trench for the base, but rather placed a double course of sod "bricks" as a base. These were pieces of sod I dug from other areas in the yard where I wanted to have gardens. They were not like the sod you can buy at a nursery in a roll. They were much thicker than that, hence the term "bricks". I dug them with a spade and each brick was 8" to 10" long. On top of the sod I laid a double course of the wavy pavers. This made for a somewhat less than even wall, but that only made it fit the site better.

Where did I get the idea for a sod wall? I was in Norway for 3 weeks this summer and while there (and before I left), I had read about the sod walls the Vikings had built. Some of which are still standing today, over 1000 years later!

The next two walls were built entirely of sod bricks. The base courses of sod were placed grass side down and the top course grass side up. The outside of the wall was faced off with sod, grass side out, placed at a 45 degree angle to the wall. Back fill of topsoil was used behind



(Continued on page 11)



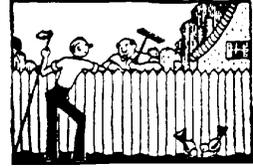
Gardening in Africa and Germany

By Don Morganweck

By coincidence Chuck's plea for Garden Spray articles appeared on my computer just a day or so after I arrived home from a trip to Africa and Germany. One suggestion was garden experiences you have had on a trip, So here goes.

While I was with my daughter, Jody and family in Kinshasa, Congo, it was nearing the end of the dry season. Jody has had good luck growing peanuts and sweet corn. But most of the other seeds brought from Minnesota have not done well. Again this time I was asked to bring seeds for some more experimenting. She was able to borrow a weird shaped, short handled hoe and we began digging into the dry, powdery soil. After planting some seeds, we discovered that there was no such thing as a sprinkling can available, but with a hammer and nail, I made small holes in the plastic top of a big can. We needed something like this order to gently water them at least three times a day in the mid 90 degree temperatures.

To our surprise in 48 hours, the White 'Profusion' Zinnias were sprouting, as well as marigolds. The following day the first sunflower was poking through the ground and also a few onions and snapdragons. Jody had already started watermelons inside the house, which we set out. Later we visited a very interesting nursery and she picked out a nice potted pink rose. The season is about to change from dry to wet and humid, so I'll be waiting for reports on the success of this

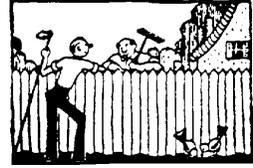


African garden.

On the way back to the U.S.A., I stopped for a visit of a few days with relatives in Dermbach, my father's home village in Germany. This was my first visit here since 12 years ago when this section was still East Germany. The improvements since then in the condition of the roads and the appearance of the homes and other buildings are very striking, but the gardens are what really grabbed my attention. When viewing the many, many small well-kept gardens, I see where the strong interest in gardening that runs in my father's family must have come from. Apparently it's a trait that has been passed on down to me and our daughters.

Houses are close together on small lots and there is seldom space for a lawn. I never saw a lawn mower, but nearly everybody has a garden and 'well-kept' is not an adequate term to describe them. I don't think a weed has been allowed to germinate for generations. When I arrived back home on October 8th, the frost had pretty much finished off our gardens, but in Dermbach, Germany they were in very good shape. Dahlias were outstanding, as well as mums and numerous other flowers. The beds were in most cases very artistically laid out with interesting combinations of plants with few things planted in straight rows as I tend to do so much. There were also many small vegetable gardens and in abundance were healthy clumps of strawberry plants ready to burst forth next spring. Walking around the village observing the little gardens and through the cherry orchards on the surrounding hills sides was one of the highlights of my visit to Dermbach.





**The 2002
MGCM
Board**

We wish all of you well in 2002;
And hope your endeavors to MGCM be true;
Plus we thank you for your service too.

“The spontaneous energies of the earth are a gift of nature, but they require the labors of man to direct their operation.” Thomas Jefferson



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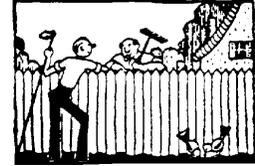
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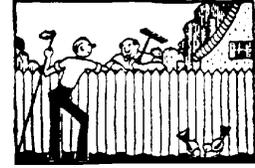
**The 2002
Proposed
Budget**



MGCM Proposed 2002 Operating Budget

Committee or Function	Income	Expense	Net
Beginning Bank Balance	\$1,200.00		\$1,200.00
Arbor Day		\$250.00	(\$250.00)
Awards & Trophies		\$400.00	(\$400.00)
Calendars	\$1,400.00	\$780.00	\$620.00
FFF		\$800.00	(\$800.00)
Garden Spray		\$850.00	(\$850.00)
Holiday Party	\$2,600.00	\$2,600.00	\$0.00
Hospitality	\$4,000.00	\$4,330.00	(\$330.00)
Membership	\$25.00	\$350.00	(\$325.00)
Photography		\$50.00	(\$50.00)
Plant Auction	\$8,200.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,200.00
Programs		\$600.00	(\$600.00)
Slide Show	\$100.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
Sunshine		\$300.00	(\$300.00)
August Tour	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00
Valley Fair Work	\$750.00		\$750.00
MGCM Dues	\$1,300.00		\$1,300.00
MSHS	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
TGOA-MGCA Dues	\$2,550.00	\$2,550.00	\$0.00
Mid-America Dues	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$0.00
ARB Membership		\$60.00	(\$60.00)
ARB Donation		\$300.00	(\$300.00)
LPDC Donation		\$300.00	(\$300.00)
MSHS Donation		\$200.00	(\$200.00)
Bank Interest	\$350.00		\$350.00
Bank Charges		\$100.00	(\$100.00)
Honorary Member Dues		\$550.00	(\$550.00)
Insurance		\$500.00	(\$500.00)
President Contingency		\$500.00	(\$500.00)
National Director		\$400.00	(\$400.00)
Office Supplies		\$300.00	(\$300.00)
Legal Expense		\$100.00	(\$100.00)
Raffles	\$200.00		\$200.00
Historian		\$500.00	(\$500.00)
Youth Gardening		\$100.00	(\$100.00)
60th Anniversary Book		\$820.00	(\$820.00)
<u>Biennial Tour</u>	<u>\$7,000.00</u>	<u>\$4,000.00</u>	<u>\$3,000.00</u>
Totals	\$32,425.00	\$29,390.00	\$3,035.00

**The budget will be voted on at the
January 8, 2002 dinner meeting**



these walls. The walls aren't perfect. They look a little crooked at times, but they have performed their duty of controlling erosion very well. I planted a variety of shade tolerant plants behind the first wall, hosta and astilbe and bleeding heart behind the second and ground covers, (two types of ajuga, yellow archangel, epimedium and wild violets) behind the last two where the tree roots were more prominent. I suspect that winter and spring will be the test of my construction methods. At least I have a ready source of supply for any repairs to the sod walls, since I haven't finished digging for new gardens. I certainly am encouraged by the fact that Hadrian's wall, (on the border between Scotland and England) is still standing in many places and its basis is sod walls built by the Romans, and those viking walls have lasted for 1000 years.



Lonnee presented a selection of other perennials - some new, some unusual, several of questionable hardiness-and a few that I would call replacement plants -perennials that are an improvement over similar varieties already growing in our gardens. Once again, I made notes on more plants than I can list, but here are a few that would be a welcome addition to any garden.

Cimicifuga ramosa 'Hillside Black Beauty' A variety of Snakeroot with very dark foliage. The two-foot clump will send up a 5 - 6 foot stem, topped with foot-long white bottlebrush type flowers. Does best in partial shade.

Veronica 'Royal Candles' Touted as a replacement for 'Sunny Border Blue'. Foliage looks good all year.

Aster 'Woods Pink' One of a series of Asters including 'Woods Purple' and 'Woods Blue'. Compact foliage that doesn't flop over.

Chrysanthemum 'Centerpiece' and 'Peach Centerpiece' 'Centerpiece' is a pink garden mum originally developed by the U of M in 1982. 'Peach Centerpiece' is a sport from the original. Interesting looking plants. For those of you interested in other Mums developed by the U of M, log on to the web and go to [www.maes.umn.edu/maesinfo/releases/mums.html].



This is the last call for your pictures and there are no planned sittings scheduled. We would still like your picture in the book so if you have a picture, we would like it. It can be a print, slide or a portrait. We will scan it and return it. The picture can be a snapshot with other people on it since you can be isolated from the rest of the picture. Send or give it to Chuck Carlson.

Warren Nordley is to be commended for bringing Debbie Lonnee to us. A presentation like this makes one realize how worthwhile membership in the MGCM is. I can't ever remember attending a program where I put so many plants on my wish list and peonies weren't even mentioned! Unfortunately, along with the early case of spring fever, I'm sure I'll be showing signs of cabin fever before retuning to the garden.

MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS, INC.

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CLUB OFFICERS:

President: Carole Ann Brekke

709 Rushmore Drive, Burnsville, MN 55306-5161

Vice-President: Warren Nordley

14001 Frontier Lane, Burnsville, MN 55337-4741

Recording Secretary: Margaret Hibberd

1850 Roselawn Ave., Falcon Heights, MN 55113-5519

Membership Secretary: Jackie Overom

14024 Frontier Lane, Burnsville, MN 55337-4728

Treasurer: Howard Berg

10107 Lakeview Dr., Minnetonka, MN 55305-2615

Past President: Ritchie Miller

4249 Twin Oak Lane, Robbinsdale, MN 55422-1336

DIRECTORS:

Dave Johnson

5291 Matterhorn Dr., Fridley, MN 55419-1324

Tim McCauley

325 West 82nd Street, Chaska, MN 55318-3208

Wayne Engleman

11311 Oakvale Road So, Minnetonka, MN 55305-4359

THE SPRAY

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Managing Editor & Production Manager-----Chuck Carlson

The committee: Fred Glasoe Mary Maynard Robert Olson Rich Van Sickle Lloyd Wittstock

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Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, Inc.

Charles J. Carlson, Managing Editor

1001 Hackman Circle

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