

What's Up in the Gardens

By Joan Andersen

I visited with Nia Primus, Gardens Supervisor, to find out what she thought were some of the highlights of the 2020 season.

We could not have this discussion without talking about the impact of Covid-19 on everything at Munsinger Clemens Gardens. Gardens operations were affected by a reduced budget and staffing due to a City of St. Cloud budget shortfall caused by, among other things, a large reduction in conventions, meetings and visitors to the city which reduced the normal income from sales and hotel taxes. Nia observed that you need to make do with what you have, and that certainly happened. There were fewer staff members this year, but they managed to make the Gardens as beautiful as ever.

Unfortunately, there were no Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society "Music in the Gardens" concerts on Sunday afternoons or the July "Art Fair in the Gardens" this year. The good news is that the MCBS Photo Contest is happening this year and we received a lot of entries. Winners will be announced on November 21.

In spite of Covid-19, the Gardens were very busy with visitors all summer. Many people stopped in for an outdoor picnic or for a respite from working at home. Mother nature is wonderful for your mood when you really can't go to many indoor places.

By the end of September, Gardens staff was busy getting the flower beds ready for winter. Annual flowering plants were pulled and some of the perennials were cut back. If needed, compost was added to the beds. As you can imagine, this process was a little interrupted by the 5" of snow on October 20. It was heavy wet snow and it just did not want to melt.



Tender plants overwintering in greenhouse

Many of the tender perennials, succulents and annuals were removed from the gardens and containers to overwinter in the greenhouse. The fountains were turned off and winterized. Fortunately, this happened before the snow!

I asked Nia to tell me what her favorite annuals were in 2020. It is quite a long list, but there are lots of fabulous flowers in the Gardens. Generally, favorite flowers on this list have pretty blooms or colorful foliage, perform well in both cool weather and heat, plus need little or

Continued on page 2

In this Issue

What's Up in the Gardens	1, 2, 3
Best Performing Hardy Shrub Roses at the Gardens	3, 6, 7
2020 Photography in the Gardens Winners	4, 5, 6
2020 Photography in the Gardens & Facebook Photo of the Month	4, 5
Membership Application/Renewal	Back Cover
RAP	Back Cover



Continued from page 1

no deadheading. I have tried to get all the names spelled right so you can look on the internet if you are interested in locating any of these plants for your garden.

Aloe 'White Fox' is a mini succulent with white leaves speckled with green, perfect for containers.

Yucca 'Color Guard' grows an impressive 2-3' tall and wide and is green with a yellow center stripe.

Coleus Main Street 'Beale Street' was the first coleus to be named an AAS winner (in 2020). It is a rich deep red and grows to an impressive 2-3' x 2-3' and does not fade in the sun. Coleus cultivars get those unwanted little purple flowers and this cultivar is noted for being very late to flower.

Cosmos 'Choca Mocha' is a compact 10-12" tall and has deep red flowers held on sturdy stems with ferny foliage.

Impatiens Imara 'XDR Mix' is highly resistant to a serious disease called downy mildew that has made it difficult to grow impatiens that are so wonderful in the shade. They are 10-12" x 10-12" and available in orange, orange star, purple, red, rose, salmon and white.

Tithonia 'Goldfinger' caught the notice of many visitors because it gets about 2-1/2' tall and produces a lot of bright golden orange flowers.

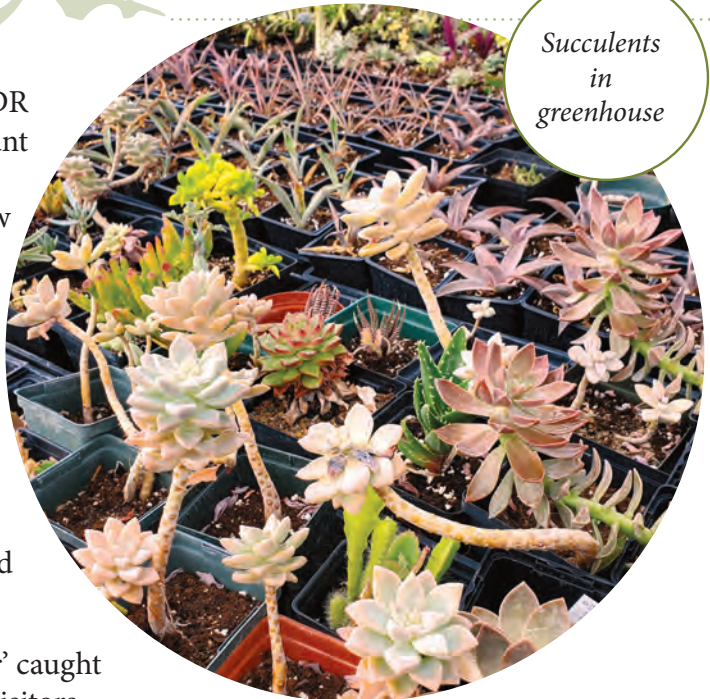
Calibrachoa Mini Famous 'Double Red' has a deep red double flower that grows 6-10 x 8x10" with a slightly trailing habit.

Cuphea 'Maria' is also called Mexican Heather. It has white flowers and grows 10-12 x 16-18" with an upright habit.

Gerbera 'Sweet Love' (a bright orange red) and Gerbera 'Sweet Smile' (bright yellow) are Gerbera daisies that grow 15-20 x 12-15 and have a long bloom season.

Salvia 'Sallyfun Deep Ocean' is a violet blue that reaches 15-24 x 12-22" in size and blooms from late spring into fall.

Carex 'Testacea' is a sedge with grass like leaves that



Succulents in greenhouse

start out olive green but transform into coppery tones in the fall. It grows 18-24 x 18-25 and has a very long season of interest.

Helianthus 'Suncredible Yellow' has daisy like sunny yellow flowers with chocolate brown centers. It grows 24-36 x 20-32" so it is a large bush like plant.

Colocasia 'Esculenta' is also called Elephant Ears. It is an upright tall tender perennial with large tropical looking leaves. It prefers dappled sunlight and this is one of the plants that is overwintered in the greenhouse.

Salvia 'Wild Thing' has bright cherry red flowers loved by hummingbirds. It grows 24-30" tall and blooms from early summer to mid fall.

Salvia 'Wendy's Wish' has magenta tubular flowers that are also visited by hummingbirds. It grows 2-3' x 2-3' and blooms all summer.

Begonias in greenhouse



Continued on page 3



Continued from page 2

Petunia 'Tidal Wave Red Velour' is a deep red with black veining and center. It was an AAS winner in 2015. It grows 16-22" tall with a spreading/trailing habit and does not need deadheading.

Coleus 'Golden Dreams' is a sun coleus with bright chartreus leaves with contrasting red veins. It is a stately plant that grows 24-36 x 18-36 and is upright in form.

'Gnome Domes' are succulent plants that resemble 'Hens and Chicks.' Plants are small (about 4") and they do bloom and unlike many succulents, they are hardy in our area.

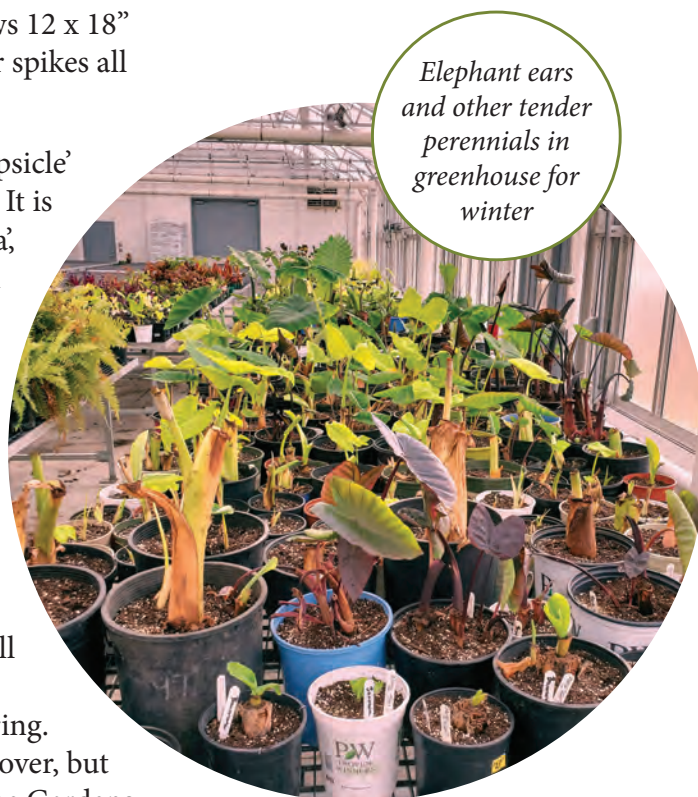
Begonia Maculata 'Angel Wing' is an unusual looking specimen with long pointed leaves with white polka dots. It grows 20-30' tall and is very upright.

Kniphofia 'Papaya Popsicle' has grassy foliage and produces orange/

red flower spikes. It grows 12 x 18" with slightly taller flower spikes all summer into fall.

Kniphofia 'Pineapple Popsicle' has yellow flower spikes. It is a little taller than 'Papaya,' growing to 18 x 18" with slightly taller flower spikes produced all summer into fall.

Planning is already underway for the 2021 season. Instead of attending plant shows or meeting with sales people in person, Nia will be talking with them on the internet before ordering. The gardening season is over, but visitors are plentiful at the Gardens due to the nice November weather. Urns have been decorated for winter and the Virginia Clemens Rose Garden has been covered for winter.



Elephant ears and other tender perennials in greenhouse for winter

We look forward to next year. The Gardens did well during a season with Covid-19 but we hope that is a onetime occurrence and that things will be back to normal in 2021.

Best Performing Hardy Shrub Roses at the Gardens

By Joan Andersen

Rose Specialist Deb Keiser has finished her assessment of the 2020 season of growing roses at Munsinger Clemens Gardens. Most of the tender roses are grown in Virginia Clemens Rose Garden where they receive complete winter protection, while many of the hardy ones are growing in the lower rose garden or are tucked into other beds in the Gardens. Deb had a long list of roses to recommend, but in this issue, I will be highlighting some of the hardy ones that only need their roots covered with compost for winter protection. All of these roses are grown on their own roots which means that they should come back even if we have a very harsh winter. Disease resistance is also extremely important when choosing favorite roses. You want your plants to be blooming and retaining their foliage all season. You can be assured that these roses have disease resistance without using chemical sprays.



Continued on page 6



2020 Winners

Photography in the gardens

BEST IN SHOW:

Erika Powers
"Glory in the Garden"



YOUTH FIRST PLACE:

Andrew Schroeder
"Sacred Smells"

Photography in the gardens

by Lora Honer

We love seeing all the gorgeous photos taken in the gardens and are please to share this years winning photos and photographers with you.

Just to remind you, you can start entering photos in the 2021 Photography in the Gardens now through November 1, 2022. We look forward to sharing all the photos entered on our Facebook page in the upcoming weeks.

Continued to page 5

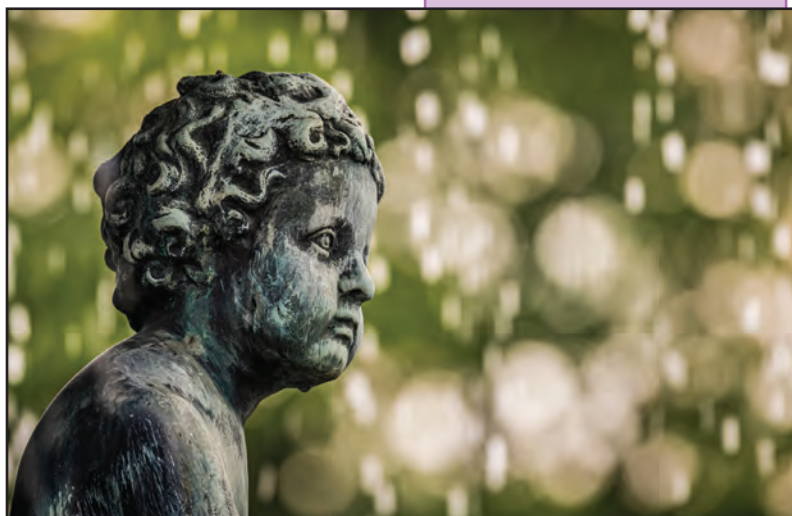


YOUTH SECOND PLACE:
Matthew Scherber
"Fading Light"

ADULT HARDSCAPE FIRST PLACE:
Stephen Busuttill
"Tranquility"



YOUTH THIRD PLACE:
Kira Smith-Ahles
"Cranes Golden Renaissance"



Continued from page 4

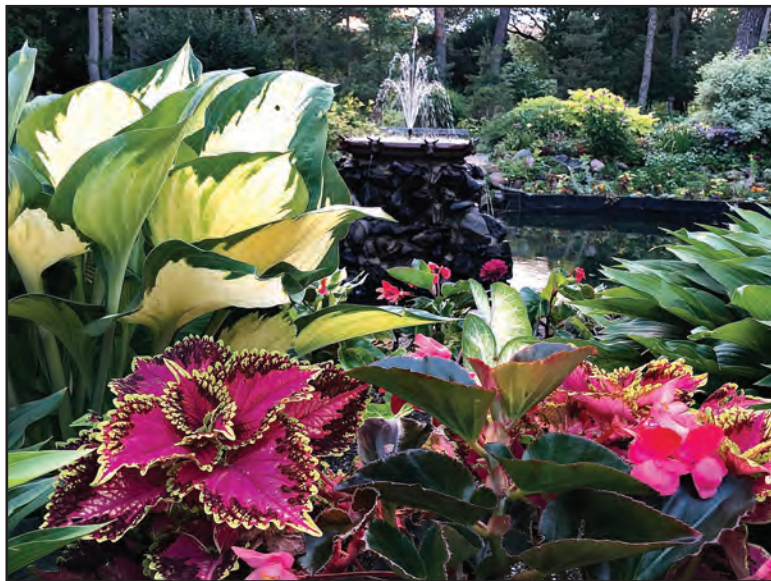
We also want to thank everyone who participated in the Photography in the Gardens. This event is a great way to share your vision of the Munsinger Clemens gardens with family, friends, and the St. Cloud Area. Winning photos are displayed at locations throughout the St. Cloud area over the next year. In addition, the winners will be shared on our website and our Facebook page as well as in this issue of our Newsletter.

ADULT HARDSCAPE SECOND PLACE:
Stephen Busuttill
"Splash"

Photo of the Month

We started the Photo of the Month last year and we have received a great response to it. So we will continue the "Photo of the Month" this year as well. So we will be selecting one photo that was entered in the Photography in the Gardens 2020 contest as the photo of the month on Facebook. We will share the photographers name, their photo title and the photo on Facebook. This way we get to share with you more of the wonderful photos entered. Be sure to watch our Facebook page to see what photo is selected for the month of January.





ADULT LANDSCAPE FIRST PLACE:
Jonathan Wolf
"Garden Outlook"

Continued from page 3

'Above and Beyond' is an impressive climber that can be over 10' tall, a trellis is recommended. It has semi-double to double apricot

blossoms with heavy bloom early in the season with some repeat blooming. There are four plants at the Gardens that have been here since 2015, so the canes are definitely hardy to zone 3.

'Cancan' is categorized as a climber, but at the Gardens it grows more like a 4' bushy shrub. Flowers are sprays of magenta to light pink with cream at the center. Plants are disease resistant and bloom constantly all season. They have been growing at the Gardens since 2008.

'Cherry Frost' produces sprays of cherry red flowers all season. Also classified as a large flowered climber, it tends to grow here as a 4' bushy shrub. There are 10 plants in the Upper Test Rose Garden that made a nice show all summer.

'Winners Circle' has bright red blooms all season. It is classified as a hardy climber and at the Gardens it got about 5' tall.

Several roses bred in Canada from the Canadian Artist Series did very well at the Gardens.

'Campfire' is a smaller shrub rose that is 2-3' tall and spreading to 3' with unusual blooms that open bright yellow with a pink edge. Flower color

Continued on page 7



ADULT LANDSCAPE SECOND PLACE:
Michael Brubaker
"Red Fading to Pink"

ADULT LANDSCAPE THIRD PLACE:
Susan Aune
"Textures"



ADULT LANDSCAPE THIRD PLACE:
Michael Brubaker
"Garden Throne"





Continued from page 6



is quite variable with some blooms more pink than yellow, which makes it a very interesting plant.

'Emily Carr' is a shrub rose that grows up to 4' tall with an upright form. Flower clusters are medium red and it blooms all season.

Another group of roses hybridized in Canada is called the 49th Parallel Collection. One of these roses is called 'Canadian Shield' and it was released in 2017. It is a shrub that grows 4-5' x 3-4' and produces clusters of scarlet blooms all season.

'Ice Cap' is a compact shrub rose that grows 2-1/2 x 3-1/2'. It is covered with double pure white flowers all summer. It is rated to zone 5, and that seems to be a very conservative rating as it has come back every year since 2015 and performed well at the Gardens with winter protection on its roots. There is a lovely planting of it around the Clemens memorial statue.

'Miracle on the Hudson' is a medium size shrub rose, growing 3-5' x 3-5'. Clusters of red single to semi-double appear all season. Recent tests look like this rose is reliably hardy to zone 3b.

Several roses from the Easy Elegance Series from Baileys Nurseries have also performed well at the Gardens.

'My Girl' is a shrub rose that is 3-5' x 3-1/2-5' with an upright habit. Blooms are dark pink, borne in clusters all summer.

'Super Hero' is a shrub that can get a little larger, from 3-6' x 3-6'. It has clusters of bright red flowers and blooms all season.

The 2020 season started with spring, followed by extremely cold days and nights in mid May. Summer arrived, but it was very dry in late summer. Then we had 5" of snow in mid October followed by several weeks of cold days and nights. During the first week of November, the temperatures were in the 60's. I am sure the roses were confused, I know I was. Tender roses in the Virginia Clemens Rose Garden were covered by November 3 during beautiful weather, but it had to be done because winter is coming.

There were also some staffing challenges due to Covid-19. Only limited staff could work inside the building and greenhouse. Staff hiring was delayed. But the work got done, and the Gardens looked beautiful and had lots of visitors all summer.





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