

## Daylilies

By Joan Andersen

Daylilies are one of the stars of a perennial garden. They were on full display in the Perennial Garden during the July 15 Art Fair at Munsinger Clemens Gardens.

The botanical name is *Hemerocallis* which is from the Greek words meaning “beauty” and “day” because each flower on the plant lasts only one day. The plants produce many stalks so that bloom time is over several weeks with flowers opening every day. They bloom in the height of summer and come in showy colors including diverse shades of white, yellow, orange, melon, coral, red, pink, purple and lavender.

Daylilies are such an easy perennial to care for that they are a good choice for a both beginning and experienced gardeners. For the best blooms, they should be planted in full sun (at least six hours a day) in well drained soil. New plants should be watered regularly until established and then the plants are quite drought tolerant. Avoid overhead watering and water established plants deeply only when soil is dry. It is beneficial to mulch around the plant to conserve moisture and prevent weeds. Excess fertilizer actually inhibits flowers, so if the soil is good, fertilizer is not really necessary. If the plant gets very large, division may be needed to keep it looking good and flowering well. Divide in spring as the plants are beginning to grow. Division after flowering is also acceptable as long as it is done early enough to allow the plant to get ready for winter.

The National Gardening Association hosts a daylily database at <https://garden.org/plants/group/daylilies/>. There are about 84,000 cultivars available. If you know the name of your plant, you can look it up.

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## What's Up in the Gardens

By Joan Andersen

We are enjoying the long days of summer and lots of people are visiting the Gardens. After unusually cold May weather and a frost on Memorial Day weekend that delayed planting, the weather decided to be really hot, with very little rain. There were about 82,000 annuals grown in 2021 for planting, so staff gardeners worked hard to get everything in the ground once the weather was decent. Fortunately, the hot weather is what makes everything grow fast. The lack of rain means that extra time is spent to make sure that everything is watered.

The Rest Area Garden has purple, yellow and green flowers and foliage. One highlight is helianthus 'Sunccredible' yellow that has a branching form that is shorter than most sunflowers. It looks great with purple Pennisetum grass and green sun coleus. In a



different area of the Rest Area Garden there is a large planting of salvia 'Rockin' Deep Purple.' Nearby is sun coleus 'Fishnet Stockings,' a tall specimen that has lime green leaves with purple-black leaf veins and edges.

The Formal Garden is planted with flowers and foliage in red, orange and yellow. Many grasses are included in the design and they will be at their very best later in the summer because they turn warm colors as fall approaches.

Gardens Supervisor Nia Primus plants the urns and containers in the Gardens. Here is a photo of her favorite urn located at the bottom of the steps going up to the Treillage Garden. Near the gift shop, Nia plants succulents that have been wintered over in the greenhouse. This year the planting includes some impressive cactus.

After all the uncertainties and restrictions for COVID-19 in 2020, it is starting to feel like the Gardens are back to normal. Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society sponsored events Music in the Gardens and Art Fair in the Gardens are back and have attracted enthusiastic music and art lovers. This year the wedding area has received a planned refurbishment and is open for ceremonies in 2021. A number of weddings have already been held and more are scheduled. The Gift Shop is now under new management by Copper Pony and summer hours are from 10 – 7. Because the shop is located in the Gardens, many items for sale will have a botanical theme. Be sure to visit and check out all the familiar and new things happening in the Gardens.







## Get to Know Nia

By Mary Margaret Bjorklun

Recently, on the shaded gift shop deck, Nia Primus and I chatted about her career with the Gardens. She has been the Supervisor since December, 2010, but before that she had various roles with the City of St. Cloud. She was first employed at the Heritage Center as a seasonal worker before being promoted to full time Naturalist. In 2008, she was transferred to Munsinger Clemens Gardens. Her Biology major at SCSU, with an emphasis on birds and mammals, prepared her for quite a different career. As she said, "It was on the job training".

The name, Munsinger Clemens, honors Josph Munsinger, the first Park Superintendent for the City of St. Cloud. Bill and Virginia Clemens, who lived across the street, first purchased the land that is presently the Rose Garden. When the adjacent property became available, they purchased and donated it to the City of St. Cloud.

Presently, the gardens have expanded into being a favorite destination in St. Cloud. The lower Munsinger garden, remains more informal, with paths wandering in shady areas near the Mississippi River. The gazebo is a favorite resting and photo site. Clemens, the more formal upper area, features six gardens in an European style. They are the Formal Garden, Perennial Garden, Rest Area Garden, Treillage Garden, Virginia Clemens Rose Garden and the White Garden.

Twenty five people are employed during the busy season, three during the winter. When visiting the Gardens, visitors will see Nia joining the crew with whatever needs to be done. She believes in "leading by example". Their day begins with a 7:00 staff meeting when duties are delegated. Daily tasks until fall include cleaning up, planting, weeding, dead-heading and painting. When Mother Nature ends the season with a killing frost,

annuals are pulled out and perennials cut back. It takes six weeks to plant the annuals, but only ten days to remove them.

Planning for the subsequent season begins with analyzing this year's design. In September, Nia orders flowers for the following year. She has learned the necessity of being flexible. Sometimes selected flowers are not available and possible difficulties with shipments to the U.S. may occur. She has learned that schemes involving waves of heights and colors work well. Dependable choices are snap dragons, salvia and dusty miller. She also relies on marigolds. 'Inca

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# Art Fair in the Gardens

By Joan Andersen

Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society had a fabulous Art Fair on July 15. Due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 so we were so excited to have the Art Fair in 2021.

The flowers were blooming like crazy. Many people commented on the lovely setting. I must agree that we have the best location anywhere for an Art Fair. Artist booths are set up in open areas right in the Gardens so you can enjoy the flowers as you shop.

MCBS can't take credit for the weather, but this year it was perfect – sunny and warm with reasonable humidity. We had over 40 artist booths with a wide selection of fine artwork for home and garden that were very busy with shoppers. Live music down by the Mississippi was performed by Paul Imholte, Carlos Quinche and Pachanga Society. If you were hungry, you could have a snack or meal, complete with dessert. Food vendors included Christine's Sweet Confections, Jupiter Moon Ice Cream, Mrs. Goodcookie, Patty's Popcorn, Warren's BBQ and Granite City Food & Brewery.

The crowd enjoyed everything; it was really a memorable day for all. MCBS appreciates the support of the local community and the many visitors from other places. Come back next year on the third Thursday in July – July 21, 2022.



This activity is funded, in part, by an appropriation from the Minnesota State Legislature, through a grant from the Central MN Arts Board, with money from the State's general fund.







**WE NEED  
VOLUNTEERS**



**Looking For  
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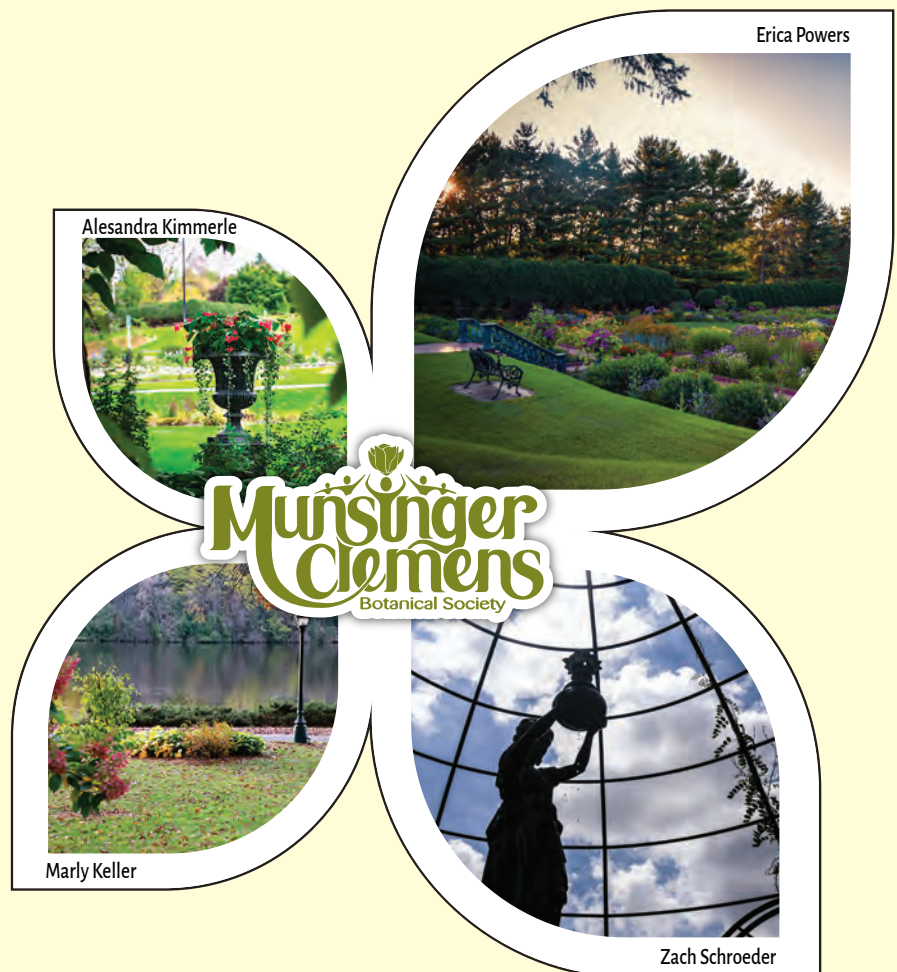
**Music in the  
Gardens,  
Photography in  
the Gardens &  
Art Fair in the  
Gardens.**

Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society is a non-profit that plans events in the gardens as well as raising money to help support the gardens. You would not be gardening at Munsinger or Clemens Gardens but helping with events. Please contact us if you would like additional information.

## 2021 Photography in the Gardens

You can enter your photos online now for the 2021 Photography in the Gardens contest. You submit and pay for your entries completely through the online process. This provides visitors of the gardens who do not live close to the St. Cloud area the opportunity to enter their photos. ALL entries must be entered online to be eligible. All Juniors (18 and under) can enter their first photo free of charge.

This year's contest runs until November 1st. Photos entries must be entered by Midnight on November 1st. If you want to submit photos this year, check out the rules and entry details on our website: [www.munsingerclemens.com](http://www.munsingerclemens.com).



Start taking your photos now. The gardens are beautiful year round.



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It's a favorite because dead-heading isn't necessary.

When asked about perks of the job, Nia replied that working with her staff and conversing with visitors are the most gratifying. She recalls conversations with international guests and a couple from Niagara Falls who are annual sightseers. Challenges include the absence of rain, which is more beneficial to flowers than city water, and the lack of lightning which provides nitrogen to the plants.

While these beautiful gardens delight so many visitors, Nia chooses her staff as the high light of the gardens. It's no wonder so many staff return every year.

Thanks, Nia and staff, for providing St. Cloud residents and many more people a gem to enjoy.



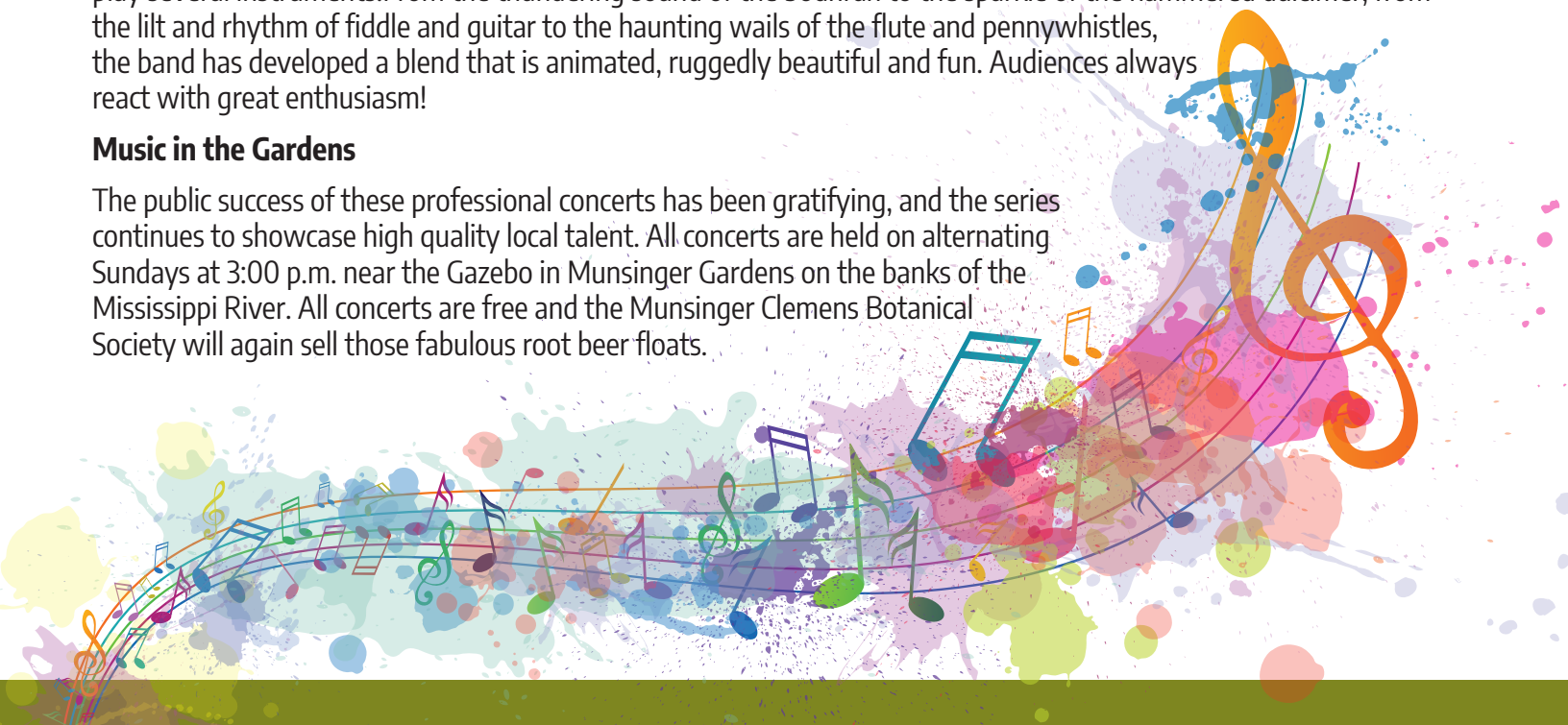
in the Gardens



**Ring of Kerry - August 22, 2021** Ring of Kerry is a bursting-with-energy Irish music group that captures the hearts of listeners. The group takes its name from a beautiful craggy drive in southwestern County Kerry, Ireland. Its Celtic music, however, is played with a heart much closer to its American home. All five of its engaging musicians sing and play several instruments. From the thundering sound of the bodhran to the sparkle of the hammered dulcimer; from the lilt and rhythm of fiddle and guitar to the haunting wails of the flute and pennywhistles, the band has developed a blend that is animated, ruggedly beautiful and fun. Audiences always react with great enthusiasm!

### **Music in the Gardens**

The public success of these professional concerts has been gratifying, and the series continues to showcase high quality local talent. All concerts are held on alternating Sundays at 3:00 p.m. near the Gazebo in Munsinger Gardens on the banks of the Mississippi River. All concerts are free and the Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society will again sell those fabulous root beer floats.







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When there are so many daylilies, how do you shop for plants to add to your garden? Every nursery you visit in person or online seems to have different daylilies for sale.

You can make sense of it all by reading the plant description or identification tag to find out the details of the plants being sold. The American Daylily Society has a FAQ page on their website that gives a lot of information about daylilies at <https://daylilies.org/daylilies/faq/>

**Plant Size:** Ranges are from mini to very tall. Most plant tags will show the plant size and the height of the scape (flower stalk). This will help you choose a plant of appropriate size for your garden.

**Flower Size:** This will give the width of the flower. Tip - you cannot assume that a large plant will also have large flowers.

**Flower Color:** The description will tell you the color. Most cultivars have a contrasting throat, midrib or eye

band. Some

have flower

edges that are

called ruffled, picoteed or pie crust edges. A good photo in a catalog or on a plant tag is really helpful if you can't buy a daylily in bloom.

**Bloom Season:** Daylilies are sold as early, mid or late season bloomers. Some plants are sold as reblooming or long blooming. This is good information so that you can select daylilies that flower at different times so there will be a long season of color.

Care of daylilies is easy. Clean off the dead foliage in the spring and remove any damaged leaves during the season. If you are a neat gardener like me, carefully remove spent blossoms, especially if you are taking a photo. After blooming is done, cut off the stalks to about 2" from the ground so the plant looks nice for the rest of the season. Enjoy the beauty of a tough, reliable, long-lived plant with stunning flowers.





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## Membership Application and Renewal

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$50-\$99 (Basic Membership)

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