

The Minneapolis Blooms Committee
of the Committee on Urban Environment (CUE)

2005

Annual Report

Submitted by Joyce Vincent,
Co-Chair

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2005 Annual Report

Minneapolis Blooms Program

2005 was a year of dramatic growth for the Minneapolis Blooms (MB) Program of the Committee on Urban Environment (CUE). The Minneapolis Blooms Program's flagship activity, evaluating and recognizing visible gardens nominated by city residents, culminated in the Minneapolis Blooms Day event in April which attracted over 300 Minneapolis residents, doubling attendance from the previous year in Nokomis Park Community Center in Minneapolis. As in past years, the main event on Blooms Day was awarding certificates to gardeners for outstanding gardens. In 2005 fifty volunteer garden evaluators were trained who then logged an astounding 420 hours rating nominated gardens. Five gardens were selected in 2005 from 850 publicly nominated gardens to receive these awards:

- *Best Watershed-Friendly Garden - Mary Nolte*
- *Best Community Garden – Vera's Garden*
- *Best Public Building Garden – Kenny School*
- *Best Business Garden – International Market Square*
- *Nate Siegel Award – This award honors the Minneapolis Blooms Program founder, and went to Greg Lecker and the Bryn Mawr Gardens. This award is given to the gardener(s) who not only beautifies the city with an outstanding publicly visible garden, but who also substantially contributes to garden education and the quality of community life.*

Deb Brown, veteran horticulturist, writer and radio personality was the keynote speaker for Blooms Day. The Blooms Day program also highlighted water quality issues, featuring three city officials who educated attendees on the importance of protecting the city's watershed. Blooms Day program partners included representatives from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization and the Minneapolis Public Works Department. They staffed tables at the event, offering opportunities for Minneapolitans to learn about their local watershed, and to get technical assistance on have their questions answered about the city's Storm water User Fee Credit Application, which effectively reduces water bills in exchange for mitigating stormwater run off with a rain garden or other activities.

The Minneapolis Blooms Day Program further promoted watershed protection with the presentation of a new Blooms Day award in 2005 for the Best Watershed-Friendly Garden. We increased the emphasis on the value of rain gardens in the training for garden evaluators. In addition, the inclusion of "Rain garden techniques used" on the nomination form increased the public's awareness of rain gardens, and resulted in an amazing increase in rain garden nominations over 2004 from 10 to 87. We learned that the Best Watershed-Friendly Garden award is an effective way to recognize and promote the importance of watershed-friendly gardening.

Sensing a responsibility to lead the community in active stewardship of its historic water resources, the MB accepted a new challenge in 2005. The Mississippi Watershed

Management Organization, the Shingle Creek/West Mississippi Watershed Management Commissions, and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District enabled MB to develop a two-part series of rain garden workshops with a follow up consultation option, to inform, coach Minneapolis residents about protecting the watershed by constructing rain gardens. Workshops and the Blooms Day event were both promoted in 100,000 city water bills. Workshops educated 516 Minneapolis residents in all parts of the city, well exceeding our original estimates. The unique curriculum was developed by Kelly Mahoney, along with helpful folder valuable materials for each attendee. Ten landscape architecture from the University of Minnesota College of Landscape and Landscape Architecture students served as Design Assistants at the second workshop in each series. The popularity of these workshops took us by surprise when actual attendance topped 500, more than 30% above our goal. In addition, we had a waiting list of nearly 400! Consistently high ratings by workshop attendees ('above average' to 'excellent') attested to the value of the presentations to city residents and to participants who traveled to Minneapolis from first and second ring suburbs.

As a direct result of the workshops, seventy-nine rain gardens were created in Minneapolis. The Minneapolis Blooms Program awarded \$3,950 in \$50 incentive grants to attendees who applied for funds to purchase native plants for their rain garden. The workshop's one-to-one consulting feature in rain garden design proved to be a very popular and important aspect of the training and provided further support for constructing this type of garden.

The marked increase in the public awareness of water quality issues in the city of Minneapolis and surrounding watersheds that was produced as a result of our rain garden education efforts will ultimately lead to improved water quality in our lakes and river as rainwater is kept on-site by rain gardens. Residents and business owners who have been trained in rain garden installation will share their knowledge with friends, neighbors and colleagues, who will in turn choose to construct their own rain garden, building community as a by-product.

Simultaneously with the rain garden workshops, the MB initiated another community outreach project in 2005. Thirteen Minneapolis libraries agreed to host display tables in March and April which highlighted our rain garden workshop information as well as the library's rain garden and native plant books.

The Minneapolis Blooms Program is proud of its accomplishments in 2005 in promoting visible gardens and educating the residents of Minneapolis about watershed-friendly gardening techniques. We can proudly say that we continue to be firmly committed to improving the 'live-ability' of our communities through visible gardens, and to increasing our neighbors' awareness of water quality issues in order to promote a healthier watershed.

**Minneapolis Blooms
Balance Sheet
December 31, 2005**

Assets

Current Assets:

Cash		\$4,795.	
Accounts Receivable	\$0		
Less: Reserve for Bad Debts	0	0	
Merchandise Inventory		0	
Prepaid Expenses		0	
Notes Receivable		0	
Total Current Assets			\$4,795

Fixed Assets:

Equipment	\$ 1,000		
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	0	\$1,000	
Total Fixed Assets			1,000

Other Assets:

Goodwill		0	
Total Other Assets			0

Total Assets **\$5,795**

Liabilities and Capital

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable		\$0	
Sales Taxes Payable		0	
Payroll Taxes Payable		0	
Accrued Wages Payable		0	
Unearned Revenues		0	
Short-Term Notes Payable		0	
Short-Term Bank Loan Payable		0	
Total Current Liabilities			\$0

Long-Term Liabilities:

Long-Term Notes Payable		0	
Mortgage Payable		0	
Total Long-Term Liabilities			0

Total Liabilities **0**

Capital:

Owner's Equity		0	
Net Profit		\$5,795	
Total Capital			\$ 5,795

Total Liabilities and Capital **\$ 5,795**

**Operating Statement
Minneapolis Blooms
Year Ending
December 31, 2005**

Changes in Net Assets:	Temporarily Unrestricted	Restricted
Revenues and Gains:		
Donations - Direct Grants ¹	2,355.00	24,199.13
Special Event Revenue ²	991.13	
Total Revenues, Gains, Other Support	23,864.66	3,680.60
Expenses:		
Program Services ³	16,718.25	
General Administration ⁴	5,278.71	
	957.93	
Total Expenses and Losses:	22,954.89	
Increase in Net Assets:	4,590.37	
Net Assets as Beginning of Year:	205.10	
Net Assets as End of Year:	4,795.47	

Notes:

- 1 \$20,518.53 represents MWMO grant money received in 2005
\$3,180.60 represents MCWD grant money received in 2005
\$500 represents SCWC grant money received in 2005
- 2 Money raised during or directly related to 2005 Blooms Day event
- 3 Expenses directly related to goods and services provided as part of our Mission.
These include:
Rain Garden Workshop packets/presentation, Garden Awards and Native Plant Grants
Also includes payments to Kelly Mahoney
- 4 Includes payments to Laura Wieland as "Staff Assistant"
- 5 Expenses directly related to fundraising include: Mailings and postage for Blooms Day Event