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Produced at the University of Minnesota, Morris, Prairie Yard and Garden enters its 24th season on Pioneer Public Television

Summary: The horticulture series has been the number one rated program of national or local origin on Pioneer for several years.

(February 19, 2011)—After nearly a quarter century on public television, “Prairie Yard and Garden” (PY&G) begins a new season on Thursday, January 20, 2011. Hosted by Larry Zilliox, former University of Minnesota Extension educator from Alexandria, Minnesota, the popular program, now in its 24th season, is one of Minnesota’s top resources for gardening information. This season, longtime host Sue Gooch, who stepped down three years ago to spend more time nurturing her own backyard garden, returns as a contributor on six episodes.

Created and produced on campus by Roger Boleman, Instructional and Media Technologies director, the series’ success and longevity represents a cooperative alliance between the University of Minnesota, Morris and Pioneer Public Television, KWCM Appleton. Each season, PY&G travels the state tapping researchers, gardening and nursery professionals, educators, and ordinary backyard gardeners for their expertise in horticulture, landscaping, and a variety of gardening topics in a sometimes difficult and frustrating growing region.

Michael Cihak, assistant director of marketing communication and design, recently shared the exciting news that PY&G has been one of the top rated programs of national or local origination on Pioneer for the last few years. PY&G airs Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. January through April, with rebroadcasts Mondays at 1 p.m. and Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. This year’s topics include something for everyone, running the gamut from secrets of growing both popular and uncommon plants, seasonal tips, landscaping ideas, and garden tours. In January, viewers will experience novel twists on the traditional holiday poinsettia and become acquainted with new houseplants gaining popularity for the holidays. Later in the month, Mary Ann Scharf, retired Minnesota Extension Service educator, advises Sue Gooch on techniques for storing a homegrown fall harvest through winter and spring.

February’s programs include two tours—Munsinger and Clemons Garden in St. Cloud and the University of Minnesota, Morris Gardens. Growing gladiolas and combining hobbies to create a “railroad” garden in Buffalo round out the month. In addition to episodes on hostas, the fall garden, and a return tour of River Glen Gardens under development for March, growing daylilies and a tour of Schell’s Brewery Formal Gardens will be broadcast. The season’s programming concludes in April with a discussion of unusual plants such as perennial grasses and water lilies, and an introduction to the many varieties of lilacs.

Pioneer Public Television, a Public Broadcasting System (PBS) affiliate, serves more than 375,000 households across Minnesota, South Dakota, and Iowa.

Photo: Roger Boleman, “Prairie Yard and Garden” producer
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