



MILLIS GARDEN CLUB
M I L L I S , M A 0 2 0 5 4

The Millis Garden Club strives to enhance the natural beauty of our own surroundings and that of our community through the horticultural education of members - while cultivating new friendships in the process.

The Mulch Pile MGC Newsletter October 2004
C l u b N e w s

Dear Founding Members of the Millis Garden Club,

Welcome each and every one of you who has embraced the mission of this new community organization. Your contribution of membership is gratefully acknowledged. Your name will be forever recorded as a 'founding member.'

Members will receive a monthly MGC Newsletter called *The Mulch Pile*, detailing meeting and event information, important project updates, seasonal tips and field trip suggestions. We suggest that you 3-hole punch the Newsletters and keep them as a resource in a binder. Future newsletters will be emailed to those that have access, and snail mailed/hand delivered to those that do not. We wish this publication to be a worthwhile collaborative effort, so your comments and contributions are requested and welcomed.*The Editors.*

PROGRAMMING INFORMATION AND UPDATES

We are still 'abuzz' from Michael Nelson's presentation information on *Sustainable Landscaping*, our *first* educational program at our *first* official Millis Garden Club meeting on Wednesday, September 15, 2004. Attending were forty Millis and Norfolk residents. The session is currently being aired on Millis Community Access Television. Additional educational programs are scheduled throughout the year as outlined in your "Welcome New Members" Packet.

Wednesday, October 20, 7-8:30 p.m. REMINDER. The next meeting of the Millis Garden Club will take place at Veterans Memorial Hall, Room 18 (Ground Floor). An essential meeting to attend as we are voting on our 2004-2005 Officers (we are still seeking nominations for Vice-President), our By-laws, and we'll hear presentations and vote on our Club Flower. So that our members are more informed about our candidates, we have included brief bio's on the reverse side. Note: This is a club business meeting open to Member's only.

Sunday, October 24, 2-3:30 p.m. *Putting Your Garden to Bed with Geri Sprague*, and our *First Annual Plant Swap!* THIS IS A DATE CHANGE. Please see enclosed sheet for detailed information. Members must R.S.V.P. to this event.

Saturday, November 13, 3 - 4:30p.m. *Holiday Wreath and Bow Making Demonstration and Workshop.* Join Anita Cross, an accomplished watercolorist and former owner of Martha's Flowers, Beverly, MA. for a fun and creative workshop – and go home with a holiday wreath ready to hang. Greens, frame, wire and ribbon will be provided. Bring with you light work gloves and pruning shears. Event will take place at St. Paul's Rectory, 903 Main Street (across from Veterans Memorial Hall, and at the Big Bird Pre-School). Event is open to the public and seating is limited. Register early by calling Nancy Sitta. Cost to Members \$15. Cost to Non-Members \$25.

Wednesday, December 1, 7 - 8:30 p.m. *Holiday Floral Arranging Demonstration.* Before the holiday craze begins, join Doug and Julie McPhee, accomplished floral designers, for an inspiring holiday floral arranging demonstration. Support our Fundraising Event! Completed arrangements along with garden related objects will be raffled off to very lucky winners. Holiday refreshments will be served. Event is open to the public and seating is limited. Register early by calling Nancy Sitta. Cost for Non-Members is \$5. Event will take place at Veterans Memorial Hall, Room 18, (Ground Floor).

CIVIC PROJECTS

Saturday, October 23, 2004, 8am – 4pm. Millis Public Library – Phase 1-2. Please see enclosed sheet for details. Please call and confirm your availability with Nancy Sitta.

(GREAT) MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Nancy Wong reports we are now **24 members strong**, with growth sprouting every week(!). A listing of members will be available in the MGC Yearbook, which will be distributed at the October meeting. Everyone should have received his or her "Welcome New Member" membership packet. If not, please contact Nancy Wong, Membership Chair at (508) 376-5805.

Membership Interest Form. In order to provide outstanding programming, and meet the needs of our members, we kindly ask that you complete the enclosed form for our next meeting. Thank you.

More great news! Our website, www.millisgardenclub.org has been established. Members and the world are now able to access information about our programming, civic projects, and everything horticulture. If anyone is interested in assisting in the maintenance of the website, please come forth!

Membership Benefits

The Millis Garden Club is a member of the **New England Wild Flower Society**. Members have use of five complimentary circulating passes to Garden in the Woods, Framingham, MA, open April 15 – October 31. Five members can also take advantage of a 10% off discount on their extensive selection of courses. See Nancy Wong for more details. Please visit www.newfs.org for complete course and event information.

Through one of our members' membership to **Massachusetts Horticulture Society at Elm Bank**, Wellesley, MA, our members can access Horticulture Magazine. Published six times a year, this publication is an invaluable resource on anything and everything horticulture. Subscription rate for the publication is \$28 but if you become a member of Elm Bank for \$50 you can take advantage of their membership benefits and receive Horticulture Magazine for your own library! Visit www.masshort.org for more information including class listings and special events. Please see Kathleen Hennessy for issues of the publication.

Millis Garden Club Election of Officers takes place on Wednesday, October 20th at 7p.m.

Bio's for the Slate of Officers, September 2004 – May 2005 Year

Nominated for Treasurer, Nancy Wong, Millis, MA

Nancy Wong holds a Master's Degree in Elementary Education. She worked with second graders in the Walpole school district for 4 years. Nancy enjoys tending to her gardens and is always seeking out new learning opportunities related to horticulture. Nancy was a member of the Medway Garden club for 1 year. She has lived in Millis for ten years with her husband and two young boys.

Nominated for Secretary, Kathleen Hennessy, Millis, MA

Kathleen Hennessy has a Bachelor of Science in Communication Arts. She has lived in Millis for twelve years. Kathleen was an active member for a number of years in both the Oak Tree League and Millis Arts Council. For the past five years, she was an executive board member of the Medway Garden Club. In meeting many avid gardeners here in Millis, Kathleen is now interested in establishing a garden club for Millis. Kathleen has two middle school children and with a recent move within Millis, is excited to redesign her new home's gardens.

At this time, we are still seeking a candidate for the Vice-President's position.

Nominated for President, Nancy Sitta, Millis, MA

Nancy Sitta wishes to significantly contribute to the aesthetic and well-being of this great community by combining her skills at event and project planning with her newly discovered obsession, horticulture.

Formerly, Nancy was an active member with the Medway Garden Club for one year. She also contributes her project planning skills to the Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, MA, actively serving on the Exhibitions Committee. In addition, Nancy served on the Board of the internationally based arts organization, The Furniture Society, having chaired various committees for over four years, including the fundraising committee. She has lived in Millis since 1990 with her husband and two Samoyed dogs.

From the Garden of Tess McDonough Ward...our Horticulturist Member .

- ... Leave astilbe flower heads on thru winter, especially *Astilbe chinensis* var. *pumila*; so stout they stay well for good winter interest.
- ... Keep *Miscanthus* foliage up thru the winter for winter interest, but not *Pennisetum* foliage, too fragile and will not retain its form through the winter.
- ... Best to prune broadleaved evergreens in the Spring – and not in the Winter. Come springtime, in one fell swoop, you can get rid of winter burn and stimulate new growth.
- ... Late Summer and Early Fall is the time to fertilize all trees and shrubs with a low fertility, "organic" (% water insoluble nitrogen) fertilizer. In practice, an annual treatment proves out well as it helps with storage at the bud for next spring.

From the Garden of Martha Stewart Living, September 2004 issue

Great article on **forcing bulbs**, *Spring Forward*, page 124 or visit www.marthastewart.com and type in "forcing bulbs" and several articles on the subject will come up.

Follow-up from Mike Nelson's Presentation on Sustainable Landscaping

- ... At our meeting, Michael touched upon the subject and passed around the publication detailing which plants are on the MA invasive plant list. The info is now available at the **Invasive Plant Atlas of New England** web site. FYI: The Arnold Arboretum recommends cotoneaster as a low growing, low-mountainous alternative to the invasive non-native Japanese barberry. <http://invasives.eeb.uconn.edu/ipane/>
- ... Apply **lime** to unlock the nutrients in the soil. A total of 100 lbs per 1000 sq. ft. per year in the fall and spring.
- ... Add 3 inches of **organic matter** to your soil annually – fall is the best time.

Become a Gardener's Club Member at Weston Nurseries, Hopkinton, MA www.WestonNurseries.com

- ... Join the Gardener's Club and receive complimentary their Horticulture Reference Book (valued at \$24.95). Membership is free – just fill out a form and they will give you a membership card to use with purchases right away. Bennies include an extended warranty on all trees and shrubs; special e-discount email offers; special sales and discounts for members only; advance notice of seminars and special events, and more.

Field Trip Report ... Polly Hill Arboretum, West Tisbury, MA, as reported by member Nancy Sitta.

Open all year round, this Martha's Vineyard horticultural and botanical landmark is breathtakingly exquisite with an immense selection of magnificent species, such as magnolias, stewartias, dogwoods, witch hazels, winter hazels, viburnums, deciduous hollies and camellias, to name a few. Polly Hill Arboretum was developed over the past 40 years by the legendary horticulturalist, Polly Hill, now 97. There is a cornus kous ₁ allée and a ₂ pleached hornbeam arch that is worthy of a ferry ride to the island. Non-Members \$5 requested donation but if you are a Mass Hort Member – admission is free. For more info, visit www.pollyhillarboretum.org.

1. allée – a horticultural term defined as a walkway lined with trees or tall shrubs
2. pleached – a horticultural term defined as a garden path, on each side of which living branches have been intertwined in such a way that a wall of self-supporting living foliage has grown up. To treat each side of a garden walk, or alley, with pleaching and thus make a secluded walk was a favorite device of the 16th and 17th centuries. Although most pleaching is done by gardeners, it can also occur naturally.

Spanish Bluebells Bulbs in Bulk– save \$ now and reap the rewards in the spring.

Members - take advantage of this opportunity! MGC has placed an order for **blue Spanish Bluebells** (*Hyacinthoides* Hispanic) from Van Engelen, Inc. Naturalizing readily for years of spectacular color, *Hyacinthoides* thrive in rockgardens, woodland areas, border plantings and in perennial beds. This variety produces 15 to 20, bell-shaped, blue pendant flowers on strong stems with strap-shaped foliage 12" to 15" H. Bloom time: early Spring. Plant 4" to 5" deep and 4" to 5" apart. Bulbs will arrive by October 18 and will be packaged in 50# count bags for a cost of \$20.00 per bag (.40 cents per bulb). Only 5 bags are available. First to call can take advantage of this opportunity. Contact: Nancy Sitta. For more info on the species, visit www.vanengelen.com.

Composters still available

The Medfield Garden Club sold out of their composters and have plans on reordering. Worth the \$30, and it makes gold. If interested, please call Betty Sanders, President, at (508) 359-9453. Time sensitive, so call now.

Special Event -- First Annual Plant Swap

What: First Annual MGC Plant Swap
When: Sunday, October 24, 2004, 2pm
Where: Bring your plants with you to Geri Sprague's Presentation *Putting Your Garden to Bed*.
How: Details of the Plant Swap were included in your "Welcome New Members" Packet.

Additional Guidelines:

So that you know what you are taking home, and your fellow members understand what they are taking home from you, we've put together a sample "plant card" for you to reference when you are gathering your plants for the swap. Hand-written index cards are perfectly fine!

This is a sample Plant Card that should be completed for each plant you are offering to the swap.

<p><u>Sedum 'Autumn Joy'</u></p> <p>Light: full sun is best for best fall color partial shade okay Moisture: moderate to dry conditions Soil: prefers neutral to acidic soil Height: 12"– 24" Shape: vase-like habit, light green stems and leaves Flower heads rose color in summer, turning darker wine as the temperatures drop. Comment: Easy to grow.</p> <p>Member's Name:</p>

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The Mulch Pile Newsletter is produced and published monthly by the Millis Garden Club, Millis, MA. 02054. Frequent contributors to our "tips from our members and beyond" column include professional horticultural and landscaping members Scott McPhee, Geri Sprague, and Tess McDonough Ward. The Editors welcome tips, suggestions, reports from field trips, etc, from all of our members. Submissions for *The Mulch Pile* are due by the 20th of every month and should be 'season appropriate.' Until we all are more familiar with our website address, please send submissions to nsittamgc@comcast.net. Thank you, *The Editors*.