

MGC CLUB FLOWER
Oak Leaf Hydrangea



MILLIS GARDEN CLUB
MILLIS, MA 02054

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.

Hydrangea quercifolia

The Mulch Pile ❄️❄️❄️

MGC Newsletter

February 2005

CLUB NEWS

Dear Members of the Millis Garden Club,

Many of you have been commenting that "enough is enough" and you're "just itching to get out there and dig, dig, dig!" Well, soon we can dig, but in the meantime, let's learn, learn, learn! Attend the next two horticulture programs and gain knowledge of how to be more productive, efficient, and creative with resources to produce a luscious, living landscape.

And then you can dig, dig, dig! *The Editors.*

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

I am pleased to report that we have a total of 35 members at this time. A warm welcome is extended to our newest members: Mike Ambrose, Debbie Lesbirel, Joanne McCarter and Susan Vecchi.

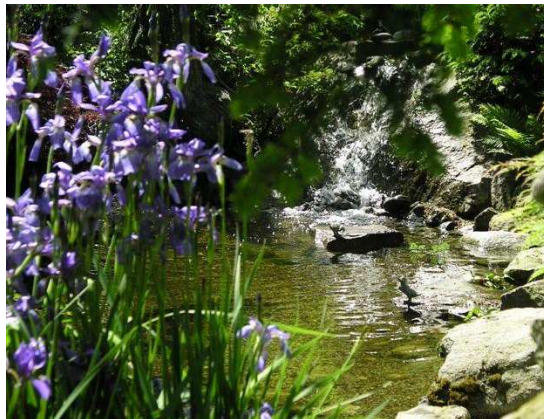
If you know of someone who is interested in joining, they can access the membership form via our website www.millisgardenclub.org or by contacting me and I will personally deliver a membership form to them.

We have some exciting civic and fund raising events awaiting us. One of which is a "Millis Community Clean Up". This project is slated for the month of April and more details will follow.

Thanks to all for helping us network by spreading the word about our club and by forwarding emails to family and friends.

See you at the next MGC Business meeting following our LawnCare program on Wednesday, February 2.

Nancy Wong, Membership Chair,
(508) 376-5805; nmwong@gtcinternet.com



A peaceful water design by Ripple Effects, Inc.

WINTER 2005 PROGRAMMING

Upcoming Educational Programs and Meetings

Who doesn't need to learn more information on **Lawn Care**? **Please join us on Wednesday, Feb 2nd from 7-8pm** to hear Turf Expert Ted Wales talk about everything that he knows from years of hands on experience at Hartney Greymont. This event is open to the community (with a \$5.00 donation fee) so please pass the information along to those that might find the program of interest. Remember, spouses and significant others are our guests for the evening, so if you are unable to attend...please send the next best representative from your family!

Not to be missed! Mark your calendar now for our March 16th educational program with MGC Member Tess McDonough Ward. She'll offer a visually delightful slide presentation and speak on **Tough, Reliable and Steady: Non-Stop Performers**. Tess is a wealth of knowledge on plantings, and she's held some very interesting positions since earning her degree in Horticulture from The New York Botanical Garden's School of Horticulture. For 15 years, she was the Head Gardener of a 22 acre, 200-year-old private estate in Brookline that was undergoing extensive renovation. We can't wait to hear more! This program is open to the community (with a \$5.00 donation fee). Spouses and significant others are welcome as our guests.

Winter 2005 Programming Details, *continued...*

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Veteran's Memorial Building, Room 18

6:30- 7:00 Hospitality

7:00 – 8:00 Educational Program

8:00 – 8:45 MGC Business Meeting

Lawn Care 101

Join the Millis Garden Club and Ted Wales, Turf Guru with Hartney Greymont, a full service landscaping service based in Neeham, MA.

Overview: Is there such a thing as perfection when maintaining a healthy lawn? Is it one that doesn't have any weeds? Is it a perfectly uniform carpet of green? What if it does have weeds and bugs and other things in it? Is it no longer perfect? The answer is simple. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder; no two lawns are the same. For one person a uniform carpet of green is their idea of perfection, for another a lawn with dandelions is beautiful. Learn the basic skills and techniques necessary to have a healthy lawn. Learn which grasses grow best in sun or shade, seed verses sod. Learn what some of the problem weeds, insects and diseases are and how to prevent or control them.

Join us at 6:30pm for our Hospitality and Networking before the presentation.

Members, Spouses/Significant Others are Free.

Guests are welcome with a \$5.00 Donation Fee.

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

Veteran's Memorial Building, Room 18

6:30- 7:00 Hospitality

7:00 – 8:00 Educational Program

8:00 – 8:45 MGC Business Meeting

Tough, Reliable and Steady: Non-Stop Performers

Join the Millis Garden Club for a dazzling slide presentation and lecture by Tess McDonough Ward, horticulturist and Member of MGC.

Overview: There are perennials that bloom beautifully, but only for a week, there are perennials that fade from view after they bloom, there are perennials that need staking, dead-heading, and a lot of fussing. Who has time? Come hear what an experienced estate gardener has to recommend about low-maintenance, highly rewarding perennial plants that will perform in your garden for a long time. Be prepared to write plenty of notes. (Snow Date March 23).

Join us at 6:30pm for our Hospitality and Networking before the presentation.

Members and Spouses/Significant Others are Free.

Guests are welcome with a \$5.00 Donation Fee.

For the February 2nd meeting, Members are asked to consider contributing to our Hospitality Table. Please contact Kathy Devine kathleendevine@comcast.net and Janine Schultze janine.schultze@verizon.net.

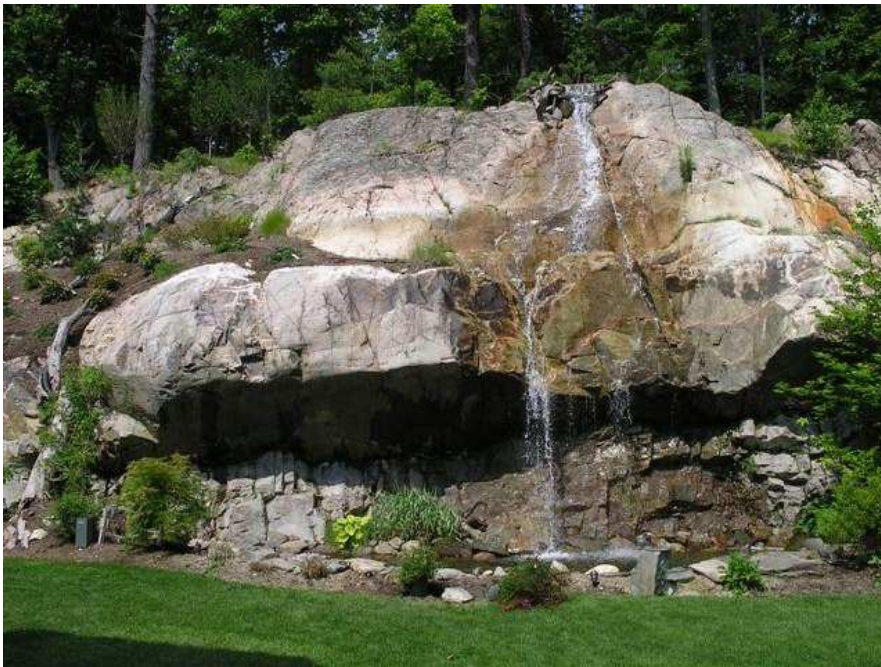
For the March 16th meeting, we ask that two Members consider volunteering as hosts for the Hospitality Table, a *low-effort* task. Others are asked to contribute sweets and savory. Thank you.

club news

Winter 2005 Programming, *continued...*

Overview: *Water Gardens* with Ripple Effects, Inc.

For those of you who were unable to attend the inspirational program on *Water Gardens* with Ripple Effects Inc., owner Scott McPhee, he was kind enough to offer this overview for our Newsletter. If you have any questions about designing, installing or maintenance of a water garden and would like to consult with Scott, he can be reached at (508) 376-4049. We thank you Scott, for organizing an outstanding program.



Water Gardens designed by Ripple Effects, Inc.



Water Gardens

Points to Remember

- ☼ Choose a location that will be both a focal point in your garden and be visible from indoors for added enjoyment and interest.
- ☼ Use the natural terrain of your landscape to create a more realistic and natural looking garden. Don't make waterfalls too tall or majestic on a flat site.
- ☼ Use stones that are similar to surrounding landscape features to keep the pond from appearing artificial.
- ☼ Underwater lighting will add hours of interest and viewing pleasure to expand your potential relaxation time.
- ☼ Design the water feature and use components and organisms that will encourage a natural, sustainable mini- ecosystem. For example: fish, gravel, biological filters, mechanical filters, plants, rocks, and moving water.

Scott McPhee, Owner
Ripple Effects, Inc. Millis, MA.

CLUB NEWS

Upcoming Horticultural Field Trips for Group or On Your Own

Several of us will be attending, so please join us at Medfield Garden Club's program **Beautiful Things with Bill Graham**, floral designer extraordinaire. February 9, 10am-12 noon. United Church of Christ, Route 109/North Street. No advance registration necessary. Just meet us there!

According to member Beverly McCarter, **Tower Hill Botanical Garden** is a magical place. **Flora Euphoria!** is a con-current program at Tower Hill and the Worcester Art Museum, February 4 – 6. Check out the web site for more information <http://www.towerhillbg.org>.

Educational Event Sponsored by
The Garden Club Federation of MA

The Federation sponsors a worth-while program called "Horticulture Mornings" and has opened the **March 7th** meeting to non-federated members, which means we can attend for a \$3.00 donation fee. The meeting topic is **Sophisticated Annuals for Gardens and Containers** and will be offered by Julie Weiss. The program is held from 10am – 12 noon in Waltham. Several MGC members are planning on attending so if you have an interest and you would like to carpool, please call Nancy Sitta. No advance registration is necessary. Let's take advantage of this educational opportunity offered by the Federation.

Side note: We are so eager to get our ducks all lined up by June 2005 (budget, by-laws, programming, fundraising, civic, membership), so that come September 2005, we can present our organization to the Federation's Board for membership approval. Once MGC becomes a federated member, the educational opportunities for *all of our members* is endless!

New England Spring Flower Show, March 12–20, Bayside Expo Center, Boston. Weekday \$17. Weekend \$20. Mass Hort Members Free. For more information, please visit www.Masshort.org. And if you volunteer to sell cookies at the Girl Scout's booth, your admittance ticket will be free (parking on own). Shifts are available from 3/14-3/18. Volunteers are needed from 10am to 2 pm or 2pm to 5:30pm. For more information, please call Michelle Provencal, Cookies and Dough Coordinator for Millis at (508) 376-4590.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

New England Grows, THE annual horticulture event for industry members is in Boston February 1-3 and professional members Chris Gavin, Geri Sprague, Tess McDonough Ward and Scott McPhee will all be attending (Scott will be demonstrating his pruning techniques all three days!). Nancy Sitta will be experiencing the show for the first time, and she hears it is a bit overwhelming with information. Plan on hearing the highlights and reviewing the 500 pounds of resource material that we anticipate collecting at the March 16th meeting. <http://www.negrows.org/>

Betty Sanders, Medfield Garden Club's President, has extended an invite to Nancy Sitta to attend The Garden Club Federation of MA's Metro West Winter District Meeting on Thursday, February 10th. Federated Garden Clubs from Wellesley, Needham, Westwood, Medfield, Dover, Natick and Sherborn will be in attendance. During these bi-yearly district meetings, there is usually a topic for group discussion. Nancy will report back what other clubs are concentrating on for civic and fund raising projects.

Planning a HORT field trip? Share with us who; what where; how and why! We'd love to know!

Tips From Our Members and Beyond

From Sprague Garden Designs

Did you know that you can top seed over snow and the seed will work its way into the soil when the snow melts? That way the seed stays moist which is the most important point, after buying quality seed and adequate soil prep.

If you are *able* to take a break from shoveling, here are some very fine reading suggestions.

Periodicals:

- People Places and Plants is published 6 times yearly by PPP.
- Fine Gardening is published 6 times yearly by Taunton Press.
- Horticulture is published 7 times yearly by F+W Publications and is a benefit when you join Mass Hort.

Books:

- Designing Borders by Noel Kingsbury
 - The Water Garden Encyclopedia by Philip Swindells.
 - The Natural Shade Garden by Ken Druse.
 - Winter Garden Glory (How to get the best from your garden from autumn through spring.) By Adrian Bloom.
- (Any of the Taylor Books are great garden resources).

From the Garden of Tess McDonough Ward

Well, not much action happens in the garden in February, except in very unusually warm years, which is not our current experience! Listen for the first Cardinal's song, this often happens around Feb 10 in my experience. I think it has more to do with the increasing light, rather than how cold it is. Also, look for flocks of Robins.

Enjoy the longer days, as it makes a huge difference in our hopefulness, even when it is below zero and we are out there walking the dog. It is daylight at 6am and 5pm now!!! WOW.

Look for Witchhazels to begin blooming: this definitely depends on temps....but glorious when they bloom in such a bleak landscape....Enjoy fruits, hollies, etc....

Greenhouses start to experience an early spring in February, with the accompaniment of increased insect activity!

From Ted Wales, Turf Expert, Hartney Greymont

Ted's presenting the program *LawnCare 101* at our February 2nd meeting. He suggested we access these two web sites for additional information on lawn care: www.umassturf.org www.malcp.org Thanks Ted, for contributing to the MGC Mulch Pile. We can always learn more efficient ways to maintain our lawn.

Millis Playground Fund - Wine Tasting and Dinner Benefit

Why not *step out* for this special evening of fun and support our local **Millis Playground Fund**. On Friday, March 11th you can enjoy dinner, a wine tasting, an auction and dancing! The event takes place at Primavera Restaurant, Millis, from 6:30pm – 11:00pm. Call Carol Baker at (508) 376- 9178 or Rebekah McCarty (508) 376- 2601 to reserve your seat now. Cost of the event is \$60.00 per person.



The Mulch Pile Newsletter is produced and published monthly by the Millis Garden Club, P.O. Box 535, Millis, MA 02054 and can be viewed by visiting www.millisgardenclub.org. Frequent contributors to our *Tips From Our Members and Beyond* column include our horticultural and landscaping professional members. 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.' Please send submissions to nsittamgc@comcast.net. Thank you, *The Editors*.