

Millis  
Garden  
Club

Founded 2004 • Millis, MA 02054



# The MULCH PILE

MGC CLUB NEWS

NOVEMBER 2005

## OUR MISSION

**Founded In 2004, 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.**

## Upcoming Events

### **The Winter Garden: A Field Trip to a Private Garden in Millis,**

led by Geri Sprague.

Saturday, November 12th, 9:00 am - 10:30 am

Sharon and Rob Bennette's Garden  
25 Baltimore Street, Millis  
Members and a Guest

### **Boxwood Trees and Topiaries**

with Anita Cross

Saturday, November 19th, 2 pm - 5 pm

Amvets 404 Village Street, Millis  
Members and Guests

### **Holiday Greens Workshop for MGC Greens Sale**

Monday - Tuesday - Wednesday,

November 28 - 29 - 30, 2005

9:00 am - 9:00 pm

Workshops are for Members and Guests  
Nancy Sitta's Home 12 Walnut Hill Rd  
Day and Evening Hours Available.

### **Festival of Trees & MGC Holiday Green Sale**

Friday, December 2nd through Sunday,  
December 4th, 11 am - 5 pm daily

### **MGC/MHS Holiday Gathering**

Friday, December 2nd, 7:00- 9:00 pm

Oak Grove Farm House  
Members and a Guest

## Millis Garden Club and Millis Historical Commission Sponsors *First Annual Festival of Trees* A Community Event for the Entire Family December 2 - 4, 2005, 11 am - 5 pm daily Oak Grove Farm House, Route 115, Millis MA

How wonderful that two organizations decided to organize and plan an event that would bring holiday cheer to our community members, and beyond. And then, how cool is it that fifteen Millis businesses said YES! to supporting *Festival of Trees* by donating a "themed" decorated artificial tree; and, how exciting that ten very creative and artistic Millis residents said YES! to creating a uniquely decorated one-of-a-kind holiday wreath. And let's get together a few of our best "decorators" to festively dress Oak Grove Farm House for the holiday season. And let's ask some of Millis' best bakers to make beautiful holiday cookies that can be offered for sale during the weekend event. And what about the possibility that Scrooge from the Millis Theatre Group might visit and sing for our guests during the weekend? And let's not forget to involve the Civil War re-enactors by inviting them to drop by in their "Sunday" best. And let's invite all the Council on Aging Groups and the Garden Clubs and the Lions Clubs, and other groups from all around to visit the weekend event. And let's tell everyone we know in Millis and beyond that this is the *First Annual Festival of Trees*, that there is something for all ages, that it is free and open to the public, and that we invite everyone to visit during this special weekend holiday event, right here in our town of Millis, MA.

## **SOUNDS LIKE MILLIS IS OFFERING A SPECTACULAR HOLIDAY EVENT FOR ALL AGES! AND EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IT!**

The *Festival of Trees* Committee greatly appreciates the support of the following businesses who have supported the fundraiser with a tree donation. The themes they have chosen are wonderful and festive. Trees measure anywhere from 1.5 feet to 6 feet in height. The next time you visit one of these businesses, please thank them for their support.

Big Bird's Nest Nursery School      Clicquot Club      Pretty Pieces  
Congo Creation      Curves of Millis      D.L. Murphy Insurance  
Gold's Gym      Harkey's Wine and Spirits      Millis Council on Aging  
Roman's Hallmark      Ryan Family Amusements      Totally Tile  
Town & Country Antiques      Gina's Hair & Boutique  
Tresca Bros. Sand and Gravel

And we thank the following artistic Millis residents for their donation of a one-of-a-kind uniquely decorated holiday wreath or tree:

Sue Gilkey      Diane Hubbard      Jean Maier      Jennifer McPhee  
Sandy Tannozzini      Janet Yered

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**Winter Interest Field Trip with Geri Sprague**  
**Saturday, November 12, 2005 9:00 -10:30 am**  
**Sharon and Rob Bennette's Garden**  
**25 Baltimore Street, Millis**

We have a grand field trip opportunity forthcoming and we hope you all have marked your calendar for this event. MGC Member and Landscape Designer Geri Sprague will lead a tour of Sharon and Rob Bennette's landscaped garden. It is a magnificent landscape that features many specimen trees, which offer *winter interest*, various *rooms* and *paths*, and a *water feature*. When the Bennette's moved into their home some 20 years ago, nothing was there. Over the years, the landscape has been completely designed and installed by our hosts.

This landscape will demonstrate points from Geri's *Winter Interest* program, Gary Koller's *Organizing Garden Spaces* program, and Scott McPhee's *Water Gardens* program (from January 2005).

**Members and a guest are invited.** Please car pool as parking is limited.

Access Baltimore from either Pleasant Street or Plain Street (Route 115). Park in the driveway and tightly along Baltimore.

Please join us at 8:50 am for coffee and a selection of freshly made scones and a blue berry buckle! RSVP to Nancy Sitta so that we know how much "hospitality" to provide at the Bennette's.

**Boxwood Tree Workshop with Anita Cross**  
**Saturday, November 19, 2:00 - 5:00 pm**  
**Amvets, 404 Village Street, Millis.**  
**Cost: Non-Member \$25. Member \$20.**

Registrants will learn the techniques of how to make a boxwood tree using freshly picked boxwood and floral oasis. Registrants will also make and take home a completed 12" fresh boxwood tree made in the workshop.

In addition, Registrants will also learn by a class demo of how to make a fresh boxwood topiary, greened centerpiece, and bow.

MGC will supply fresh boxwood, oasis and a tray. Fresh greens and fresh baby's breath will be available should you wish to embellish your tree while constructing.

We welcome Guests to attend this workshop. Please invite friends, neighbors and family to attend.

Class size is limited to 35. **Limited seating so please register now so you won't be disappointed.** Registration accepted via email or phone with Nancy Sitta. Registration fee (cash or personal check) is due at the same time to Nancy Wong, 1 Walnut Hill Road, Millis, MA 02054. For workshop questions or driving directions, please call Nancy Sitta at 508 376-2676.

Anita Cross led our Wreath Workshop last November. She is a floral designer and artist. She is a very inspiring and motivating instructor, and offers great design and construction tips. As she did last year, Anita will be making a few Holiday Decorations in class, which we'll raffle off at the end. Remember how beautiful they were?

**First Annual Festival of Trees**, continued from page 1.

Both trees and wreaths will be raffled off over the weekend with the winning tickets drawn on Sunday, December 4th at 4pm. Raffle Ticket prices for both Trees and Wreaths are 1 for \$5.00; 5 for \$10.00; and 10 for \$25.00.

Home made holiday cookies and hot cocoa, mulled apple cider and coffee will be available throughout the weekend for a small cost.

Trees and wreaths will be delivered on December 5 to winners living within a 15 mile radius of Millis. Winners may choose to donate their tree or wreath to a family or organization who are in need of some holiday cheer.

**Members! We Need Your Support NOW!**

What can you do NOW? And, *thank you* for asking ☺

1. *Festival of Trees* promotional postcards are now available which can be handed out, sent out in the mail and picked up at various businesses and municipal buildings. Each member will have a supply to distribute.
2. An email blast will be ready shortly. Please forward to everyone in your address book.
3. Flyers will be posted around town in all the businesses. Remember, this is an event that is for Millis and beyond. Please consider posting flyers where you work; where you shop, etc! Call Nancy Sitta for your supply today.

So let us know if you can put up flyers, send out postcards, or help us market in any other way. As you can see, this is a grand scale community effort and **we need everyone's support!**

Remember, this is a fundraiser for the Millis Garden Club and the Millis Historical Commission. We need it to be successful as it benefits historic awareness and preservation, and civic beautification projects in our beautiful town of Millis, MA.

*Special thanks are sent out to Mr. Kevin Meehan for lending a helping hand, which will provide monies for decorations and advertising. And to Ms. Joyce Boiardi for supporting the event in so many ways, and for designing the gorgeous Victorian style window treatments for the Oak Grove Farm House.*

**Holiday Gathering at Festival of Trees**  
**Oak Grove Farm House**  
**Friday, December 2nd**  
**7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

Members and a Guest are invited to attend a festive holiday gathering with Millis Garden Club Members and Millis Historical Commission Members. Invitations to follow shortly via snail mail. Members are asked to bring a *special* holiday appetizer, punch or dessert.

For additional information and to RSVP, please contact Holiday Gathering Co-Chairs Paula Fraser (508) 376-8734, or Barbara Koman (508) 376-8959 by November 28th.

**Holiday Greens Workshop for MGC Greens Sale,  
Monday - Wednesday,  
November 28th, November 29th, November 30th  
9 am till 9 pm, daily.**

What better way to get in the mood for *Festival of Trees* and the upcoming holiday season? You are invited to attend the Holiday Greens Workshop where we will make a selection of boxwood trees, boxwood topiaries, greened centerpieces and decorated wreaths, which will all be sold at the *MGC Holiday Green Sale* during the weekend at *Festival of Trees*. All materials will be provided. The *Holiday Greens Workshop* will be hosted at the home of Nancy Sitta, 12 Walnut Hill Road, Millis. Hospitality will be available. Please check your calendar now and contact our host with your availability - day or evening hours.

Want to invite a friend to join all the fun? If they make one boxwood tree for a donation, they are welcome to make a boxwood tree to take home, with only a small donation of \$10 to the club for supplies.

You can start now at home by helping to make the decorations for our pieces. Call Nancy Sitta for supplies of pinecones, ribbon and wire picks.

**Member's, Volunteer Millis Garden Club's  
Biggest Fundraiser  
Festival of Trees  
December 2 - 4, 2005, 11 am - 5 pm daily.  
Oak Grove Farm House, Millis**

Festival of Trees is only weeks away, and our busy little committee of twenty has been organizing and planning since January 2005. We now need to call in the big guns and rally the rest of the troops to help support this fun weekend community event.

Assistance is needed at Oak Grove Farm House with various tasks. Please check your calendar and consider lending a hand during the weekend, or pre and post event. Volunteers are needed in 2-3 hour blocks on the following dates and times:

Thursday, Dec 1, 9 am - 3 pm (final set up)  
Friday, December 2 through Sunday, December 4,  
9 am - 6 pm daily.  
Monday, December 5, 9 am - 2 pm (wrapping and delivering trees and take down of event)

Bring a friend along with you to share in this fun volunteer project - it will be an enjoyable time for everyone. Call Barb LeBlanc now to schedule some volunteer time at Festival of Trees. 508 376-9022.

**Send a Little Holiday Spirit from Millis MA  
And Support Civic Beautification Projects in Millis.**

MGC Holiday Cards, depicting "Holidays at the Oak Grove Farm House", circa 1890, Millis, MA, as seen through the eyes of Artist Jean Maier, are now available at various businesses and locations throughout Millis. These cards are printed in a limited edition and when they sell out, there will be no more.

The Cards are available for \$8.00 and are sold in wrapped packets of 10, with matching envelope. The card elegantly says "Season's Greetings".

The cards can easily be viewed on our website at [www.millisgardenclub.org](http://www.millisgardenclub.org) so pass the word on to family, friends and neighbors - what a great way to send a little holiday spirit on to others this holiday season.

Web inquiries, please email NancySitta@comcast.net with your order.

**MGC Holiday Cards are available at the following  
Millis locations:**

Gina's Hair Boutique 28 Exchange Street, Millis  
Harkey's Wine and Spirits 1138 Main Street, Millis  
Roman's Hallmark 26 Milliston Road, Millis  
Pretty Pieces 1132 Main Street, Millis  
Curves of Millis 18 Exchange Street, Millis  
Town & Country Antiques 37 Exchange Street, Millis  
Big Bird's Nest Nursery School at St. Paul's Church  
903 Main Street, Millis  
Veterans Memorial Building,  
Clerk's Office Main Floor 900 Main Street, Millis

MGC Holiday Cards will also be sold at *Festival of Trees*, Oak Grove Farm House, December 2-4, 2005, 11 am - 5 pm daily.

## **Annual Fall Meeting of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts In Review**

On October 26 MGC Members Sharon Bennette, Chris Gavin, Tess McDonough Ward and Nancy Sitta attended the Fall Federation Meeting on. Immediately, we were greeted by many club members from around the state, wishing us well on becoming the newest member of the Garden Federation of Massachusetts. And when President Kathy Thomas made the formal announcement of our membership to the over 400 attendees at the meeting, well, you bet we let out a "Woop" and a half!

We wanted to share our experiences with you, as these meetings are all about networking, networking and networking. The Fall Meeting is broken into a morning business meeting; a review from two districts discussing specific projects; lunch; boutique shopping, and a floral design program. The educational aspect of the meeting provided many ideas. The Brockton Garden Club spoke on how they organized a one-day event which marked their 75th anniversary. The speaker discussed budgeting, marketing and pr, fundraising, volunteerism, and all the logistics of organizing a one day event at a meeting site. All of us were frantically writing down their suggestions to incorporate for *Festival of Trees* and other projects. The second speaker was from the Fall River Tree Planting Program, a non-profit organization which has supported a tree planting program in that town for over 10 years. We took some ideas home with us, which eventually will lead into an Arbor Day project for the club.

And, with every meeting there is a floral design element to the schedule. Mr. On Thai, owner of Surroundings Floral, Schenectady, NY, offered a fabulous two hour presentation that knocked our socks off! He created over 15 different designs starting with several examples of elegant Eastern centerpieces on though masterful works of floral art. Mr. Thai used rich color combinations and exotic flowers and leaves. Normally not a lucky raffle winner, Nancy Sitta took home the most coveted centerpiece, a hollowed out pumpkin filled with an elaborate spray of Japanese Lanterns, Orange Lilies, Wheat, Cat of Nine Tales, Tulips and so much more. The piece weighed about fifty pounds and was challenging enough getting it to the car!

Save the following dates for upcoming Federation Meetings!

April 6, 2006 - Metro West and East Luncheon  
June 7, 2006, Annual GCFM Annual Meeting.

These meetings are open to all MGC Member.

## **Benefit for the Oak Grove Farm Playground Annual Comedy Night Fundraiser Friday, November 18, 2005, 7:00 - 11:00 pm, Glen Ellen Country Club, Millis, MA**

The Millis Lions Club will be hosting the third annual Comedy Night fundraiser to benefit the Oak Grove Farm Playground. Three professional comedians will once again grace the stage: Kenny Rogerson, Jim Lauletta and Brad Mastrangelo. Tickets are \$35.00 per person for advance sale only and can be purchased by calling Lion Paul Winslow at 508-376-4022 or Lion Keith Gagne at 508-520-4024 before November 11th, 2005. Tables of ten can be reserved so call now to reserve a table with your friends, family and neighbors. Ticket price includes hearty hors d'oeuvres. Cash bar available. Doors open at 7:00pm.

*The Millis Garden Club supports all community fundraising efforts to benefit the Oak Grove Farm Playground Committee. In October 2004, the OGF Playground Committee asked MGC to redesign, plant and maintain the Children's Garden at Oak Grove Farm Playground which is slated for Spring 2006.*

## **November's Horticultural Events**

### ***Holliston Garden Club's Annual Holiday Floral Demonstration November 9, 2005, 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm***

The Holliston Garden Club presents "Holiday Magic" a floral demonstration with Bill Graham, November 9, 2005 at 7:30 pm., at St. Mary's Church Hall, Holliston. This talented and entertaining designer will create a series of seasonal designs. All arrangements, plus a number of contributions from Garden Club members and local businesses will be raffled during the evening. Tickets are \$6.00 in advance or \$8.00 at the door. Refreshments will be served. For additional information or to purchase tickets, please call Jill Malcolm at (508) 429-4395

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### ***Milford Garden Club's Christmas at Home Demonstration November 14, 2005, 7:00 pm - 9:00pm***

The Milford Garden Club invites you to their "Christmas at Home" floral arrangement demonstration on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the Milford Senior Center, 60 South Bow Street, Milford. A \$5 donation will be collected at the door.

Join Robin Murphy as she demonstrates making holiday arrangements from fruits, flowers, and foliage. One of her arrangements will be a door prize, and the rest will be raffled off along with theme baskets. Refreshments will be served.

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## HORTICULTURAL TIPS

### Deer Resistant Bulbs-Keeping Bambi at Bay in the Garden

By Steven A. Frowine

Many parts of the US are facing an unprecedented number of deer due to suburban sprawl and lack of natural predators. These large deer populations can mean significant garden plant damage from their browsing, including loss of some prized bulbs. While there is no certain way to absolutely prevent all deer damage, planting bulbs and other plants that deer prefer not to eat is a step in the right direction.

#### To Deer, Daffodils Leave a Bitter Taste

Fortunately for gardeners, daffodils are near the bottom of the list of deer food preferences. In fact, their leaves contain a toxin that deters deer, rodents and most other creatures. Daffodils come in a wide range of flower colors, types, and heights, so plant plenty of these early spring beauties for your greatest chance to escape deer damage. Other bulbs that are shunned by deer are: Alliums, Star of Holland (*Scilla siberica*) Glory of the Snow (*Chionodoxa forbesii*), Crocus, Winter Aconite (*Eranthis cilicica*), Grape Hyacinth (*Muscari armeniacum*), Snow Drops (*Galanthus nivalis*), Early Snowdrift (*Puschkinia libanotica*), and Crown Imperial (*Fritillaria imperialis*).

For a super offering of deer-resistant bulbs at a very economical price, try M&G Van Eeden Brothers of Holland's 50 Bulbs Deer Won't Eat seasonal collections. The Early-Season, Mid-Season and Late-Season collections include Daffodils, *Chionodoxa*, *Scillia*, Crocus, *Eranthis*, *Muscari*, *Ipheion*, Allium and *Fritillaria*. Each bag, containing fifty bulbs chosen by bloom time.

#### Tulips are Deer Candy

Unhappily, deer love tulips and lilies as much as gardeners do. To discourage deer from enjoying your cherished flowers for their breakfast, plant them close to the house or grow them in a protected area. Consider simple fencing solutions like the Easy-Up Lightweight Fence or the Liquid Fence Spray that repels by smell. Try other repellents like garlic or Deer Off. One of the newer approaches, called Water De-Fence, uses a water sprinkler that has a motion/infrared sensor that fires a harmless spray of water at the curious garden intruder.

#### Plant Bulb Companions That Are Also Deer Resistant.

Daylilies are one of the first choices of gardeners to plant as companions for daffodils since they do an admirable job of covering up the maturing bulb foliage and provide a follow-up flowering performance in the early summer. Regrettably, deer relish daylily foliage. So, think about planting other perennials less liked by deer with daffodils and other deer-resistant bulbs. Some good choices include various ornamental grasses, Bee Balm (*Monarda*), Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), Lenten Rose (*Helleborus*), Shasta Daisy (*Chrysanthemum*), Columbines (*Aquilegia*), Japanese Anemones (*Anemone japonica*), Deadnettle (*Lamium*), Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra*), Foxglove (*Digitalis*), Threadleaf Coreopsis (*Coreopsis verticillata* 'Moonbeam'), most of the hardy ferns, Russian Sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*), and Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*).

To have peaceful coexistence between gardeners and deer requires a game plan that includes careful bulb and plant selection and being aware of the arsenal of products that help prevent or at least minimize deer damage. It's worth the effort!

## A Gift Idea for the "Gardener who has Everything"!

The ECOlogical Calendar is not your standard grid calendar; instead it is a beautifully painted scroll illustrating the whole year, season by season.

NBC called it:

"The most spectacular calendar of the year..."

Gardeners, farmers, and nature lovers of all ages are enjoying the multi-layered design and art of The ECOlogical Calendar, plus learn fascinating facts daily!

The ECOlogical Calendar is a stunning and inexpensive gift for your friends and yourself. Follow the natural phases of our Earth, Sun, Moon, planets, weather, tides, and growing seasons while absorbing details on plant and animal life year-round.

"...This replaces the traditional squares. It is a continuum of the seasons. There is more information here than in many a thick book, but it's so friendly you can get it at a glance. The ECOlogical Calendar is fabulous for your home, your office, and especially for your kid's classroom." -NBC's Today Show

Preview this season while checking out their website at:  
[www.ecocalendar.info](http://www.ecocalendar.info)

## Looking to Build Your Garden?

Visit [www.gardenweb.com](http://www.gardenweb.com) to search for a special plant, request seeds, or trade gardening books at no cost.

## Mum's The Word!!

Simple arrangements of cut chrysanthemums in ceramic pumpkins or votive candleholders add a lovely touch to any Thanksgiving Day table. Mums, the symbol of happiness and long life, are one of the longest-lasting cut flowers and will stay fresh, when watered, for up to two weeks!

## Good to Know.....from Better Homes and Gardens

Include some of these late-season bloomers in next years garden to ensure plenty of material for autumnal bouquets:

Black-eyed susans, eryngium, ornamental grasses, sedum, coneflowers, nandina and snowberry.

Shrubs with brilliant fall foliage:  
Winged euonymus, fothergilla, blueberries,  
and oak-leaf hydrangea!

**The Charles River Chorale's Anniversary  
Performance of Christmas Carols  
With Roy S. Kelley, Director**

Join in this festive evening!  
Concert Date: Saturday Dec. 10th  
Time: 7:30 pm  
Place: Millis High School  
Tickets: Adult \$10.00  
Senior \$8.00  
Child \$6.00

Pre-concert sales - save \$1.00 per ticket by calling 508.643.4134 or contacting any Chorale member.

**ADVANCE NOTICE:**

**ART IN BLOOM, MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON**

Mark your calendar now for the 30th annual celebration of the Museum of Fine Art's *Art in Bloom* event, Saturday, April 22 - Tuesday, April 25, 2006.

Last year 22,000 enthusiastic visitors toured the exquisite floral interpretations of the Museum masterpieces.

A group of MGC Members attended that event and were overwhelmed with the floral displays. Cost is just the regular admission fee for the museum. Free for MFA members. Consider joining us this year or attend on your own.

## Changes...

Recently, there has been a change in our Executive Team. Sadly, we must announce that **Kathleen Hennessy** has stepped down from her Secretary's position. She will be dedicating more time to her family and their busy schedule, a role she finds justly rewarding. Kathleen was one of the founding members of the Millis Garden Club, along with Jeanne Murphy Romano, Nancy Wong and Nancy Sitta. It was her famous cry "Millis should start their own club" that paved the way to where we are today. We will sadly miss Kathleen's presence at the monthly Executive Meetings, and we look forward to seeing her from time to time at the upcoming programs and fundraising projects. When you see Kathleen next, please acknowledge her dedication and hard work during our first year - our most important "growth" year ever. Her contributions were invaluable and so appreciated. She was our steady light, guiding our growth every step of the way. Kathleen, thank you for every ounce of energy you put into your role as Secretary and Founding Member of the Millis Garden Club.

And, we are grateful to **Barbara LeBlanc** who has accepted the appointment of Secretary, effective immediately. Barbara became a member at the very first meeting, back on September 15, 2004. And Barbara was our first member to volunteer for a committee, having called Nancy Wong the very next day to offer her services. All of you know Barbara, as she is the one that warmly greets our members and guests at the Registration desk during our meetings. She has been active on the Membership Committee since October 2004, and has also served on the Remembrance Committee. Barbara's husband Norman has been very generous as well. He lent a hand when we were filing for non-profit 501(c)3 status, giving us the double thumbs up, acknowledging that our accounting is all in order. We welcome Barbara's enthusiasm, energy and spirit in her new role as Secretary of the Millis Garden Club which she will serve from October 19 through May 2005. Thank you Barb, and welcome!