

**A POSY PICKER'S PAPER**  
**New Meadows Garden Club**  
**Topsfield, Massachusetts**  
*February 16th through March 16, 2021*



*The objectives of the New Meadows Garden Club shall be to foster knowledge of home gardening, decorative arrangements and an interest in civic projects.*

*Ah, winter precipitation! Read about the good, the bad and the ugly in this month's Green Thumb Corner.*

*Keeping in touch during the Pandemic and at a time of social distancing.*

*There's no question that the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to create extreme uncertainty in our lives. This uncertainty continues to extend to our club and how it is able to function at this time. In an effort to keep our members safe, our regular monthly meetings continue to be suspended until further notice. But, rest assured, our board is working on our members' behalf to carry on club business and will schedule events when it will be possible to hold them safely. You are being kept up to date electronically, so keep an eye out for messages you will receive about club happenings as time goes on. We all look forward to a time when we can safely be together again. In the meantime, please continue to keep yourselves and those special to you safe and healthy.*

**March 16**



*Our next board meeting will be a Zoom meeting at 10 am. Stay tuned board members, and be prepared to fire up your electronics for this meeting. A Zoom invitation will be sent prior to the meeting.*

**NOTES**



*We are still looking for volunteers to bring a plant or floral design of some kind to the Topsfield Town Library for its circulation desk until the end of March. A few members have already participated, and the library staff is extremely pleased for the flowers and plants that cheer them during these challenging times. Your plants or floral designs can be left for a two week period. The library staff is happy to water during this period, if you wish. No need to enter the library to bring and pick up. Give the library a call to let them know you're coming and ring the outside bell when you get there. The transfer will be made safely at the door. Please let Sandy or Jane know if you would like to lend a hand so that they can add you to the schedule.*

*...more news on the following page...*



*...Bits and pieces...*

*Oh, the places we've been!  
See how many members you can  
identity!*



*At Glen Magna 2010*



*The Essex River Cruise 2016*



*At the PEM in Salem 2012*



*At the Northern District Meeting 2012*



*At the Crane Estate 2015*



*At the Flower Market 2012*



*At the Pretty Poppy, Newburyport 2013*



*At Boston's Public Garden 2013*

*...Green Thumb Corner follows...*

## Green Thumb Corner

*Well, we can't say that Mother Nature has deprived us of snowy weather so far this winter. I almost forgot how shoveling snow feels after the absence of much of the white stuff the last few years! I can't say I missed that chore! I must admit, I'm not much of a fan of winter, but there are those who are delighted with the snow cover we have had the last few weeks. Actually, truth be told, our*



*gardens are delighted as well. Snow cover is an excellent insulator for our plants during the winter. Without it, cold temperatures like those we've had recently can freeze the ground very deeply, potentially damaging the root systems of trees and shrubs. Snow traps a lot of air and, like the goose down in our favorite winter jackets, holds in heat. There are reports that for every inch of snow on the ground, the soil temperature rises as much as 2 degrees! Snow also helps preserve moisture in the soil during winter, which is a huge help to plants which retain their leaves and are subject to the unforgiving winter winds. These plants require more moisture than dormant deciduous trees and shrubs. We've all heard of "winter burn." Winds draw moisture from the leaves, and if the ground is frozen and without snow cover, moisture is unavailable to the plant to make up for this abuse. And many trees and other plants actually grow new roots using stored energy reserves when there is persistent snow cover. The good stuff doesn't end there. In addition to the benefit to trees and shrubs, snow cover insulates the roots of perennials, which helps prevent freeze and thaw cycles that can lead to heaving of your prized specimens right out of the ground! A good tip for our perennial beds is to leave a little stubble when cutting down plants in the fall. The stubble will capture snowfall and hold a cozy "blanket" over the roots of plants like hostas, daylilies and peonies. And the good still keeps coming...I'm sure that some of you have heard snow referred to as "the poor man's fertilizer." As snow falls through the atmosphere, sulfur and nitrogen attach to the flakes. When the flakes melt, these elements are released into the soil and absorbed by your plants. What a deal! Before we go on to the not-so-good parts of snow in winter, a few extra benefits to note are that birdfeeders will be much more active because everything is covered in snow, providing some additional bird-watching opportunities. And need I mention that one of my favorite upsides is that snow cover in winter provides a much needed break from gardening chores?*



*But, while there is an upside to snow in winter, there are some downsides too. One look at the photo above and the one here tells you that, sometimes in life, there can be too much of a good thing! As all of us have experienced, heavy and wet snow can be very destructive. Branches on trees can split or break and trees can even be uprooted. When branches and trees fall, one has to hope that they will not do further damage to life and*

*property. While we have seen that snow cover is good for our gardens, the reality is that it also provides cover for voles, mice and other destructive animals as they secretly tunnel underneath making trails in lawns, chewing on the bark of your prized ornamentals and destroying stems of plants. It might be a good idea to pull snow away from the trunks of your favorites, if at all possible. Rabbits and deer are still attempting to feed on your young trees and shrubs in winter, and, with an added layer of snow, they can reach even higher! And, then there's always the late season snowstorm. Just when you are anxiously awaiting the first spring-like day, BAM, here it comes! These storms are very hard on plants that flower early. Luckily, many of them are pretty tough and make it though okay.*

*I guess the truly ugly has to be the occasional ice storm. It's always bad news when these are headed our way. The result is damage to trees and buildings, down power lines, no electricity and very slippery walking and driving. Not Mother Nature's best effort. But, that said it cannot be denied that there's nothing more magical than the peace and stillness of a garden covered in fresh snowflakes. ♦*