

# A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

January 16th through February 27, 2018



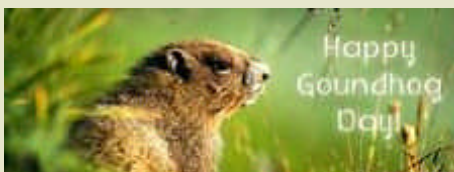
*The objectives of the New Meadows Garden Club shall be to foster knowledge of home gardening, decorative arrangements and an interest in civic projects.*

*While our outdoor gardens are fast asleep, why not celebrate with a new indoor tree, the houseplant of the month of January!*

*Congratulations to our newest Honorary Member, Oney Shade!*

*There is no regular membership meeting scheduled for January.*

February 2

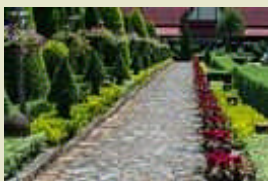


*According to folklore, if it is cloudy when a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day, then the spring season will arrive early, some time before the vernal equinox, which this year is March 20th; if it is sunny, the groundhog will supposedly see its shadow and retreat back into its den, and winter weather will persist for six more weeks. Any bets on how this will go???*

February 20

*Our next board meeting will be held at the Topsfield Town Library Meeting Room at 10 am.*

February 27



*Our next regular membership meeting will be held at the Topsfield Town Library at 12 pm. The program will be presented by Shirley's husband, Glen Holt, who will tell us all about the beauty of English Gardens. Have an early lunch before you arrive and then enjoy dessert at our meeting.*

*Hostesses are Claudette Poor and Jane Cullinan.*

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

## NOTES



As many of you know, it has been a long-standing custom for our club to place a small flower design or plant each week at the main desk at the Topsfield Town Library during the months of January, February and March. Our Artistic Co-Chair, Donna Graves, has compiled a list of volunteers for this public service we do for our club's home town. Thank you so much to those members who have graciously signed up. Here's the list:

Jan 2—Donna Graves  
Jan 7—Linda Mann  
Jan 14—Janet Hanson  
Jan 21—Gerrie Bunker  
Jan 28—Jane Cullinan  
Feb 4—Mary Leahy

Feb 11—Donna Ryan  
Feb 18—Sandy Whelan  
Feb 25—Claudette Poor  
Mar 4—Linde Martin  
Mar 11—Barbara Shade  
Mar 18—Rose Ann Waite  
Mar 25—Linda Flynn

For those who are participating, your assignment is very simple...on Monday of your week, just bring a plant, or a simple flower design to the library...the choice is yours and it doesn't have to be too elaborate...then come back to pick it up the following Saturday afternoon. You can even arrange with the member volunteer for the week following yours to pick up your plant or design. No lilies please because of their strong scent! It couldn't be easier!

If you find that circumstances have changed making it impossible for you to follow through with the commitment you made, please find someone on the volunteer list following your week who can swap weeks with you. If all else fails, please give Donna a call.

► For your information, the library opens at 10 am on Mondays and closes at 5 pm on Saturdays!

►► And new this year, we thought it might be a nice idea to start a collection of photos of library desk arrangements members of our club bring to the library each year to provide hints for volunteer members to come! So, this year's volunteers are requested to snap a photo of their desk arrangement and forward it to Donna Graves.

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

Coming soon!

► **April 7, 2018** The Topsfield Garden Club presents its 2018 Grow Spring EXPO! Last year's event was a smashing success and this year promises to be even better! Our club has reserved a table once again at this year's event. \*\*We are considering the possibility of using our table for fundraising this year. Please contact Shirley Holt with ideas for nifty items we might be able to feature!

► **April 25, 2018** The Northern District Annual Meeting will be held at the Tyngsboro Country Club. Awards Chair, Barbara Shade hints that she has submitted an application for an award for one of our members. Save the date!



***Essex County Greenbelt is planning a family Pollinator Day, Saturday, May 19, 2018 10 am to 1 pm at the Cox Reservation, 82 Eastern Avenue, Essex. There will be lots of kid-friendly activities to learn about important insects and mammals that are part of the***

***pollinator cycle. Among the activities will be a pollinator scavenger hunt, creating pollinator seed kits, and building a mason bee house! Weather permitting, there will be an introduction to the bees on the Reservation featuring a hive opening. For adults gardeners, there will be a lecture about pollinator-friendly pest control. Light snacks will be provided, and everyone is encouraged to bring a picnic lunch and blanket. All this for free admission. It sounds like a fun day for all!***

► ***Essex County Greenbelt invites members of our club to be part of this exciting event. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Alexandra Letizia at 978-768-7241 x10. Her e-mail address is alexandra@ecga.org.***

► ***For those of us who find ourselves a bit bored and still at home in January, rather than basking in the sun in our bikinis in some exotic place in paradise, here's a tip from our club's Master Chef, Donna Ryan...get into your herb and spice cabinet, flip open the bottles, and take a whiff. If the contents "smell like dust", it's time to change them out for new ones! I'm going to run right down to my kitchen...***



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



*...Bits and pieces...*



*Enjoying lunch...*

### *Our Holiday Social*



*Oney Shade becomes an Honorary Member!*



*Dessert!*

### *COA Boxwood Tree Workshop*

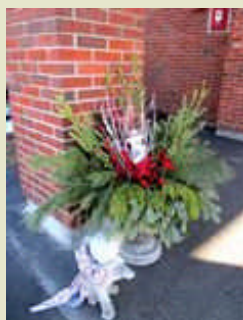


*Expert guidance from workshop leader, Rita Galvin.*



*Loving the finished product!*

*Here's a very sweet story I'd like to share with you from the Boxwood Tree Workshop. As I was wandering around taking photos, I noticed a little girl from the Trinity Preschool standing in the doorway with her teacher. I went over and the teacher shared with me that one of the children had peeked in to see what was going on and ran back excitedly telling the others that Santa's helpers were in the next room getting things ready for Santa! Then, very quietly, each student had to come see for themselves! Ah, the beauty of the innocence of youth. ♥*



*Linda Flynn's urns at the Steward School*



*...Green Thumb follows...*

## Green Thumb Corner

Since gardening is one of my passions, you can imagine my dismay when the scene from my kitchen window is a garden totally asleep for the winter. I guess in New England, winter is unfortunate for folks like me, who would rather enjoy spring and summer all year round!



So, in order to keep my gardening passion well-fed, I do a lot of indoor gardening with houseplants. I just love to come into a room filled with plants, ready to make me feel calm and happy, regardless of what's going on outside. Some might turn to a glass of wine to provide this effect. I turn to plants! And, since the houseplant for the month of January is the indoor tree, I thought it might be a good idea to talk about a few that are easy to grow, and might make you dance with glee as they beautify and purify your winter indoor spaces. Imagine creating an enchanting, magical woodland in your home with just one or two plants!



So, let's start with the Dracaena tree, pictured to the left. Many of you already know this plant...it's pretty common. I have a really old one that is big enough to put a bench under! There are many species featuring green, yellow or gold leaves, sometimes with a touch of red or pink. The Dracaena tree is a powerful air purifier, but take care if you have pets that eat plants, since this one is poisonous to dogs and cats. This is an easy care plant requiring only a bright spot, no full sun, and watering when the soil is dry...no wet feet! Feed every 6 weeks spring and summer. No food in winter.

And here to the right is another beauty, which I also have in my collection...Beaucarnea, commonly known as Elephant's Foot. This tree looks very much like a palm, but actually belongs to the asparagus family. This plant grows slowly and has a very distinctive silhouette, with its rugged trunk and heavy base to its top filled with curly ribbon-like leaves. A bright spot, not in direct sunlight, is perfect. Water only when the soil feels dry, and should you forget, the plant will be okay, since it looks after itself by storing its own water in its trunk and base!



Today's shade hero is the tree to the left...Polyscias, which belongs to the Aralia family. Some of the common names for this plant are Ming or Geranium Aralia. These trees grow straight upward and remain compact. The foliage can be green, white or yellow, depending on the variety. Round or heart-shaped leaves cover the branches from top to bottom. Remember that this tree is a shade lover, so a place for it should be easy to find. This plant does not like to dry out, so water frequently! Feed only once a season, and if you need to, you can prune to your heart's content!



And the last tree for today, to the right is *Pachira*, commonly known as Money Tree. This plant is crowned by foliage that grows almost horizontally, and resembles a hand with five fingers. Usually, two or three trunks are interwoven. This is a rapid grower, even though it does not prefer full sunlight and can be placed in spot with less light. Do not over-water, but do keep soil damp in summer. Like the Elephant Foot tree, this one also stores water in its trunk! It likes to be fed once a month in summer, and because of its tendency to grow towards the light, should be turned from time to time!



Well, I hope that today's introduction to these indoor trees has inspired you to go to your local nursery and have a look at them and the many other varieties that are available. They're easy to spot...just look for foliage that sticks out above all the rest! Indoor trees make their own statement and can provide a feeling of calm in the hectic world we live in. Why not create your own enchanted forest indoors even as our outdoors are bare and chilly! ♥



And, just for fun...I was looking out of my kitchen window the other day at all the snow we had on the ground (which has since melted!), and thought to myself that there had to be something else we could do with all that white stuff instead of shoveling it, skiing on it, making people out of it and throwing balls of it at someone else. As I looked out the window, I noticed some small birds, who are daft enough to stay around all winter, sitting on the

the holly bush right outside pecking around in the snow for a drop of moisture. What a great idea! Why can't I whip up some recipes using snow? So, on the computer I went to see what I could come with. Lo and behold, there is tons of information available about eating snow. First and foremost though, proper collection of the white stuff is essential. We are so fortunate to live in a place where the air is relatively clean. The best time to collect snow is when it isn't too windy and after it has been falling for a while. If it has finished falling, scoop your snow above the layer that is touching the ground. Do this when the snow is fresh. Stay away from plowed snow, or snow that is not pristinely white, if you know what I mean!

So, how about trying Paula Deen's recipe for **Snow Ice Cream**? Here's what to do... place 8 cups of snow into a large bowl. Pour a cool 14 ounce can of sweetened condensed milk over the snow and add 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract. Combine and serve!

Then, there are always **snow slushies** that you can make with flavored syrups, and even grownup cocktail ingredients, but how about a **Hot Cocoa Snow Slushie**??? Here's what to do to create this addictive treat: chop 3 ounces of chocolate into little pieces and melt. Add 2 teaspoons of cocoa powder and 1 1/2 tablespoons sugar, stirring constantly until blended. Remove from heat and stir in 1/2 cup milk until smooth. Then cool to room temperature. Add another cup of milk and stir the mixture into 3 cups of snow until it becomes slushie-like. Top with lots of whipped cream! Yum! ♥