

Beacon Hill Byline – By Rep. Mary Rogeness

December 10, 2001

### **A Change of Season**

This autumn we have been treated such pleasant weather that it hardly seemed like New England. We had beautiful foliage as usual, but lacked the frosty mornings that usually accompany them. We had a full season of football games, but we seldom needed scarves and gloves as each warm weekend followed the last. Then suddenly, Saturday, it's snow.

This year September was balmy, though it often provides the first frost of the year.

October was so warm all month that the neighborhood children made it through Halloween showing off their costumes unencumbered by sweaters and coats. My garden, though it had a late start, kept producing ripe tomatoes throughout that entire month.

November was a bit cooler. The heavenly display of the Leonid meteor shower, coming mid-month in the middle of the night, required watchers to be well bundled up. But Thanksgiving Day was mild and the next day's Springfield Parade of Big Balloons seemed warm. Christmas decorations became more visible in stores, and Bright Nights opened in Forest Park, but the weather belied those seasonal appearances.

Then we arrived in December. Record temperatures ushered in the month, peaking in the 60s and even 70 degrees. In defiance of such warm weather, neighbors seemed to be decorating their homes with ever increasing displays of Christmas lights. At the same time, shrubs and trees that should stay dormant until spring began to show buds. After putting it off for weeks and before any signs of icy roads, I had snow tires mounted on my car.

Last Thursday or Friday when the temperature was still warm, the weather forecasters started predicting an end to the anomaly. They talked of rain or possibly snow arriving over the weekend. I'll admit to feeling some skepticism. Rain, maybe, I thought. But we could not have snow! The ground was too warm. The weather was too warm. Even if it came, it would melt on contact with the surface.

Saturday night our family listened to carols as we trimmed the tree. We finished up and looked outside, and it looked like a scene from a movie. Heavy snow was falling, and though the first flakes indeed melted, a solid cover soon formed on the ground. I recalled the adage, "If you don't like the weather in New England, wait a minute."

The first sledding, the first snowman, the first sign that I can wish you a White Christmas. Happy Holidays to everyone.