

Academy Garden Club Thymes

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY GARDEN CLUB OF LENOX

September 2017

**Tuesday, September 12, 2017
Lenox Academy Building - 6:30 pm**

**Academy Garden Club
Herb Dinner**

A - M Please bring dessert

N - Z Please bring an appetizer

Refreshments Hostesses - Everyone

*Don't forget to bring a plate and
utensils for your dining pleasure!*

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Hello Fellow Gardeners!!

Wow! Talk about a study in contrasts- this summer and last would be a great place to start. It was just the beginning of July when I heard that we had already made up for the lack of rain from last year. Lack of rain, who am I kidding? We were in a serious drought. I think that everyone who was wishing for rain last year is thinking about that old proverb: "be careful for what you wish for."

In light of all this rain, my gardens look great! How about everyone else's? Who knew we would be so lucky? The funny thing is, even with all this rain, for some reason the mosquitos have not been as bad as in previous years. Makes me wonder why, not that I've looked into it! But I am pleased by this development.

Our program committee has been very active over the summer and you will all be very happy with our meeting selections for the coming year. I can see that all those who signed up for the Monument did their summer jobs well. The Monument looks great. Thank you for taking the time to help out!

We need to get ready for the Apple Squeeze soon. There are some new ideas this year. Please come ready to volunteer. We need help at the booth and help in creating items to sell.

Our first meeting is coming up on September 12, at **6:30 pm**. Please note the earlier time and what you should be bringing to the party.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone!

Warmly,

Anne

**Anne Gannon
President**

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Possible Mini-Workshop

I was planning on having a mini-workshop at our meeting on Tuesday, 9/12, but not sure if that is possible. Just in case, bring along sharp scissors, cutters, and a willing hand. Otherwise, at my house on 9/18 at 6 pm. Please watch your email for further info.

Jean Drees, Fundraising Chair

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Herb Garden

Horticultural Column: *Saving Herbs*

By Harriet Wetstone

Oh no! Not the end of summer, not yet!! I am writing this on the shore of a misty lake in Vermont, and having to admit that the refreshing chill in the early morning air, and a hint of crimson and yellow to come, just here and there, to say nothing of the end of the August calendar, all spell the end of summer.

My parsley is trying hard to flower despite my efforts of snipping off those stems to encourage the growth of more delicious leaves. So, my thoughts turn to drying, freezing, saving my parsley . . . and tarragon and oregano and thyme and rosemary and mint – forever. Well, at least for the year.

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Preparing Herbs

I have always brought in my lemon verbena, rosemary and mint to winter-over inside, but I didn't know that you can dig parsley plants. It is suggested that you dig them early to get the most of the root system, plant them in deep containers, water well, and leave them outdoors in the shade for a few weeks 'til they get over the shock, and then bring them in to grow in a sunny window.

Thyme and oregano can also be potted up, as can mint, although I keep a bouquet of mint in a vase as it roots and it does nicely in my kitchen window. Lemon verbena, my very favorite, has lived in a pot for years for me. I cut it way back before bringing it in, and it is always surprising how much growth there is over the winter.

Yet another strategy for woody herbs, such as rosemary, lavender and pineapple sage, is to take cuttings: Root the 4- to 6-inch-long cuttings by dipping the cut ends in a rooting hormone powder. Stick the cuttings in a pot filled with moistened vermiculite or sand, cover the pot with a clear plastic bag with slits in it, and keep it in a warm, bright room out of direct sunlight.

Once rooted, the cuttings can be transplanted into individual pots and grown under lights all winter. Not only will you have fresh herbs to eat, you'll have some new plants to grow in your garden next spring. (Thanks to Garden.com)

I am sure most of you know all about drying herbs, but I have never done it. There are lots of different ways, and it seems it is not about heat, which can destroy essential oils, but about lots of dry fresh air. www.tasteofhome.com suggests tarragon, bay, mint, lemon balm, rosemary and other small leaved herbs such as thyme as being herbs that take well to drying. But they warn that when you live in a humid climate such as ours, air drying can be more difficult, with mold something to watch out for.

You can dry by hanging herbs upside down, but be care to make small bunches as large ones are more vulnerable to mold. You can dry on a rack, as the Herb Associates at Berkshire Botanical have always done, spreading herbs out on a rack in the hot attic of Center House. You can dry in an oven, heating to the lowest possible heat. And you can dry in a microwave, again in small quantities. You lay a single layer of leaves on a paper towel, cover with another paper towel, and microwave on high for one minute, and then at 30 second intervals, if needed, until the herbs are fully dried.



Dried Herbs

Sigh, I still much rather go into my garden, early in the morning, and pick those favorite fragrant herbs to be scissored into my breakfast omelet! Here's to at least one more month of warmth and sunshine!

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The Gilded Age Garden and Flower Show

This past August our Academy Garden Club and the Lenox Historic Society co-hosted a very successful Gilded Age Garden and Flower Show to help Lenox celebrate its 250th birthday.

The town has an ongoing, year-long list of events and nearly two years ago we were asked to coordinate this particular one. Never having organized this type of event proved to be a daunting task for all those involved.



Cornelia "Nini" Brooke Gilder - Lecture



Judges

Upwards of 150 people were greeted by a lovely straw hostess, as they entered the town hall to take in the sights and smells of the show. Thank you to Karen Leger and the high school art students.

This show would not have been possible without a great team effort. Seventeen members of our club participated by being on the steering committee, handling the PR, judging, taking photos, and working the entire three days - as well as being prize winning entrants.

Then there were all of you that came to give us such wonderful words of encouragement.

To all of you, **THANK YOU SO MUCH.**

Dianne Romeo



Thank you to our photographers:

Lucy Kennedy, Dianne Romeo, Victoria Salvatore, and Tjasa Sprague

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