

Academy Garden Club Thymes

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

SEPTEMBER 2023

AGENDA

September 12, 2023, Meeting

1. Welcome and overview of the new Club year!
2. Financial matters
 - a. Five-year financial performance and trends
 - b. Proposed budget for 2023-2024 Club Year
3. Apple Squeeze fundraiser
4. Proposed update to Club Bylaws (copy attached)
5. Anne Gannon proposal about timing of programs
6. Old and new business
7. Enjoy the potluck and visiting together.

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LETTER TO OUR MEMBERS from Susan Ellen Wolf

Dear Academy Garden Club of Lenox Members,

I hope everyone enjoyed a good summer. We will have a chance to catch up with one another as we kick off our 2023-2024 Club Year on **Tuesday, September 12, 6pm, at the Lenox Community Center** and enjoy a potluck meal together. Your officers and committees have been busy over the summer and will fill you in at the September meeting, including:

1. Pat Neri has compiled the new Handbook and will have it for distribution at the September meeting.
2. The Programming Committee led by Theresa Terry Michney and Harriet Wetstone has finalized a great program lineup for the 2023-2024 Club Year which you will see in the new Handbook.

3. In these inflationary times, we held our dues steady! Thanks to our VP and former Treasurer Jill Dore for tracking our financial trends, creating a proposed budget for the next Club year, and anchoring the budget with the Finance & Fundraising Committee and the Executive Committee over the summer. Jill will be providing details, and we will be offering the budget for Members' approval at the September meeting.
4. Updated Bylaws will be discussed in September and offered for Members' approval in October. Last year, our Treasurer had to certify that we were in compliance with the Bylaws and as we reviewed the Bylaws, we realized a refresh was in order. The changes update our objectives to match what we do (we added community focus, beautification, and environmental protection); remove items we did not track or enforce (such as how many meetings each member attends, no guests at potluck meetings); and eliminated redundancies. A copy of the proposed updated Bylaws is included with this issue of Thymes for your information.

Thanks to Members who participated in the Lenox Garden Show, co-sponsored with the Lenox Historical Society under the leadership of Jan Chague, Theresa Terry Michney, and Dianne Romeo. Congratulations to our Members who were blue ribbon winners. Thanks to Dianne Romeo for organizing the Hildene Tour enjoyed by a number of members.

We will only have the September meeting before our major fundraiser at the Lenox Apple Squeeze on Saturday September 23. The Finance & Fundraising Committee has been hard at work planning for the Apple Squeeze. Thanks to those

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of you who have already signed up to help – we need all active members to assist and will have sign-up sheets at the September 12 meeting for the following activities:

- Cutting flowers the afternoon of Friday September 22 at the homes of Theresa Fasano and Susan Wolf and dropping the flowers off at the Academy Building.
- Meeting at the Academy Building the afternoon and evening of Friday September 22 to assemble bunches of flowers and terrariums for sale (for those with mobility issues, we apologize but this activity must take place upstairs).
- Setting up the Club booth for the Apple Squeeze 8:30 to 10AM at the Academy Building on Saturday September 23.
- Shifts to man our Club booth at the Apple Squeeze
 - 10AM to Noon
 - Noon to 2PM
 - 2PM to 5PM
- Break down booth and clean up 5-7PM

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THINGS TO BRING TO THE SEPTEMBER 12th MEETING

* FOOD *

M-Z APPETIZER OR MAIN DISH
A-L DESSERT

Horticultural Column – Asian Fall Vegetables Harriet Wetstone

This is the time of year when my vegetable beds are usually bursting with kale and parsley and nasturtiums. And beans and cherry tomatoes. But not so much this year - the beans and the cherry tomatoes, the nasturtiums, all non-existent or bedraggled. The kale is okay, but far from luxuriant. So much rain!

Ever hopeful, I am researching fall planting of leafy greens and other short crops like turnips, radishes, and peas shoots. I like to use the long and narrow window boxes that go easily on a deck or patio. They are easy to move around, look super chock full of lettuce, or turnip and radish leaves, or spinach, and you can even bring them inside, although the crops we are talking about today are very happy outside in crisp fall weather.

There is an amazing variety of leafy greens that can be planted in September. You can begin to harvest some leafy greens as quickly as two or three weeks! Leafy greens can do well with five or six hours of good light a day, or perhaps less, or even in shade! (Yes, I know, dependent on weather conditions, but one can always dream!)

Asian leafy greens are mostly new to me, but it turns out that tatsoi, bok choy, mizuma and others germinate quickly in late summer and fall soil. Some of these greens will keep growing so long as the temperature stays above 29 degrees. Others in the brassica family taste even better when they have been frost nipped and will last until snow. And maybe even show up again in the spring!

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Tatsoi

Tatsoi is a leafy green in the Brassica family along with mustard greens. It is closely related to bok choy. Tatsoi has spoon shaped leaves and a sweet but nutty flavor. It can be used raw, or lightly stir fried. Tatsoi is also known as spoon mustard, mustard spinach and broadbeak mustard. It is incredibly nutritious, antioxidant, and high in vitamin A, C, and in calcium and iron. It wants well-drained soil, temperatures from 60 to 70 degrees and regular watering, and will be ready to pick in 20 days.



Mizuma

Mizuma is another Brassica leafy, but completely different, with dark green serrated leaves with thin stems and a peppery, slightly bitter flavor. Again, very nutritious, mizuma is antioxidant and is rich in vitamins A, C and K. There are many varieties including one with maroon leaves, and one called Happy Rich which is dark green and produces florets similar to miniature heads of broccoli!



Bok choy

Bok choy, an Asian cabbage, has leaves that are deliciously green at the top with wonderfully crunchy spoon shaped bottoms. Native to the Yangtze River Delta in China, it has been grown for food since the fifth century! It was brought to America in the late 1800s by Chinese workers during the Gold Rush. It is readily grown from seed and germinates in 4 to 8 days. It likes temperatures from 55 to 70 degrees and doesn't mind a frost or two. I love the tiny baby bok choy, raw or lightly steamed with some fish. Growing bok choy is easy, so long as it is well watered.

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Spinach

And then there is **spinach**, a super cold hardy leafy green! Spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*) originated in Persia. European settlers brought it here in the 19th century. It belongs to the amaranth family and is related to beets and quinoa, and, as we all know, it is loaded with nutrients and antioxidants. There are four main types of spinach. Baby-leaf style spinach is tender with small leaves and excellent for containers. Savoy spinach (Bloomsdale) has crinkly leaves and is great for fall planting. Semi-Savoy is a little more difficult to germinate. Smooth or flat leaf spinach has spade shaped leaves and is bolt resistant, not such an issue in fall planting.

Spinach is a great fall crop, needing about six weeks to grow from seed to maturity, but you can start picking leaves as soon as they are big enough. Plant it in early September, spinach needs temperatures below 70 degrees to germinate. Spinach likes rich soil and wants to be planted in the shade. Spinach does not tolerate full sun. Once it gets going, you will have spinach to pick even for Thanksgiving!

Thanks to: <https://www.almanac.com/plant/spinach>;
<https://gardenerspath.com/plants/vegetables/grow-bok-choy/>;
<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/mizuna>;
<https://www.thekitchn.com/a-visual-guide-to-10-varieties-of-asian-greens>;
<https://blog.bluelab.com/cea-for-short-cycle-leafy-green-crops>

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Sarah Hatch told us that a group of ten members had a great trip to Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home in Manchester Center, VT. They visited the house, the observatory, the goat farm, and a Pullman private rail car. The garden was lovely and fresh flower arrangements were beautifully placed in many of the rooms. On behalf of all, **thank you Dianne.**

