Spencertown ♥ Books!
11th annual Festival of Books is just around the corner

If reading’s your thing, you won’t want to miss the 11th annual Festival of Books at the Spencertown Academy this Labor Day weekend. This much-anticipated celebration of all things literary offers book lovers of all ages a chance to do some serious browsing and buying, with more than 10,000 new and gently-used books, as well as CDs and DVDs, for sale at outrageously low prices.

The Festival begins with the Members’ Preview Party at the Academy on Friday evening, September 2, and continues through the holiday weekend with a varied schedule of author readings, panel discussions and surprises. At the Children’s Program on Saturday morning, kids can pose for a free souvenir photo with Pete the Cat (Alice Tassinari). There will also be book-related art projects as well as Storybook Corner readings for the youngest readers.

Once again, the Cookbook Café will be open all day Saturday and Sunday, serving healthful, delicious snacks and beverages.

Star-studded cast
This year’s lineup of participating poets, novelists and nonfiction authors features a number of local luminaries, including Elizabeth Brundage (All Things Cease to Appear), Mark Wunderlich (The Earth Avails: Poems), Will Swift (The Roosevelts and the Royals) and Ruth Reichl, (My Kitchen Year). There will also be readings and discussions by Michelle Hoover (Bottomland); Courtney Maum (I’m Having So Much Fun Here Without You); Steve Yarbrough (The Realm of Last Chances); Russell Shorto (Amsterdam; The Island at the Center of the World); Christopher Breiseth (A Promise to All Generations), and David Pietrusza (1932: The Rise of Hitler and FDR, Two Tales of Politics, Betrayal and Unlikely Destiny).

On Saturday, starting at 11:30 a.m., prizes will be presented to the winners of this year’s Teens’ Short Story and Poetry contest. Academy board member David Highfill (who shares co-chair duties with Jill Kalotay) and award-winning author Daphne Kalotay (Russian Winter and Sight Reading) have selected the Short Story winners; poet Mark Wunderlich has selected the Poetry winners.

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**Bookends** It's been a great summer at the Academy—and it's not quite over

It's hard to believe—and perhaps harder to accept—that we're closing in on summer's end. According to Google, fall will arrive at approximately 10:21 am on September 22. The trees will still be in full leaf—mostly—and we'll no doubt be graced by days that are mild enough for swimming, barbecues and cut-offs. But there is no mistaking that early morning chill in the air that hints at the days to come. We've all been there.

That said, I for one am not quite ready to close the books on summer. This summer in particular has been a rewarding, productive and enjoyable one for the Academy, bookended by our Hidden Gardens Tour and our upcoming Festival of Books. Each year, it seems, both events, each well into their second decade, keep getting better and better.

Once again it bears noting that these events and, indeed, all of the outstanding programs and activities on the Academy's calendar—are planned, created and executed entirely by volunteers. Without their vision, commitment and hard work, events like Hidden Gardens and the Festival of Books simply wouldn't be possible.

These events are great fun—but also a vital source of funding for the Academy. Absent an endowment, we must raise 100% of our operating expenses each year from the proceeds—and from the generosity of our members and friends.

So, my heartfelt thanks for your ongoing support. I look forward to seeing you at the Festival of Books this Labor Day weekend—and extend my warmest wishes for a great fall.

**Kids need music**

Another Opening, Another Show

A fund-raising initiative restores music to Hudson schools

Internationally celebrated pianist-composer Lincoln Mayorga and vocalist-pianist Sheri Bauer-Mayorga will interpret a selection of Cole Porter's best-loved songs—and some lesser-known gems as well—at the Spencertown Academy on Sunday, September 25 at 2:00pm.

The concert is a fundraiser for Kids Need Music, a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that intermediate schools have musical instruments for their music program. Kids Need Music president Craig Bender explains: “Every year dozens of underprivileged school students in the Hudson City School District are unable to join their school band or orchestra for lack of money to purchase instruments. 100% of the proceeds from ticket sales, along with any additional donations, go toward the purchase of instruments—and giving kids the gift of music. Donations of instruments are welcome as well.”

Last year's Kids Need Music concert at the Academy, raised more than $7,000. To date, 120 children are beneficiaries of the program.

At this year's concert—“100 Years of Cole Porter”—the Mayorgas will be joined by bassist Otto Gardner, vocalists Jean Leonard and Derek Stannard, and emcee Cheryl Symister-Masterson.

The event is co-sponsored by The Chatham Synagogue Netivot Torah and the Spencertown Academy. Tickets are $25 and can be purchased on the website at spencertownacademy.org.

**Intersection Austerlitz**

Costume and Culture: Designs for Life Celebrating fashion and fabrics

“Intersection Austerlitz” will celebrate “Costume and Culture: Designs for Life” on Saturday, September 17. This exciting collaboration will feature activities and programs that draw on the creativity and resources of the Spencertown Academy, Millay at Steepletop and the Austerlitz Historical Society.

The day-long program will focus on various aspects of fashion and fabrics with workshops, exhibits, presentations and tours. A few highlights:

- Costume designer Sarah Conly will display a retrospective of millinery, sketches and photos from operas produced at the Tanglewood Festival... Elizabeth Walters will display a selection of the vintage feathers and trims sold on her website to milliners, designers and others.
- Internationally celebrated pianist-composer Lincoln Mayorga and vocalist-pianist Sheri Bauer-Mayorga will interpret a selection of Cole Porter's best-loved songs—and some lesser-known gems as well—at the Spencertown Academy on Sunday, September 25 at 2:00pm.

**The Academy**

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This year’s Hidden Gardens tour offered a rare view of four very special “Village and Country Gardens” – in Spencertown, Austerlitz, and Kinderhook. Among the highlights of the early-summer event was a visit to the restored grounds and gardens of 20th century American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay at Steepletop. Vivian Wachsberger and Madaline Sparks again co-chaired the event.

As always, the weekend festivities began on Friday evening with the Twilight in the Garden party, hosted this year under cloudless skies by Denise and John Dunne at their beautiful home in Spencertown. Attendance (not including the Dunnes’ grazing sheep) was at record levels.

“Year after year, the Festival of Books proves to be so much fun that it’s easy to forget it’s a vital source of funding for the Spencertown Academy,” says Jill Kalotay. Since it doesn’t have an endowment, the Academy must raise 100% of its operating expenses through the Festival, membership and other signature events.

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Next year’s Hidden Gardens tour is set for June 17.

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Costume and Culture: Designs for Life Celebrating fashion and fabrics

Austerlitz Historical Society—Michelle Parrish, an educator, weaver, and spinner, will demonstrate flax processing... Fiber artist Jennifer Touchstone will conduct a family-friendly wet-wool felting workshop...

At Francis Culley’s tie-dye scarf workshop, participants will transform a natural piece of fabric into a wearable piece of art.

Steepletop—British scholar Dr. Sarah Parker will give a presentation on poet Edna St. Vincent Millay’s use of fashion and photography to forge an iconic celebrity image.

Looking ahead, Dan Shulman (piano), Kaori Washiyama (violin) and Nathaniel Parke (cello) will round out the Academy’s 2016 concert season on Saturday, November 1 with a performance of works by Mozart, Schubert and Schumann. General admission tickets ($20/$10 for students) for each concert may be purchased in advance via http://www.spencertownacademy.org and will be available at the door.

INTERSECTION AUSTERLITZ

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Jazz at the Academy The Quartet performs October 1

The Spencertown Academy’s 2016 concert season continues on October 1 with a performance by the renowned jazz group, The Quartet.

Individually, all four members of The Quartet—Tony Kieraldo (piano), Terence Murren (bass), Peter O’Brien (drums) and Stuart Quimby (flute)—have excelled as sidemen, playing in diverse styles and backing an amazing roster of musicians, from Jacques d’Amboise to the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

“These master players bring decades of musical experience to the stage—but now they’re playing for each other,” says Rob Fisch who, with Craig Bender, has spearheaded the return of music to the Academy this year. “Their combined history yields an enormous collective repertoire, allowing them to select compositions that span several decades of jazz history.”

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Your Involvement Means Everything Volunteer at the Academy!

These are exciting times for the Academy and our community. Music is back, our signature events are thriving, and our gallery shows are drawing increasing interest from artists and art lovers throughout the region.

All of it, of course, is the work of our volunteers. And that’s where you come in.

The next big event at the Academy, the Festival of Books, takes place Labor Day weekend and there are still many ways you can play a role—as a greeter or book room attendant, for example, or by helping out in the food tent. We are also looking for gallery attendants and docents for our upcoming art shows throughout the Fall. Whatever time you can contribute, from an occasional hour or two to a few days, will make a real difference.

As a volunteer at the Academy, you’ll have an opportunity to connect with your neighbors and make new friends while joining in work that benefits and supports a worthy mission. It’s deeply rewarding—and great fun.

Whether you volunteer at an event, host a dinner, join a committee, or develop an idea of your own, your involvement means everything. Let us hear from you.

Contact us at spencertownacademy.org/support/volunteer or 518-392-3693.