Hidden Gardens 2018

Artful Landscapes

Hidden Gardens, the Academy’s annual celebration of all things horticultural, will take place June 2, 15, and 16. With a full line-up of events, this beloved community tradition has served as the gateway to summer in Columbia County each year since 2005. Hidden Gardens is co-chaired by Spencertown Academy Board members Madaline Sparks and Vivian Wachsberger.

The program begins on Saturday, June 2 at 10:30am with the Hidden Gardens Breakfast Lecture, “Where Have All the Monarchs Gone and What We Can Do About It” by environmental activist, butterfly expert and master gardener Maraleen Manos-Jones. Butterfly-friendly perennials will be on sale; tickets are $15 in advance, $20 at the door, and include a light continental breakfast.

Party time

The Twilight in the Garden Party takes place on Friday, June 15 from 6-9pm at Meg and Bill Stratton’s 1845 Greek Revival home in Spencertown, amid shade trees and meadows and wooded areas beyond. Cocktails, sparkling beverages, hors d’oeuvres, and a light supper are served. Tickets are $90 in advance and $100 at the door.

The highlight of the Hidden Gardens weekend is the self-guided tour on Saturday, June 16 from 10am-4pm. The tour showcases six exquisite private gardens in Spencertown, New Concord, and Red Rock, as well as the restored gardens of 20th century American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay at Steepletop in Austerlitz. Participants will get to explore the landscapes of several historic homes featuring abundant gardens and curated grounds; a shade garden and pond complementing a contemporary house in the woods; a brick sundial garden bordered by lavender and filled with blooming perennials; a formal “secret garden” surrounded by a tall privet hedge; and one inspired by the Grande Allée in Monet’s gardens at Giverny.

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Woodlands and Wetlands

Artists’ visions of two vital eco-systems

“Woodlands and Wetlands,” a multimedia exhibit featuring artists Jacqueline Altman, James Coe, George Dirolf, Ellen Jouret-Epstein, Roger McKee, and Burdette Parks, will be on display in the Academy gallery on Saturday, June 16 from 9am-4pm and on Sunday, June 17 from 1-5pm. The exhibit, focusing on flora, fauna, and aquatic areas within these living environments, kicked off the Hidden Gardens program on May 25. Admission is free and the artworks are for sale. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Academy.

Habitats or puddles?

On Sunday, June 3 at 2pm, in conjunction with the exhibit, Columbia Land Conservancy Stewardship and Education Manager Heidi Bock will give an illustrated talk titled “Woodland Pools: Important Habitats or Just Big Puddles?” Following the talk, she will lead a nature walk at Harris Conservation Area in Austerlitz to view regional woodlands and wetlands. Admission to the talk and walk is free. Advance reservations can be made at art@spencertownacademy.org.
Busy Doings
Summer’s approaching—and the Academy’s ready!

One gauge of the Spencertown Academy’s activity level is the “What’s Coming Up” feature in this issue of the newsletter—and, more to the point, its sheer size and density. Typically the column fits on the front page with room to spare; this time we needed a shoehorn to get it all in—evidence of busy doings at the Academy these late spring days.

For the volunteers who plan and produce our amazing array of events, it may seem like there are more balls to keep in the air and more details to keep track of than ever—but no one is complaining. The Academy is supposed to be a busy place—and all indications are that it will stay busy as the days grow longer.

On the eve of our 46th summer, I’m excited about the rich schedule of programs coming up, beginning with the Austerlitz Bicentennial on June 9 and 10 and the world premiere of a 20-minute movie about the Spencertown Academy. Next comes our annual Hidden Gardens weekend, which defines the start of summer in these parts. The Twilight in the Garden party takes place on Friday, June 15, followed on Saturday by the Garden Tour and our Garden Market on the Green. Bookending the season is our 13th annual Festival of Books, set for Labor Day weekend.

I hope you’ll take advantage of all that the Academy has to offer—now and in the coming months. I also invite you to consider volunteering at these events and our others throughout the year. Our most immediate need is for garden docents and garden market attendants for our upcoming Hidden Gardens tour. But whatever you’re good at or like to do best, there’s a job with your name on it. Please see the volunteering box on page 4 for details.

Meanwhile, thank you for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you this summer at the Academy.

Nick Van Alstine
President

Membership
Are you a current member of the Spencertown Academy?
Visit our website to sign up or to renew your membership today!
We thank you for your support.

Please visit spencertownacademy.org for information on programs, artsVOYAGE, membership, and volunteer opportunities or to subscribe to our e-blast list.
Founded in 1818, the town of Austerlitz will mark its bicentennial on Saturday and Sunday, June 9 and 10, with a varied program of historical exhibits, talks and tours, a parade along Routes 7 and 203, and other events—including the premiere of a documentary about the Spencertown Academy.

Produced and directed by Monk Schane-Lydon, the 20-minute film, *Spencertown Academy: Keeping Our History Alive,* features commentary by former Executive Director Judy Staber; former Town Board member Joel Dyslin; former Board members Steve Somlo, Irene Stone and Denise Dunne; Nick Van Alstine and Madaline Sparks, President and Vice President of the Academy’s current Board; local resident and longtime supporter John Dunne; preservation architect Marilyn Kaplan; and Fern Sloan and Ted Pugh, of the Actors’ Ensemble, the Academy’s former resident theatre group.

Also interviewed in the film are Dan and Chris Rundell and Mitzi Lobdel, who shared memories of attending the Spencertown Academy in the 1950s and ‘60s, when it was still a two-room schoolhouse; Tom Curran, an alum from the early 70s; and teacher Marion Ulmer. The film also includes vintage photos and an account by Town Historian Tom Moreland of the Academy’s founding.

Spencertown Academy: *Keeping Our History Alive* will be shown continuously in the Academy auditorium on Saturday from 10am-3pm. Tom Moreland will present a talk at the Academy at 4pm on Saturday, titled “The History of Austerlitz 1756-2018.”

The Garden Market on the Green will take place on Saturday, June 16 from 9am to 3pm at the Spencertown Village Green across the street from the Academy. More than 20 vendors will offer plants, home and garden furnishings, birdhouses, antiques, garden books, and garden advice. The Academy's White Elephant Booth will offer bargains on select garden items and accessories.

Food options will include egg sandwiches for breakfast and grilled burgers and hot dogs for lunch prepared by the Spencertown Volunteer Fire Company; Arturo’s at Micosta food truck will offer crepes, coffee, fruit salad, organic juices, and vegetarian quesadillas. There will also be an ice cream sundae booth staffed by Academy members.

Tickets are $35 in advance, $40 day of; package rates for multiple events are also available. For tickets and pricing information, visit [www.spencertownacademy.org](http://www.spencertownacademy.org). Day-of garden tour tickets and maps will be available from 9am-2pm at the Academy and at the Garden Market on the Green.
The Juries Are Out  The Academy hosts two upcoming juried shows

“Illumination,” the Spencertown Academy’s second annual juried photography show, will feature the work of regional artists from Saturday, June 23 through Sunday, July 15. Nationally exhibited multi-disciplinary artist Jan Nagle will serve as guest juror. Opening reception: June 23, 4-6pm.

Submissions for the Academy’s fourth regional juried art show are being accepted currently from residents of Columbia, Rensselaer, Albany, Ulster, Dutchess and Greene Counties (New York), Litchfield County (Connecticut), and Berkshire County (Massachusetts). The show will run from October 6-21, with the opening reception on Saturday, October 6, 4-6pm. Please visit spencertownacademy.org/gallery for details and submission guidelines.

building community through the arts

Be a Hidden Gardens Volunteer! Have fun—and make a difference

Like all of the Academy’s signature events, our annual Hidden Gardens tour is planned and produced entirely by volunteers. With this year’s tour fast approaching, now is the time to let us know if you can help as a garden docent or a garden market attendant.

Docents will be assigned to a specific site, where they will welcome visitors, direct parking if necessary, and offer guidance and help as needed. We have open spots for both the 9:45am-1pm and 12:45-4pm shifts.

Depending on the shift, market attendants will help with set-up or breakdown, selling tickets to the tour, and assisting vendors and shoppers. There are three shifts: 7-10:30am; 10:15am-2:30pm; and 2:15-5pm.

Volunteering is rewarding and fun—plus there’s an added bonus: All volunteers will be treated to a private preview tour and breakfast on Sunday morning, June 10.

So please let us know how you’d like to help, including the shift you prefer. We will do our very best to accommodate you. To volunteer or to learn more, email Ann Vartanian at annmvartanian@spencertownacademy.org.

We look forward to seeing you on June 16.