

HANDMADE HOLIDAY



A beloved tradition returns



Holiday shopping is fun again!

The wait is over: Following a two-year absence, the much-missed Handmade Holiday Pop-up Shop is back at the Spencertown Academy.

The shop will be open from Friday, November 27—the day after Thanksgiving—through Sunday, November 29, and on Saturday and Sunday, December 5 and 6. Hours are from 10am to 4pm each day. Admission is free.

Back by popular demand

"We're excited to bring the Handmade Holiday back to the Academy," says Vivian Wachsberger, chair of the Handmade Holiday Committee. "During the two-year hiatus, we heard from many community members who missed the event."

Holiday gift shoppers will once again find hundreds of locally crafted items, including ceramics, jewelry, quilts, knitwear, felted puppets, candles, bath products, fired glass, baskets, paper crafts, cards and edible delicacies. In addition to supporting local artists and artisans, a portion of the proceeds help fund Academy programs.

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what's coming up

THE GALLERY

Fur. Fin. Feathers.

Animal-themed Fall Regional Juried Show

Through November 22

GALLERY HOURS:

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, 1-5pm

HANDMADE HOLIDAY

November 28-29, December 5-6

SEE ARTICLE ON THIS PAGE

Revels

Revels 2016:

Winter at Its Warmest

Saturday, January 30, 2016

A festive and memorable evening of great food and great company.

WATCH FOR DETAILS

Hidden Gardens²⁰¹⁶

June 18, 2016

WATCH FOR DETAILS

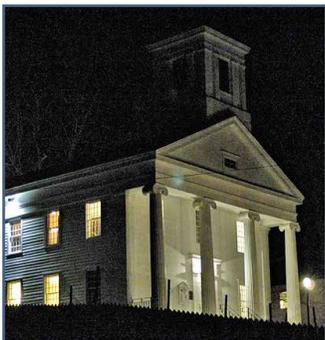
spencertownacademy.org/events

Spencertown Academy Annual Appeal



An Opportunity to Thrive

It's time to revitalize the Spencertown Academy. Your gift will help.



It's hard to remember a time when the Spencertown Academy wasn't a treasured part of our community. Over the past 43 years, the Academy has provided a wide array of high-quality offerings, including concerts, classes, readings, gallery shows and arts-in-education programs at local schools.

But as a new year approaches, the Academy faces daunting financial challenges.

For one, our historic 1847 Greek Revival building is in desperate need of restoration and repair—notably a new roof and an updated electrical system. Accomplishing this will require that we mount a successful capital campaign in the near future. But for now, at least, the money simply isn't there.

Without an endowment or foundation grants, the funds in our reserve account must be carefully husbanded and earmarked for essential operating costs and bare-bones maintenance. Little is left over for critical infrastructure improvements and, sadly, even less for programming.

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Can We Count on Your Support? The Academy needs your help—now more than ever



This has been another great year at the Spencertown Academy, marked by high-quality programming and strong attendance at our events. All of it, as many of you know, is the work of volunteers.

In point of fact, the Academy has operated on an all-volunteer basis for the past three years. During that time, thanks to a tireless board and an incredible team of volunteers, we have been able to continue producing most of our signature fund-raising annual events – Revels, Hidden Gardens and the Festival of Books.

Time and again our volunteers have played an indispensable role in keeping the Academy going. Over the past three years, our crack gallery committee has provided us with a constant stream of great art exhibits featuring regional artists. This year's Festival of Books and Hidden Gardens ran more smoothly than ever thanks to the interest and commitment of volunteers. And it is only through the efforts of a group of dedicated volunteers that we were able to bring back our much loved Handmade Holiday event.

But the reality is that even dedicated volunteers with a passion for giving back are not enough to support the daily administrative tasks and operation of the building. We are often asked, "Why

aren't there more programming events at the Academy? Where is the variety of programming we used to see?" While we would love to offer more programming, we simply don't have the required resources – money and staff.

Thus, our next priority is to hire an administrative staff member so that we can free our volunteers to focus on programming, community events and the restoration of the building. But that is a capital expense which, at present, isn't covered in our budget.

After nine years as president I had originally planned to step down this past June but have decided to stay on until we have a plan in place for the future that allows for the hiring of an administrative staff member. I hope I can count on you to help reach this important goal.

Your past support has been vital to the survival of the Spencertown Academy and I want to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation. But the Academy today faces a critical need. As we look ahead to a new year the Academy needs your help – now more than ever. Please give as generously as you are able.

My best wishes for Thanksgiving and the holiday season.

Mark Bone

Festival of Books recap

One for the Books This year's festival draws rave reviews

Reading is alive and well—and more fun than ever. Just ask the booklovers of all ages who thronged the Spencertown Academy's annual Festival of Books over Labor Day weekend.

As always, the Festival featured a wide-ranging schedule of events, including stellar author presentations, the best book sale around, and some exciting new features. "The audiences for all the events were consistently engaged and energetic, which is vital to our mission this year and every year—getting folks in the door and providing a fun experience," says board member David Highfill, who co-chaired the Festival with Jill Kalotay.



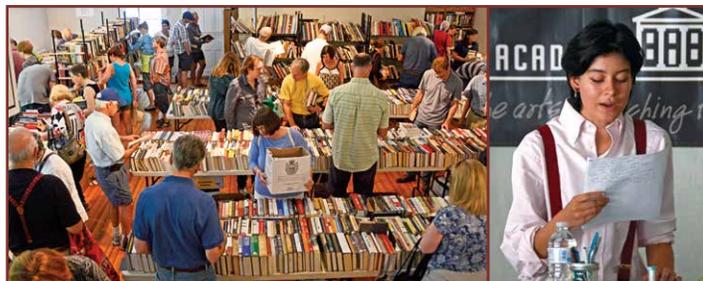
this new addition to the Festival and perhaps even expand it to poetry," says Jill. (You can read the winning stories at spencertownacademy.org/events/teen-writing-contest.)

Planning and producing the Festival requires a huge investment of time and effort beginning months in advance and continuing through Labor Day weekend—all of it the work of volunteers who sort books, order supplies, recruit speakers, and ensure the smooth running of a complex event with many moving parts.

Return on investment

Their work paid off in a Festival that was a success by every measure, grossing nearly \$30,000 in sales—a 7 percent increase over last year. "More important, net income grew by almost 17 percent," says David. "Since the Academy doesn't have an endowment, our survival as an organization depends on our ability to create and execute well-attended, profitable events."

Festival of Books 2016 is set to begin on Friday, September 2. Stay tuned for updates in the new year. "And if you'd like to help," says David, "please let us know."



Left: Book lovers browse in the main book loft. Right: Ruby Lamond, age 16, reads from her winning short story, "Solitude and Solace."

SRO turnouts

Ruth Reichl's interview of author Luke Barr (*Provence, 1970*) and Alan Chartock interviewing Simon Winchester (*The Professor and the Madman; Krakatoa*) drew standing-room-only crowds.

The Teen Short Story Competition, launched this year, helped gain broader visibility for the Academy while letting young writers know that we want to encourage them and support their writing," Jill says. The winners read from their stories and prizes were presented by author Jamie Cat Callan. "I hope we can continue



Left: Jonna Semeiks shares a Corduroy Bear story with young listeners. Right: Shoppers enjoy a break at the Cookbook Cafe.



An Opportunity to Thrive CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In recent years, as public funding of the arts has declined, the Academy has taken steps to remain solvent and operational, and to do more with less. We cut budgets, eliminated our debt, protected and contributed to a small emergency fund and, three years ago, shifted to an all-volunteer footing. These measures have enabled us to survive, but not to thrive.



Sheri Bauer Mayorga conducts students of the Good Globe Music School in a performance at the Academy.

Our board and volunteer corps have worked tirelessly at Academy events and behind the scenes, planning, promoting and producing events and attending to the myriad details involved in running an organization. For many, volunteering has proven a labor of love and taken on the demands of a full-time, if unpaid, job. Meanwhile, there is no time left for long-range planning or for researching and applying for grants.

In the past, we've always acknowledged that there are many ways to support the Academy above and beyond monetary contributions—through volunteering, recruiting new members, or lending specialized expertise.



Ruth Reichel in conversation with Fish and Game chef Zakary Pelaccio

But what the Spencertown Academy needs today is an infusion of capital to hire part-time support staff to handle the daily administrative tasks and operation of the building...to make long-overdue repairs...and to restore sorely missed cultural and community events, such as "Conversations with Neighbors."



Guests and volunteers mingle at the festive Twilight in the Garden Party

Each year at this time, not-for-profit organizations look ahead to the coming year and solicit donations, but our appeal this year has special poignancy and unprecedented urgency. The challenges facing the Spencertown Academy are real, and it would be misleading to paint them in muted colors.



Art lovers through the Academy at a recent gallery show.

We have an opportunity to revitalize our priceless resource and restore the richness of its programming. But we need to move quickly and decisively to capture that opportunity and make the most of it.

Let's do it!

The Spencertown Academy has enhanced our lives for two generations. Allowing it to decline would be unthinkable. In this season of thanks and giving, please help us move forward into a new year and a rich and vibrant future.



The Academy shines a light on the area's most beautiful hidden gardens.

To make your gift, visit spencertownacademy.org/support and click on DONATE

the academy

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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.

presenting the arts - enriching the community

Handmade Holiday CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

This will be the Academy's eighth Handmade Holiday and feature works by Amanda Bagnato, Beth's Farm Kitchen, Michael Boyer, Gretchen Brown, Terry Buck, Kay Castelle, Pamela Dalton, Mary Ann Davis, Bina Evans, Joyce Flower, Ulrike Grannis, Liz Hamann, Nikki Hayes, Ali Herrmann, Betsy Howard, Sharon Koomler, Josette Lee, Jan Moseman, Melody Lea Lamb, Doris Nieves, Clarke Olsen, Melissa Pollack, Gunnel Reznikoff, Pat Rotondo, Gloria Scannell,

Prudence Theriault, Sally Veillette, Vivian Wachsberger and Susannah White, as well as others to be announced.

"Handmade Holiday has been one of the most popular and highly anticipated events on the Academy calendar since the day it was launched," Vivien says. "It's a fun way to shop for holiday gifts—or for yourself."



the rewards of volunteering



Join Us! Volunteer at the Spencertown Academy

As an all-volunteer organization, the Spencertown Academy depends on the active and enthusiastic participation of our friends and neighbors.

More than 100 volunteers have helped out this year at Academy events and gallery shows, behind the scenes and in many other ways. They'll tell you that volunteering is rewarding, fun and a great way to connect with friends and neighbors. And, of course, there's the satisfaction that comes from knowing you're having a positive impact on your community.

If you'd like to volunteer at the Academy, the timing couldn't be better. Our fourth-quarter calendar includes gallery shows and the happy return of Handmade Holidays and we're already looking ahead to 2016.

There are many ways to participate—so please pitch in! We warmly welcome your ideas, your enthusiasm and your company.

For more information, visit spencertownacademy.org, or email us at volunteer@spencertownacademy.org.

**Kids
Need
Music**



The Spencertown Academy and the Chatham Synagogue co-sponsored a chamber music concert at the Academy on October 11 to raise money for Kids Need Music, which provides band instruments for children at the Hudson City School District Intermediate School. The benefit raised more than \$7,000.