Bonanza for Book Lovers
The Academy holds its annual celebration of books and reading

If you love books, thirteen is your lucky number. That’s because the Spencertown Academy’s 13th annual Festival of Books is just around the corner.

An always popular Labor Day weekend event, the Festival offers book lovers of all ages a chance to hunt for treasures among more than 10,000 new and gently-used books, as well as CDs, DVDs, vinyl LPs and audio cassettes, all at bargain basement prices. A first-floor gallery features a handpicked selection of specialty books, limited editions, out-of-print books, and new books donated by leading publishers. The always popular Children’s Book Room will be open throughout the Festival.

Healthy, delicious snacks and beverages will be for sale throughout the weekend, including the Academy’s signature To-Die-For, No-Alarm Vegetarian Chili. Festival-goers will find all books carefully categorized for easy browsing. As always, prices will start out low and be stepped down each day throughout the weekend. It’s a terrific way to stock up on a lot of great reading for not a lot of money!

A wide array of books and authors

“This year we’ve lined up a wonderfully diverse range of presentations—from poignant and powerful memoirs to literary thrillers to artful poetry and a charming how-to book,” says Jill Kalotay, who, with fellow Academy Board member David Highfill, heads the Festival of Books committee.

The program begins on Friday, August 31 with a special Members Preview [see box below] and continues through the holiday weekend with a varied schedule of author readings, signings, discussions and surprises.


At the Children’s Program on Saturday morning, kids can visit Biscuit the Puppy and pose for a free souvenir photo with the cute star of the popular children’s book series by Alyssa Satin Capucilli. Children will hear funny stories about the silly puppy, create a related craft, and browse in the Children’s Book Room, which will be open throughout the Festival.

Membership Has Its Advantages
This year, for the first time, the Festival will open its doors from 1 to 8 p.m. on Friday, August 31, during a special Members Preview—free for Academy members and kids 12 and under, $10 for members’ guests.

Preview shoppers will enjoy wine and cheese from 6 to 8 p.m. and memberships can be purchased at the door. Current, new and renewing members will receive one free book with their purchases throughout the weekend.
Getting Better All the Time

We’re building on the Academy’s future

Who knows where the time goes?

Every year around now, echoes of that wistful Sandy Denny song made famous by Judy Collins go through my head. Wasn’t it just yesterday that we were shaking off the chill of a long, snowy winter and savoring the arrival—finally—of sunnier, longer days? Suddenly, almost without our noticing, fall has snuck into the picture and will push summer aside in less than a month.

But I’m not ready to give up on summer—especially not this summer, which has been such a 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 keep getting better and better.

The physical state of the Academy too is noticeably improved. Last fall, as you know, work began on an extensive restoration of our 171-year-old landmark building. The roof, leaking badly, was replaced, and the crumbling bell tower, cornice and chimney were reconstructed.

Of course, there is more to be done. Decades of rot have seriously compromised the Academy’s wooden columns, siding, windows and trim; the parking lot, driveway, drainage systems and walkways also need major work.

Make no mistake: these are not optional enhancements, but critical measures that must be taken to save the Academy building from eventual ruin. The work completed to date was made possible only through the generosity of community members who donated some $320,000. But it will take an additional $280,000 to finish the job—an investment that will yield immeasurable benefits for our community and for generations to come.

I urgently encourage you to make your contribution today if you haven’t yet done so. You’ll find a contribution form at spencertownacademy.org/support.

Meanwhile, I look forward to seeing you at the Festival of Books on Labor Day weekend. Let’s make the most of the special pleasures that late summer and early Autumn in Columbia County bring.

Autumn—already? Who knows where the time goes?

from the President’s IPad

Two Shows, Infinite Possibilities

A wide range of works by local and regional artists were featured in two gallery shows at the Academy earlier this summer. “Illumination: Light from Darkness,” the Spencertown Academy’s second annual juried photography show, included works in color and black & white by 21 regional artists, exemplifying the deeply personal process of creating art in all its forms. Nationally exhibited multi-disciplinary artist Jan Nagle served as guest juror.

“They Made the Cut,” featured works in paper, fabric, scrap metal and other materials by six local artists, each of whom uses cutting in creating art. The curator was Barbara Lax Kranz. In conjunction with the show, artist Melissa Sarris offered a workshop in which participants embroidered words written by the incarcerated men of the “Invisible Made Visible” project.

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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.
**Austerlitz Bicentennial**

**Austerlitz at 200**

The Bicentennial celebration continues at the Academy

Austerlitz’s Bicentennial observances continue on September 23 at the Academy with a varied program of events.

Austerlitz Town Historian Tom Moreland will reprise his illustrated talk on the history of Austerlitz, first presented at the Bicentennial festivities in June. There will also be a showing of the 25-minute documentary, Spencertown Academy: Keeping Our History Alive, produced and directed by Monk Schane-Lydon.

In addition, copies of Tom’s new book The Old Houses of Austerlitz: The History and Early Architecture of a Rural New York Town, published by the Austerlitz Historical Society, will be on sale. The book contains the first full history of Austerlitz ever written, from the earliest settlement of the area as “Spencers Town” in the 1750s through today, with individual histories of the 168 houses and other buildings in the town that survive from the town map of 1888.

The program is set for 3 p.m. on Sunday, September 23, at the Academy and will be followed by a reception. Admission is free.

**A Great Start to Summer**

Hidden Gardens tour draws rave reviews

The Academy’s annual Hidden Gardens tour once again offered an inside view of horticultural gems tucked away in private residences throughout the area. The June 18 event was co-chaired by Vivian Wachsberger and Madaline Sparks.

Under cloudless blue skies, tourgoers got to view six private gardens and chat with the owners in New Concord, Red Rock and Spencertown. “Each garden was different, enabling visitors to come away with plenty of ideas,” says Madaline. Also on the itinerary were the restored gardens at Steepletop, the mountaintop home of 20th-century poet Edna St. Vincent Millay.

As always, the weekend began on Friday with the Twilight in the Garden party, at the beautiful historic home of Meg and Bill Stratton in Spencertown. Blessed with perfect weather, the event drew a record turnout.

Since 2005, Hidden Gardens has been a signature event on the Academy calendar as well as an important fundraiser. “This year’s tour was a great success with exceptionally beautiful gardens, large crowds, a vigorous Market on the Green, and a great turnout for Maraleen Manos-Jones’s Saturday morning talk on monarch butterflies,” Vivian says.

Adds Madaline, “Special thanks go to the volunteers who put so much time and effort into making this wonderful event happen, and to our neighbors who graciously opened their gardens to us.” Next year’s tour is set for June 15.

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**Music at the Academy**

**Everything’s Coming Up Roses**

Maureen Kelley Stewart celebrates the music of Jule Styne

Award-winning cabaret singer Maureen Kelley Stewart, joined by vocalist Tom Stewart and pianist Don Rebic, will present an overview of songs by legendary American composer Jule Styne at the Academy on Saturday, October 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Over the course of his extraordinary career, Styne wrote hit songs for Frank Sinatra, Carol Channing, Ethel Merman, Doris Day, Judy Holliday, Barbra Streisand and Jimmy Durante among many other recording stars. He was the composer of eight Academy Award-nominated songs, including “It’s Magic,” “Time After Time” and “Three Coins in the Fountain,” as well as the music for such Broadway mega-hits as Funny Girl, Bells Are Ringing, Gentlemen Prefer Blondes and Gypsy.

Jule Styne is one of many iconic American songwriters and singers whose works Maureen Kelley Stewart has celebrated, including George & Ira Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Alan Jay Lerner & Frederick Loewe and Bing Crosby. She is a frequent presence at Manhattan’s best-known cabaret rooms, including Don’t Tell Mama, Danny’s Skylight Room, Judy’s Chelsea, Helen’s Hideaway, and the Laurie Beechman Theatre. She has also performed at the Mabel Mercer Foundation’s Cabaret Conventions, at New York’s Town Hall and at Guild Hall in East Hampton, and was featured at the Academy in 2017 in an evening of songs by American lyricist E.Y. Harburg.
Handmade Holidays '18

Be a Handmade Holiday Volunteer!
Have fun—and make a difference

As an all-volunteer organization, the Spencertown Academy depends on the active and enthusiastic participation of our friends and neighbors. And that’s where you come in.

Our event calendar over the next few months includes gallery shows, concerts and, of course, Handmade Holiday. The dates for this beloved seasonal event are Friday through Sunday, November 23-25 & December 1 & 2 10am-4pm each day. If you’d like to volunteer, there are a number of ways you can help, including as a shopping attendant, cashier or wrapper. I’ll be emailing details soon on how you can sign up.

As always, Handmade Holiday will feature a wide variety of gift items in every price and age range, plus tempting edibles such as jellies, toffees, fudge and sugar plums. So, make sure to leave some time for shopping too!

For more information, email Ann Vartanian at volunteer@spencertownacademy.org

Kids Need Music

¡La Guitarra Fiesta!
A fund-raising concert restores music to Hudson schools

Internationally acclaimed guitarist presents a program of classics and original works at the Spencertown Academy on Sunday, November 11 at 1pm.

Building on a classical and flamenco foundation, Zemantauski takes her audience on a musical journey inspired by her flair for experimentation and pure love of the instrument. Writes one reviewer, “She has continually pushed the boundaries of the possible with her trusty 6-string. It’s rarely less than electrifying to watch her do it.”

The concert is a fundraiser for Kids Need Music, a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that underprivileged schools have musical instruments for their music program. Kids Need Music president Craig Bender explains: “Every year dozens of intermediate 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.” To date, 250 children have benefited from the program. Tickets at $25 are available at spencetownacademy.org.

Festival of Books ’15 continued from page 1

Bonanza for Book Lovers

Volunteers have been hard at work all summer, receiving and sorting books, ordering supplies, recruiting speakers, and attending to the myriad planning details that go into such a complex undertaking. The support of sponsors, donors, Festival attendees and Academy members also figures crucially in the effort.

“The Academy is an all-volunteer organization, and none of this would be possible without the generosity of our individual underwriters, book donors, and the nearly one hundred people who volunteer their time and talents to help make the Festival of Books a success,” adds David Highfill. “We are so grateful for their support.”