

# Academy Garden Club Thymes

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

**NOVEMBER 2021**

## A Message from the President



November's palate presents with golds, greens, and browns with splashes of red for your visual pleasure. You might want to take a break from your gardening chores to enjoy nature by hiking or walking to take in the sunshine and smells of the fall air and damp earth. You can take an easy hike on the boardwalk trail of Parson's Marsh off Undermountain Road in Lenox or adventure out to OMI Park in Ghent, NY to walk among sculptures, fields and forests. Fall offers as many enjoyable activities as the summer months without the heat!

Following my message, you will find a copy of the October meeting minutes submitted by Jen Picard, Secretary, for you to read and review. By including the minutes in the monthly Thymes newsletter, members not in attendance will have the opportunity to read about that evening's events, discussions, and decisions. We can vote on accepting the minutes after addressing any questions at the November meeting. This will allow us to move quickly into the presentation/workshop.

To give you other options to fulfill your civic obligation as a member, you can become a docent with the Lenox Historical Society in the Academy Building. They are looking for volunteers to fill 2-hour slots from Thursday through Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Since we interact closely with the Lenox Historical Society, it makes sense to ask for volunteers among our members. Some of us are already volunteering.

If you like local history or want to learn more about it, this is an activity for you. The horticultural history with the town, and the shared production of an annual flower and garden show, unites us. If you are interested, stop in during those days and times and provide your name and contact information.

November's meeting will be a boxwood workshop. Get your creative juices flowing! The boxwood cuttings and containers will be provided for \$10. Bring a cutting tool, decorations if you want, and another container if you want to purchase more boxwood. The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Academy Building, and mask wearing is required. If you cannot be there or feel uncomfortable in the upstairs enclosure or the mask requirement, you may pick up the materials and not have to attend.

### Agenda for November 9, 2021

- Introduce new members and/or visitors
- Vote to accept the November minutes
- Announcements
- Boxwood workshop

**Theresa Terry Michney**  
**President**

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### October 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes

18 members and two new members in attendance

At this business meeting, two new members, Peggy Ammendola and Kathleen Lynch, were introduced. Kathleen has agreed to become Vice President of the Club. The slate of officers was introduced and unanimously accepted by the members. Officers are Theresa Terry, President; Kathleen Lynch, Vice President; Ginny Akabane, Treasurer; and Jen Picard, Secretary.

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Theresa gave us plans for the upcoming Club events and programs:

November: Boxwood Project  
February: Mill Brook Sugar House  
March: Chris Ferrero  
April: Flower Arranging  
May: Home Range Winery and Tour (which will begin early at 3 PM)  
June: End of Year at Berkshire Botanical Gardens, hopefully with a tour of the herb gardens

Discussion followed for our Holiday Meeting which may be held at the Botanical Gardens if we can use our "one meeting" privilege for 2021 in December and still be able to hold the June, 2022, meeting there. Theresa said she'd check with the Botanical Garden on this. Also mentioned for the December meeting was walking around town to see the decorations and stopping for a drink possibly at the new Village Inn or another of the restaurants in town. Other ideas: Ventfort Hall.

We talked about the civic duties performed by club members and how beautiful the Monument Gardens looked as well as the planters outside the Academy Building. We will fill the planters at the Academy with greens and decorate them again this year.

Tjasa and Kathy brought plants to the meeting which were available for the members.

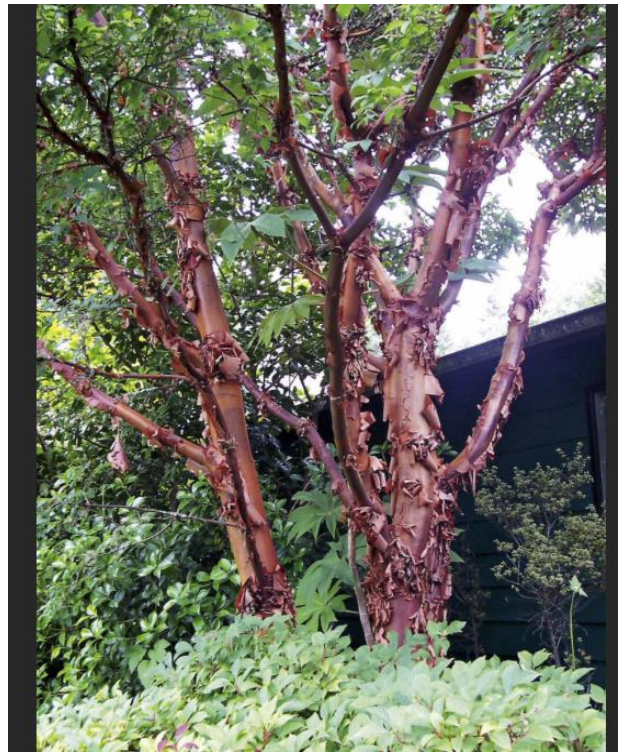
The Treasurer's report was read and approved by membership. The President said she hoped we'd have refreshments at our next meeting, but we will have to see how the Covid situation is at that time. The meeting was adjourned at about 7:15 PM.

**Respectfully Submitted**

**Jen Picard, Secretary**

## **Horticultural Column By Harriet Wetstone**

It takes courage to read about gardening these days. From climate change to new garden predators, the news is not all heartwarming. Even our beloved fall foliage has been more muted this year. Concerns about pest and disease resistance is not new of course. I remember my classes with Elizabeth Carey, ten years ago, in which she stressed how important it is to check the vulnerability of every cultivar we considered planting. So, in my continuing the theme of good trees to plant, I have researched those decorative trees which are more trouble free.



The Paperbark Maple (*Acer griseum*) is a good example of a beautiful tree which is also pest and disease resistant. It grows 20 to 30 feet, but slowly, and it has beautiful crimson fall color. But even

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better, it has beautiful cinnamon colored exfoliating bark which gives it wonderful winter interest as well. Most specimens have multiple trunks which branch close to the ground. Branches older than two to three years also exfoliate. This is not a native tree; it was brought from China to England in 1899 by E. H. Wilson and introduced here shortly thereafter by the Arnold Arboretum. It is thought that the biological purpose of shedding bark is that it serves to rid the tree of pests like scale and aphids, as well as harmful fungus and bacteria. It also helps reduce the amount of lichen and moss that grows on the tree.

The Katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) is related to the Red Bud. It is a big tree, 40 to 60 feet tall and 25 to 60 feet wide. As with the Red Bud, its leaves are heart shaped, purplish in the spring, light blue green in the summer, and wonderfully bright yellow in the fall. In the spring there are small flowers, insignificant visually but adored by the bees. (The one at the Berkshire Botanical Garden positively hums in the spring.) The wonderful fall color is accompanied by a sweet aroma, akin to cotton candy or burnt sugar. It also has shaggy bark. The Katsura is native to Japan and China but has been naturalized all over the world. It has also been hybridized into a surprising number of cultivars. While the Katsura is a big tree, many cultivars are small enough to be suited to home gardens; in fact, there is a surprising amount of variety. There are dwarf specimens and weeping specimens, and many choices in foliage color, from red violet to blue purple, to golden yellow.



The Sourwood tree (*Oxydendrum Arboretum*) is a disease and pest resistant native tree that is new to me. A mature tree will be 20-30 feet tall with a spread of about 20 feet. It has lustrous dark green leaves and an interesting branching pattern that makes it attractive in winter. It blooms mid to late summer, with showy white or creamy flowers similar to lilies of the valley, followed by small fruits that persist into winter. Fall foliage is a striking red and orange. The deeply ridged bark is distinctive. Sourwood is also called by many names, e.g., sour gum, arrow wood, and sorrel. Sourwood is a favorite of bees for making honey, and sourwood honey is considered to be quite special. The Sourwood tree was much used for medicinal purposes in the past, and the leaves are said to be favorites of hikers who use them to make an astringent, thirst quenching tea.

Thanks to:

[www.collierarbor.com](http://www.collierarbor.com); [www.missouribotanical.org](http://www.missouribotanical.org);  
[www.gardeningknowhow.com](http://www.gardeningknowhow.com); [www.natureandgarden.com](http://www.natureandgarden.com); [edis.ifas.ufl.edu](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu)