

# Academy Garden Club Thymes

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

**JUNE/JULY 2023**

**Dear Academy Garden Club Members,**

I hope everyone enjoyed a happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July long weekend with family and friends.

As I reflect on the close of the 2022-2023 Club year, I want to thank each of you for your warm welcome and strong support as I stepped into the Acting President role unexpectedly mid-year.

I particularly want to thank past leaders for their patience in answering my many questions and helping fill in when I wasn't familiar with the process – Jan Chague, Theresa Terry Michney, Dianne Romeo, Lynn Schmitter, Carol Way and Harriet Wetstone were each amazing. And I also had a terrific officer team in Sarah Hatch, Jill Dore, and Pat Neri.

The flowers at the Lenox Town Monument, the Firefighters Monument at the New Lenox Fire Station, and in the pots at the Academy Building are beautiful. Thanks to all who designed and planted, as well as the creative team behind the Lenox Post Office windows. Please help with our civic projects over the summer and be in touch if you want to help with the pollinator garden or work on the community center education program.

As you will see when the handbook for the 2023-2024 Club year comes out, we have a terrific group of Committee members and look forward to a dynamic fall season with the Apple Squeeze fundraiser and terrific programming.

Best,

Susan Ellen Wolf

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**Minutes - June 13, 2023  
Lilac Park**

Susan Wolf, Acting President, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

She thanked Janice Brindisi and the Scholarship Committee for evaluating two candidates, both from Lenox, and selecting a winner. Janice reported that Thomas Léger had been awarded the scholarship. She noted he plans to study for a Bachelor of Science and Industrial Design at Carleton University. Lynn Schmitter, a member of the Scholarship Committee, suggested that next year we consider awarding more than one scholarship if we have more than one qualified applicant. Susan Wolf suggested the Treasurer and Fundraising Committee consider the impact of multiple scholarships on the budget for the next Club year.

Susan Wolf thanked Theresa Terry Michney for leading the Club's nominations effort. Theresa reported that the slate is President- Susan Wolf for a one-year term; Vice President – Jill Dore, for a one-year term, with a second year as President to follow; Theresa Fasano, for a two-year term as Treasurer. She noted that Sarah Hatch had been elected last year for a two-year term as Secretary and has indicated she will continue. On motion duly made and seconded, the slate was unanimously elected.

Susan Wolf stated that minutes of the May 9, 2023, meeting had been distributed with the Thymes newsletter. No one offered corrections or changes and on motion duly made and seconded the minutes were approved.

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Outgoing Treasurer Jill Dore presented the Treasurer's Report for acceptance. On motion duly made and seconded, the Treasurer's Report was accepted. A copy of the Treasurer's Report is attached to these minutes.

Susan Wolf thanked Jill Dore for a terrific job compiling a list of members with long service. We applauded these members for their commitment to the Academy Garden Club! Members who have reached a major anniversary at this meeting include:

- For 30 years, Nancy Cowig and Anne Mack
- For 25 years, Jane Whalen
- For 15 years, Anne Gannon
- For 10 years, Janice Brindisi, Jan Chague, and Theresa Fasano
- For 5 years, Sarah Hatch, Martha Joyner, Maureen Salvatore, and Susan Wolf

Susan Wolf asked that all members sign up for a civic project if they had not yet done so. Dianne Romeo asked that members consider signing up for the August 12 flower show, and she provided instructions and sign-up sheets for those interested.

Susan Wolf thanked all members who responded to Dianne Romeo's survey on garden visits. Dianne announced that trips to the Mount at 10:30 on Tuesday July 11 and to Hildene at 9am on August 10 are planned. She provided sign-up sheets for these garden tours.

Next, Bobbianne Salinetti led a discussion of an opportunity to participate in the Pollinator Pathway Project. At the suggestion of Dianne Romeo, it was agreed that interested members will explore creating a pollinator friendly garden patch at the Lenox Community Garden.

In Anne Gannon's absence, Susan Wolf tabled Anne's suggestion that the Club meet in summers rather than winters until a future meeting when Anne is present. Susan noted that, because speakers and venues are already committed for the coming Club year, if adopted, the suggestion would not become effective until the 2024-2025 Club year.

Dianne Romeo asked members to save small glass containers for the Club to use in making terrariums to be sold at Apple Squeeze in October. She noted that the glass yogurt containers are particularly helpful.

There being no other old or new business, the meeting was adjourned to a potluck meal and social hour.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Wolf**

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**Berkshire Botanical Garden**

**The Grow Show**

Saturday, August 12 – 1pm to 5pm

Sunday, August 13 – 10am to 4pm

For more information visit:

<https://www.berkshirebotanical.org/events/grow-show-4>

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## Financial Report

from June 13, 2023, Meeting

May started with a balance of \$3,432.89.

There were expenses of \$170.17.

- \$45.17 for additional checks and
- \$125 for our May speaker.

We received \$45 in Cookery Book Sales giving a net expense of \$125.17 for the month, leaving a balance for June of \$3,307.72

The projected expenses in June are \$523.48.

- \$138.11 for Academy Building Planters (Historical Soc.)
- \$150 for Berkshire Botanical Garden Membership
- \$50 Donation in memory of Jean Drees' husband
- \$185.37 Plants for Monument and Academy Building

Our PROJECTED balance at the end of our Fiscal year is \$2,784.24

The Academy Garden Club of Lenox started the year with \$3,086.63. Our projected income at the end of our fiscal year (\$2,182) will be \$302.39 less than our outgoings (\$2,484.39) leaving a projected balance of \$2,784.24.

Dues for 2023-2024 will be deposited in July.

**Respectively submitted,  
Jill Dore, Treasurer**

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## Horticultural Column – Cut Flowers Harriet Wetstone

One of the great things about having a garden is being able to bring in huge bouquets of flowers! One of my favorite bouquets is of giant hosta leaves. Hosta bouquets are unexpected, long lasting, and can be wonderfully subtle in color and texture.



**Hosta Leaves**

And unlike many cuttings, hosta leaf stems stay firm and continue to draw water so that the leaves can stay fresh looking for at least a couple of weeks. Another favorite is Queen Anne's Lace which I gather roadside, but I have learned to choose young plants and to pull them, roots and all, rather than to cut the flowers. I wash off the white carrotlike taproot and put the whole thing into a tall glass vase where it continues its bloom cycle. Another late summer favorite is a tall bouquet of Chocolate Eupatorium and Sedum, Autumn Joy or one of the other tall sedums. Chocolate Eupatorium (used to be classified with Joe Pye Weed but no longer) is a tall plant with shiny chocolatey leaves, thin wiry stems, and white to pale pink fluffy flower heads which pairs beautifully with the pink sedum flower heads. This is a combination that lasts long in a vase; in fact, the sedum can go on happily forever if it sends out rootlets which it often does.

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Experimenting with great handfuls of cut flowers to discover what is happy to move into a tall glass of water and what promptly has a tantrum, flopping and shedding and even rotting, is one of the fun games of summer!

So, what are the issues that make the difference between happy and unhappy vase culture? Much has to do with the nature of the cut flowers, but there are three general issues to watch out for.

One major issue has to do with stems function. The primary function of a stem is to support the leaves and to transport water and minerals. With cut flowers, the stem continues to transport water and minerals. However, in some plants, the stem also has a protective function. If injured, and cutting is certainly an injury, some stems will form a protective coating over the cut. For flowers in a vase, that means the stem is no longer transporting water or minerals, and very soon the leaves and flowers will wilt and die. This is why it is important to trim every stem about a third of an inch every day. In addition, slightly acidic water travels up stems more rapidly than neutral or basic water. Interestingly, adding 7-Up or Sprite to vase water is a way of adding some slight acidity and some sugar which is food for the flowers.

A second issue is bacteria. For example, when the flowers begin to soften in water, it invites the growth of bacteria that causes vase water to be cloudy and eventually odiferous. And adding a little sugar also promotes bacterial growth. That is why it is important to change the water in a vase every day. A common saying is that if you would not drink the water, why would you expect cut flowers to drink it! But in addition to changing the water, it also helps to add a few drops of bleach, or a little charcoal, which is useful in killing off any bacteria.

A third issue is that every plant gives off ethylene, which is a ripening gas emitted by plants that helps them move through their growth cycles. A bit of alcohol, vodka, inhibits ethylene production and slows down the inevitable process of senescence.



***Anthurium***

Yet another approach to vase culture is using plants that happily grow in water indefinitely. There is an amazingly long list of plants that will not just tolerate being in a vase, but will happily move in and settle down! They include square stemmed plants such as mint and coleus which most of us know about, but also several types of begonias (e.g., wax winged, rex), succulents such as Sedum, and vining plants such as English ivy and pothos.

Thanks to

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/fact-or-fiction-vodka-citrus-sodas-keep-flowers-fresh/>

<https://www.toppr.com/guides/biology/anatomy-of-flowering-plants/stem>

<https://www.monrovia.com/chocolate-white-snakeroot.html>

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/anthurium/anthurium-in-water.htm>