



SEEDLINGS

Sophia Garden and Learning Center



Volume 7, Issue 2

June 4, 2007

Event Calendar

First Harvest	Jun
7am	4
First pick-up Monday	Jun
4pm-7pm	4
Harvest	Jun
7am	7
First pick-up Thurs-	Jun
day 4pm-7pm	7
Work day	Jun
	16
Children's Event	Jun
6 pm	23
Gardens & Gators	Jun
7pm	23

What's coming up in the Garden...

- *First harvest—pea greens; chard; radishes; greens mix; hakurei turnips*
- *Late June—scallions; lettuce mix; turnips; beets; broccoli; arugula; basil*
- *All items subject to change dependent on the weather, the bugs and Mother Nature!*

GARDENERS & GATORS

At press time there were still tickets for the Garden's big fundraiser! Last year completely sold out, so don't wait 'till the last minute!

Gardener & Gators is a terrific family and community event. Long Island's own top zydeco band, T'bazco Road, rock and rolled the house last year with a selection of irresistible dance tunes that pleased all ages. They'll be back this year for more!

The menu is also a crowd pleaser, the result of members visiting all their favorite food sources and getting generous donations. Take a look at this year's menu (right).

The event takes place right on the convent grounds at the lovely Helen Butler Hall (the kids especially love getting up on stage with the band) with tablecloths and napkins donated by The Sands and dressed with pretty pots of Asian greens that Farmer Nora has grown just for the event.

Part of the excitement of the evening are the raffles and Chinese Auction—prizes include gift baskets and gift certificates, food,



MENU

North Fork Potato Chips

Crudite Trays with Dip

Grilled Marinated Vegetables with Fresh Mozzarella and Mesclun Salad on Brick Oven Baked Italian Bread

OR

Bell and Evans Chicken Breast with Fresh Mozzarella and Mesclun Salad on Brick Oven Baked Italian Bread

From Javarone Brothers Quality Catering

Assorted Gourmet Cookies from Whole Foods

Kozy Shack Chocolate, Vanilla, or Rice Pudding

Fresh Strawberries

Arizona Iced Green Tea Sweetened with Honey

Arizona Iced Unsweetened Southern Style Tea

Red or White Wine



fishing, jewelry, cosmetics and more.

We really look forward to this joyous event. This was a big year for the farm with the move, a new shed, fence and watering system with outdoor sink and the Garden depends on the success of Gardeners & Gators to support everything we do!

PROGRESS REPORT FROM FARMER NORA

Spring has sprung at Sophia Garden. The chard, pea greens, greens mix, radishes and hakurei turnips (what's a hakurei? See this edition's recipe—next page) are up and — we hope — ready for the first harvest where you'll be picking up this issue of "Seedlings."

And while we're crunching down the green stuff, there's more on the way. Nora tells us that the tomatoes, summer squash, cucumbers and some of the sweet potatoes have been planted. What's left to plant? The beans

and winter squash, as well as successional plantings.

And there's always something else to do. Come on out for the next work day—June 16th—and help stake and trellis those tomatoes—the flavor jewels of late summer. We'll also be transplanting perennials.

All ages and fitness levels will find something suitable to do and there's always someone interesting to talk to! We look forward to seeing you there.



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<http://members.aol.com/sophiagardens/home>

*Towards an
interconnected
community of life*

What we're reading now: *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver. A famed contemporary author and her family grow their own and eat locally for a year in Appalachia.

RECIPE FOR A BETTER PLANET

This week we're picking up hakurei turnips. What are they? you might ask. Brassica rapa rapifera hakurei, they are a cousin to rutabaga, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower cabbage. Our friends at Quail Hill Farm (peconiclandtrust.org) said this:

Hakurei turnips, an Asian white variety, are sweet and fruity, with a crisp, tender texture. These are faster growing than other turnip varieties and best-harvested young, at about 2" in diameter.

- Scrub turnips with a stiff-bristled vegetable brush. No need to peel—simply trim away damaged areas.
- Hakurei turnips are so sweet and delicate they can be enjoyed raw; grated onto salads or in slaws, sliced or cut into sticks and added to a veggie platter. These turnips are also fantastic cooked, but do not take as long to cook as our more traditional turnips.

Most turnips can be stored, but hakureis are best eaten right away. Try them sliced into sandwiches!

Happy Farm to Table!!!!

THE DIRT ON: WORMS

What's your reaction when you see a worm? "Yuck!?" or "Yippee!?"

Here at Sophia Garden our answer is "Yippee!" Worms are the hard-working heroes of a healthy garden, chomping their way through partially decomposed organic matter, like branches and leaves, breaking them down further into healthy soil.

After they digest their meals, worm "castings" (okay, their poop) contain higher levels of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium than the surrounding soil. They break down and add nutrients to the soil faster and more efficiently than chemical fertilizer. So they don't pollute and they work for free! No wonder Cleopatra of Egypt called them sacred, the Greek philosopher Aristotle called them "the intestines of the soil" and Charles Darwin—the guy who came up with the theory of evolution—studied them for 39 years. That's not as long as it seems; worms have been making soil on this planet for 120 million years!

There are 4,400 species of worms and 2,700 earthworms. Most earthworms around us are members of the *Lumbricidae* family. They need moisture to breathe and dig down deep when it's dry. But when it's too wet they can drown. That's when they come up to the surface and become bird food or get stuck when the sidewalk dries. One clever bird follows Nora and the rototiller to catch worm spaghetti dinner!

Next time you check out Sophia Garden's compost pile or come out to harvest, say hello and thanks to our squiggly friends. But don't try to chop them in half. Instead of getting two worms, you'll have one dead one. And when you're organic growers like we are, every worm is important. Yippee!

For more on worms (including starting your own worm farm), visit:

<http://www.dsggardening.btinternet.co.uk/insects.htm>

<http://www.naturewatch.ca/english/wormwatch/index.html>

<http://yuck.discovery.com/flash>

Sophia Garden Needs You!

Our next work-day will be:

**June 16th
10 am—2 pm**

**We will
(probably) be
planting and
staking.**

**Please come,
bring the family
and a snack. See
you then!**