



# Weekly News

## The garden is at its peak; come visit! ~ Michele Roy

Week 10! Time for a reminder about our mid-season potluck dinner. It will be held Saturday, August 21, from around 5 until 7 pm. Last year we didn't even bother because the garden was in such a dismal state. This year it is just beautiful. Please try to join us as we celebrate a glorious garden season!

Every Sunday morning I go out to the garden and take a long leisurely look at everything. It's totally different than during the week when we are working. There is more and more to look at every week. I was astounded to see that the next succession of broccoli is ready to pick. The pole beans are literally "over the top", vining to the heights of the greenhouse. The lettuce and spicy greens are ready, the new cukes and summer squashes are doing great. The tomatoes are ripening! You will all start receiving them in your baskets this week, just one or two teasers to start, and hopefully many more in the weeks to come!

On the recipe sheet I included basic directions for making soup stock. As always, I'd like to encourage you to wring every bit of goodness out of your CSA food dollar, and making



*Above—pole beans to the left, sweet potatoes in center, and tomatoes to the right. It's a jungle! Right—close-up of the pole beans reaching for the heights.*



stock with all of your scraps is a good way to do it.

We'll tour the gardens at the potluck. If you can't make it, please take time to look around. You've got to see those pole beans in the greenhouse! The beans and the sweet potato vines are threatening to take over. It's crazy to imagine frost just stopping everything in its tracks. Crazier still to realize that

we could theoretically have a frost in less than a month! Let's hope it's a long mild fall.

We planted spinach this week. Fall spinach is a little tricky. It does not like to germinate in the heat. If we can get it to germinate nicely, it does pretty well as we progress into cooler weather. I hope we can pull off a fall crop—it would be a great finish to the season.

I saw a big doe and fawn run across the back field yesterday. We seem to be holding them at bay in the bean plot. BUT in my Sunday garden walk I found that they've been in the winter squash patch, gnawing big holes in the nicely forming squashes. Maddening. And then there are the hornworms—we've found some massive specimens in the tomatoes.

There will always be insects and other pests to keep us on our toes, but it's so much nicer to focus on all the beauty and bounty found in our gardens. We welcome you to share it with us.

See you in the garden!



*The flowers and herbs are ready to be picked. Left: tithonia, cosmos, ageratum, calendula for your bouquet-making pleasure. Below: basil and dill. Cilantro and mint are also available. Enjoy it while you can!*



## “Libertymen” is a good story of local land history ~ *Denis Thoet*

We don't usually buy books except for garden resource information. The libraries in Gardiner and Augusta supply all of our fiction and nonfiction needs.

But we did just buy “Liberty Men and the Great Proprietors,” by Alan Taylor. It is the story of Maine from the end of the Revolution to the 1820s when squatters battled the “Great Proprietors” over who should own the land., primarily between the Androscoggin and Penobscot Rivers.

Taylor was in Augusta Sunday to talk about how he came to write the book. His audience, members of the Kennebec Historical Society, were pretty familiar with its contents, so his topic was well chosen.

The push into Maine that occurred after the end of the Revolution was led by those who believed the land should be free for the taking and, once improved by their labor, become theirs by right.

They were opposed by the likes of Sylvester Gardiner and his heirs, Charles Vaughan, Henry Knox and other familiar personalities of the era. Countless acts of violence, mostly against the agents and property of the Proprietors occurred between 1761 and 1825.

The perpetrators were often “White Indians” — settlers who dressed in blankets and paint to launch their attacks.

It is ironic that they would dress up as Indians, from whom the land had been

pretty much confiscated by sovereign right before being distributed by the Great Proprietors. Suppose the settlers had dressed up as pirates (Aargh!) or clowns (beep-beep)?

Taylor launched the book, against the advice of one of his faculty advisors, when he was a grad student at Brandeis University. The professor felt that if he made the topic his dissertation, he would never get a job, except perhaps in Maine, which the professor viewed as a not so good outcome, Taylor said. (he got a teaching job at Boston University out of school and now teaches at U. California at Davis).

The book was published in 1990 and scarcely caused a ripple in Maine. It got a bad review from the Maine Times because it was too academic, something which Taylor had tried hard to avoid.

“It started to find an audience in Maine after the year 2000,” he said. He was asked to be the bicentennial speaker at Montville, a hotbed of activity. His favorite speaking assignment was last year for the bicentennial of Whitefield, another anti-proprietor hotbed.

He remembers the sign on the school promoting the event: “Live Music, Alan Taylor, Prime Rib.”

He also witnessed the revival of a nearly lost Whitfield tradition — the annual burning of the outhouse, usually on July 4. Since there were no



*One of our lovely hornworm specimens.*

outhouses left in the town, the event had been dormant for 25 years. One was constructed specially and a mock Great Proprietor was driven into it when it was torched.

“There were 300 people for the prime rib, 75 for the talk and then 300 people reappeared for my talk“ he said, imagining that about 225 people must have been hiding in the woods, waiting for the outhouse event.

In the end, the proprietors pretty much won the day. After the winter of “1800 and froze to death” (1816) when there was frost during each month of the year, many settlers gave up trying to farm in Maine and moved to Ohio, or surprisingly, to Canada, where land was cheaper and easier to farm.

Only about 40% of the farmers in the area could afford to buy their land at the agreed prices, and Maine's population stagnated for decades, Taylor said.

So, if you are looking for a good read, pick up a copy of Taylor's book at your local library. You might even want to buy it!

## Save the date!

**Mid-season potluck  
Saturday, August 21  
5-7 p.m.**

**RSVP 582-4817 or e-mail  
longmeadowfarm@roadrunner.com**



*Early Sunday morning view of the garden.*