

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

For the best reading experience
view this email in your browser

VERONA COMMUNITY GARDEN

April 17, 2026
Newsletter #3



IN THIS ISSUE:



Events & Activities



Reminders & Tips



What's Up in the Garden



Planning Your Kitchen Garden Workshop Summary



Recipes



Poems/Humor



Garden Centers



Verona Community Garden and That's My Brick!®



Events & Activities

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

VCG MEMBER WORK DAY & ORIENTATION

MAY 2
9:00 AM
RAINDATE: MAY 3



HAND-PAINTED
IN WATERCOLOR

May 2, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

Opening Work Day & Orientation (All Members)

All members—new and returning—are expected to attend.

Rain Date: May 3

Attendance: Mandatory

Check-In: Please sign in upon arrival

We look forward to getting the season off to a great start together!

Roots & Reads

Roots & Reads is a fun, hands-on gardening workshop series for kids in grades K-4, presented in partnership with the Verona Community Garden. Each session combines stories, learning, and creative activities as we explore how plants grow and why gardens matter. Kids will get their hands dirty, work together, and help grow real plants in the garden—all while enjoying great books and plenty of fun.

Workshop Dates

April 27th at 4:00pm

May 4th at 4:00pm

May 18th at 4:00pm



Montclair Community Farms Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser
Location: Montclair Community Farms

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County Plant Sale

Location: Presby Memorial Iris Gardens

- **Friday, May 1:** 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, May 2:** 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Additional Plant Sale Date

Location: Essex County Environmental Center

- **Saturday, May 9:** 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Reminders & Tips

- **The official garden opening is May 2.** Returning gardeners are welcome to work in their bed. New gardeners are encouraged to wait until orientation. No one can begin this season until your payment is made online or mailed in. If you pay online you **do not** need to also mail in a lease agreement.
- A list of gardeners names and email addresses will be emailed to everyone. The purpose is for each of you to find a garden buddy. **Do not share this list.**
- **Those gardeners who share a common wall or bed** will be invited to a separate meeting to discuss productive uses of your shared space.
- The shed will not be ready for common use until May 2. Use caution if you must enter.

The lock combination is 2497. Please do not share it with anyone except paid garden members. The shackle on the lock (U Shaped bar) needs to be pushed and then released for the lock to open. To lock, push the shackle into the lock with the combo set, then spin the number dials. Be sure to check the area for other gardeners before you lock the gates.
- **What to Bring to the Garden:** Each gardener should have a personal bucket or tote with basic supplies, such as: gloves, pruners, snips (small pointed shears), a trowel, a claw rake, string, harvest bags, and waste bags. A small spray bottle of alcohol is also helpful for cleaning tools between uses.
- **Tool Kit Option:** If you prefer a ready-made solution, a garden tool and tote set can be a convenient way to keep everything organized. Alternatively, something along these lines are useful. [Garden tools and Tote Set.](#)
- **Soil Access:** Soil is available next to the green shipping container behind the shed. You are welcome to use wheelbarrows to transport soil to your bed. Help filling the metal park beds is also appreciated—these beds should be filled to about 3 inches below the top.
- **Student Groups:** Students will be working in the garden at various times throughout the day. If you are present during



Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

To open the front gate, push down on the handle.

You may also use the back gate if parking in the gravel lot is more convenient.

Always close gates behind you to keep critters out.

- **Water Access:**

The water is now on. Hoses will be installed later this month.

- **Waste Policy:**

All refuse and plant waste must be taken home—please do not use the black municipal trash can for garden waste.



- **Stay Informed:**

The shed bulletin board includes bed assignments, a plot map, and planting calendars—check it regularly for updates.

- **Shared Tools:**

Tools and gloves in the shed are available for community use. Tomato cages, fertilizers, and certain supplies are reserved for the advisory committee, donation beds, and school use only.

- **Community Donation Beds:**

The metal beds in the public park area are maintained by committee members and students. Produce from these beds is donated to residents of Hillwood Terrace Apartments and others in need. Volunteer opportunities to help with these beds will be shared soon—thank you in advance for your support!

- **Planting Timing:**

Just because plants are available for sale at garden centers does not mean it is the right time to plant them outdoors. Be sure to research appropriate planting times for your crops.

- **Community Donation Beds:**

The metal beds in the public park area are maintained by committee members and students. Produce from these beds is donated to residents of Hillwood Terrace Apartments and others in need. Volunteer opportunities to help with these beds will be shared soon—thank you in advance for your support!

- **Soil Testing & Monitoring:**

Many gardeners find a soil moisture meter helpful for proper watering. You may also consider a soil NPK test kit (typically under \$20) to monitor nutrient levels.

For more detailed analysis, the [Rutgers Soil Testing Lab](#) offers testing services for approximately \$20.

If you complete a soil test, please share your results with Carol or Dan.



What's Up in the Garden

[What An OMRI Listed Product Can Do For Your Garden](#)

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

harvest time, arguably produce the cleanest and most unadulterated food and flower products available on the market. The practice of organic gardening, however, is not entirely about the production of clean and tasty crops – the roots of the trade foremost stem from philosophies that value the environment. Unlike the processes of commercial farming, where growers benefit from a variety of inorganic ingredients, like chemical fertilizers and pesticides, organic growing utilizes natural properties and elements to supplement plant health and stability. By facilitating plant growth through naturally occurring entities, the organic community can encourage tenets such as soil biodiversity and a decrease in waste and pollution, which, if cared for, can ultimately promote and maintain centres of flora and fauna diversification overtime.



To maintain standards in the field of organic agriculture, organizations such as the **Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI)**, help manage the industry of inert fertilizer production, ensuring the inputs to your garden are sustainable, ethically sourced, and otherwise meet the certification standards of OMRI listed products.

What is OMRI?

OMRI is a non-governmental organization that manages the standards of inputs that go into producing certified organic gardening products. In addition, OMRI verifies the sources and procedures of production which go into the manufacturing process of fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides, ensuring that the compounds which go into these products meet organic standards.

What an OMRI Listed Product Can Do For Your Garden

Although there are many benefits of using an organic method of gardening, there are some more specific advantages growers can expect when using an OMRI listed product in the garden.

A Consistent Product

As a consumer, purchasing a product with an OMRI stamp is one of the safest bets you can make in the production of an organic garden. Because of the measures taken by OMRI in the certification process, consumers can expect a product that will produce clean food and flower crops consistently.

Quality Driven Ingredients

Organic gardening is all about quality. By picking an OMRI certified fertilizer over chemical, or uncertified supplements, you can ensure your garden will be cut above the rest at harvest time. Part of the process of OMRI certification is the payment of quality assurance testing by fertilizer manufacturers against organic standards; manufacturers pay the fee for OMRI testing whether or not their product gets a stamp of certification. As a result, the transparency OMRI provides,

Certified Organic Crop Production

Although OMRI tests specific organic inputs against standards in the production of crops, it does not certify food or flower products as organic in nature. To become a certified organic producer of crops, there are many other steps that gardeners must navigate. As a result, other institutions which act as food/fibre certifiers, look at many factors in the process of farm certification, for instance, where, how, and with what techniques crops are produced. However, if your potentially organic farm was using an OMRI label fertilizer in the production process, the decision to certify your garden as 'organic' would become much easier for certifiers.

OMRI is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides an independent review of products — such as fertilizers, pest controls, livestock health care products — intended for use in certified organic production and processing. When companies apply, OMRI reviews their products against the organic standards. Acceptable products are OMRI Listed and appear on the OMRI Products Lists. OMRI also provides technical support and training for professionals in the organic industry.

OMRI has determined the following products are allowed for use in accordance with National Organic Program (NOP) standards, for the use indicated and in keeping with any applicable use restrictions as specified. Producers should consult with their USDA-accredited certifying body before using any new products.

Crop Production

Fertilizers and Soil Amendments: Micronutrients (e.g., zinc sulfate), humic acids, fish emulsion, compost, and manure (with restrictions).

Pest and Disease Controls: Neem oil, insecticidal soaps, botanical insecticides, pheromones, copper products (restricted), and sulfur.

Weed Controls: Weed oils, vinegar (acetic acid), and flame weeding.

Commonly Available OMRI Listed Soil Amendments in NJ

Compost: Naturcycle Compost MT (manufactured in NJ).

Worm Castings: Garden State OG Worm Castings.

Nutrient Minerals/Soil Conditioners: Greensand, Humic Acid/Seaweed extracts (e.g., Root Hume, Sea Hume).

Mulch & Structure: Hardwood Bark Mulch and Coco Coir.

Potting/Soil Mixes: Miracle-Gro Organic and Kellogg Raised Bed Mix.

Specialty: Soil Moist.



Beginners Guide to Square Foot Gardening

Do you want to start a garden but are overwhelmed about how to start? Let me introduce you to a system that is perfect for small spaces called square foot

Subscribe

Past Issues

gardening. I think this is a great way to
garden for someone who is just getting

Translate ▼



started. Square Foot Gardening features high yields in a small, easy-to-care-for plot.

I will cover the basics here but I HIGHLY recommend getting the book “All New Square Foot Gardening” by Mel Bartholomew & the Square Foot Gardening Foundation. They have released a few different editions over the years, each with new info or ways to make your square foot garden better. Mel invented the system in the 1970s and the foundation has been carrying on his good work since his passing in 2016. They are the experts on all things Square Foot Gardening!

What is square foot gardening?

It is just how it sounds. If you have a 4×8 garden bed, that is 32 square feet, and you’ll have 32 “boxes” to plant in. Most people actually put down a grid using either twine, wood dowels, or PVC piping – or you can just

imagine the grid is there and plant accordingly.

Square foot gardening plants rows closer together than in traditional gardening. The upside to close planting is it tends to squeeze out weeds. And of course, it allows you to get more vegetables in a smaller space.

So why doesn’t everyone do this? It does require maintenance. Plan to water a little more frequently. You need to manage the soil as all those plants can use up nutrients quicker than traditional gardens. You will also need to pay attention to what kind of plants you are planting because not all plants play well together.

Click [here](#) to read about companion planting Square foot gardening is an efficient way for virtually everyone to be able to grow their own food.

Raised beds or “in the ground” planting?

The answer to this is how good is your soil? My garden is set up for raised beds. Cape Cod is a lovely place to live but we are basically a big sand bar that sticks out into the ocean. Unfortunately, that doesn’t make for the best farming soil. I tried for many years with conventional gardening with so-so results. Amending & tilling soil, digging out endless rocks and never-ending weeds. Finally, I gave up, switched over to raised beds and never looked back. The best part about having raised beds is having total control over soil quality. Twice a year I add compost from my compost bin to replenish the nutrients spent on growing and to replace any soil that washed away or compacted down.

Raised beds cut down on the amount of weeds growing, but also makes it easier to pull the weeds that do grow. You don’t have to contend with rocks or stray

[Subscribe](#)
[Past Issues](#)
[Translate ▼](#)

spring. You can even add a cold frame on top for winter gardening. Most people do square foot gardening in raised beds, but you certainly can use this method with conventional “in the ground” gardening.

How much garden do I need?

This depends on a lot of things. How many people are you feeding? Do



you want enough just for seasonal fresh eating? Will you want extra for canning, preserving, etc? Do you want enough to share with friends, family, or to sell at farmer’s market? Will you be conventional row gardening or square foot gardening? But most of all, how much space do you have?

Most people seem to agree that for a conventional row garden (a row of corn, a row of lettuce, a row of tomatoes...) 100 square feet per person is needed for a fresh eating garden, and about 200 square feet per person if you want to can food for year round use. With square foot gardening you need as little as 16 square feet per person for fresh eating and about 32 square feet per person to have enough for preserving!

Finding the best location

Go out into your yard at several times during the day and note where the sun is and how it moves across your yard. What areas have the most sun? Ideally you will have an area that receives at least 6–8 hours of strong sunlight.

Where is your water source located? Of course it’s great if that works out to also be a sunny spot, but you can work around it by snaking hoses where they need to be.

Take it Slow

The nice part about growing your garden slowly is that it allows your garden to grow with your gardening knowledge. In 2009 I finally gave up on growing plants in the ground and built my first raised bed. That first year with raised beds I had about 32 square feet of raised garden bed space with a little bit of “in the ground” space. By 2016 I had 225 square feet of raised bed space plus an additional 400 square feet or so of conventional garden space for fruit trees & berry bushes.

[Subscribe](#)
[Past Issues](#)
[Translate ▼](#)

built 20-foot-long beds that were only 2 feet wide. This gives me about 120 square feet in the main garden, and then I've got 3 other small areas in the yard with growing space. I've got plans for a large orchard someday when finances allow. You need to work with the space you have.

If I started with a huge garden, I would have given up the first year. Starting slowly with just a bed or two is the best way to see how much garden you need and how much you have the time and desire to maintain. That said, before you start construction have an eye on where future expansion might go. If your beds are more than 2 feet wide, make sure you leave space around all the sides for you to tend the garden. I like to leave about 2 feet between beds.

What should I plant?

What do you eat? Start with your family's favorite vegetables. Gardening is so much more rewarding when you can enjoy the benefits of all your hard work. For years and years, I grew green beans in my garden because they were easy to grow and because they seemed like a vegetable I "should" grow. The thing is out of 6 people in my family only me and my husband like them, and even we don't like them that much. I stopped wasting my time with green beans and focused my energies on veggies we loved. I try to add a few new kinds every year but focus mostly on veggies we love and would buy at a store.

What can I plant in a square foot?

Look at the back of your seed packet. You want to look at the SEED SPACING.

Let's say the recommended seed spacing is 3 inches. Each side of your square is 12 inches. A 12-inch side divided by 3-inch spacing is 4 plants. So you can have 4 rows of 4 plants - or 16 plants per square. Make sure that tall plants are planted towards the north end of the bed so they do not shade smaller plants in front.

Following are some recommendations for each square foot for popular plants:

Basil: 4
 Pole beans: 5
 Carrots: 16
 Corn: 3
 Cucumbers: 2
 Garlic: 4
 Leaf Lettuce: 4
 Onions: 4
 Oregano: 1
 Peas: 8
 Peppers: 1
 Potatoes: 1
 Radishes: 16
 Tomatoes: 1
 Zucchini: 1



[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

together I find there is just not enough air circulation and you end up with diseased plants. For tomatoes, I always leave an empty square next to them to give them room to breathe. The same goes for squash & potatoes. I know plenty of people that grow them right on top of each other, but my garden has enough room to let them breathe a bit so I'm going to give it to them.

Companion Plants & Rotating Plants

With so many plants growing in such close conditions, you want to make sure they are friendly. Did you know plants have friends too? Sometimes friends are plants that don't compete for resources, sometimes one will deter bugs that might eat another, and some will enhance the flavor of another (think cucumbers planted with dill or tomatoes with basil). There are so many combinations.

Mel from Square Foot Gardening is a big proponent of mixing your growing boxes. Instead of planting 4 boxes in a row of peppers, spread the 4 pepper boxes into different sections of your Square Foot Garden. It helps build the diversity of your garden and cuts down on disease.

Every year you will want to rotate what you plant in each box for healthy plants. This keeps plant-specific diseases from building up in the soil and keeps your soil balanced nutrient wise. Most gardeners work on a three to four year schedule. Keep a garden journal to help you remember what you planted where. Most common vegetables can be sorted into four "families".

Enrichers (Legumes)- enriches soil with nitrogen (legumes, beans, peas, peanuts)
Nightshades - heavy feeders (tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, peppers)
Leaf Crops - anything grown for its leaves, need lots of nitrogen (cabbage, broccoli, kale)
Squash Feeders - heavy feeders (squash, pumpkins, melons, cucumbers)

So year 1 plant green beans, year 2 plant tomatoes, year 3 plant cabbage, year 4 plant pumpkins, or go back to soil enriching beans.

So what does a square foot garden look like?

Ideally, you will have at least three beds to allow you to practice crop rotation each season. But do what you have space for. If all you can fit is one bed, start with one bed. If you are worried about plant disease, you can empty the soil from the bed and start fresh each season. You can use the "spent" soil to amend flower garden beds or to mulch bushes. Adding a good amount of new compost each season will allow fresh nutrients to be added and can help keep most diseases at bay.

Copyright © 2026 The Cape Coop

We had a great turnout for last Sunday's **"Planning Your Kitchen Garden"** workshop, presented by Dani Scannella, owner of The Backyard Garden Co. In this informative and engaging session, Dani walked participants through the fundamentals of creating a productive kitchen garden, including choosing between direct sowing and transplants, planning for cool- and warm-season crops, and making the most of limited space through succession and square-foot planting. She also shared practical tips on building healthy soil, supporting plants with proper trellising, and managing pests through organic and preventative methods. Attendees left with a clear roadmap and helpful strategies to grow a successful, abundant garden throughout the season.



Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼



CHEAT SHEET: PLANNING YOUR KITCHEN GARDEN

Planting considerations

- Direct sow vs transplant - some seeds prefer to be direct sown in place, others benefit from starting indoors. Others can go either way
 - Direct sow quick growing or root sensitive plants: root vegetables (radishes, carrots, beets) and veggies that don't like to be transplanted (beans + legumes including snap/snow peas and beans; spinach, cucumber and zucchini)
 - Transplant: larger plants that need a head start indoors (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant)
 - Either way: lettuces, annual flowers, annual herbs (basil)
- Think about how many plants you want - multiple plants may be better by seed vs just planting one of a kind may be better by transplant
- Look for disease resistant, space-saving or container varieties (especially for plants that get large)
- Top cool season seeds: arugula, spinach, mixed lettuce blends, radishes, snap peas
- Top warm season seeds: bush beans, cucumber, zucchini, arugula, heat tolerant lettuce blends
- Space vs reward
 - multi-harvest plants vs one and done
- Succession planting - planting faster maturing crops in "rounds" vs planting everything at once. Many benefits:
 - gives you a more continuous harvest vs. everything maturing at once. Great for lettuces, radishes, bush beans, cucumbers + zucchini
 - helps with pest issues + pest control
 - prevents bare soil = better moisture retention and fewer weeds

Pest Control

- Not all bugs are bad; pests are inevitable. The goal is a tolerable level of pests, not none.
- Each plant hosts only a handful of pests. Proper ID is critical. Use 2+ characteristics when searching online, including host plant that's affected + appearance of pest, type of damage, time of year to help indicate pest's lifecycle
- Plant varieties that are bred for or known for certain pest or disease resistance
- Physical barriers (mesh, cloches, dollar store mesh garbage cans), mechanical control (monitoring, handpicking, soapy water cup, painters tape for egg collection, water spray)
- Companion planting + trap cropping (french marigolds, calendula, basil, dill, alliums, nasturtiums)
- Organic sprays as a last resort

Dani Scannella, owner The Backyard Garden Co. | Local Kitchen Garden Coach & Designer
 Instagram @thebackyardgardenco | Email: dani@thebackyardgardencompany.com

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼



CHEAT SHEET: PLANNING YOUR KITCHEN GARDEN

Set yourself up for success

- Top off your bed with fresh organic compost. Replenishes nutrients, helps with water retention and improves drainage. Also encourages healthy soil life
- Additional ways to feed your soil: earthworm castings + liquid fish fertilizer
- Healthy soil = healthy plants = less pests and disease
- Avoid synthetic fertilizers
- Trellises – plan for proper, strong support for your biggest + heaviest plants including peppers, eggplant and especially tomatoes. Cages can support eggplant and bush tomatoes. Indeterminate, or vining tomatoes, need larger more sturdy support.
- Watering – have a plan for regular watering. Veggie gardens on average need an inch per week, but more in extreme weather. Always water at the ROOTS not the leaves. Seeds and transplants need consistent watering every day (for seeds) or two (transplants) at first.

Plant with the seasons

Certain plants prefer certain seasons or temperatures: cold, cool, warm and hot

- Average last frost date vs Mother's Day planting date
- Cool season: March through May (chance of frost)
- Warm season: May through October (zero chance of frost)
- Cool season: October through December (chance of frost)
- Cold season: January/February (guaranteed frost)

Cool season crops

spinach, arugula, radishes, cilantro, peas, lettuces, beets, carrots, kale, swiss chard, broccoli, cauliflower, pansies, violas

Warm season crops

Tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, cucumbers, bush beans, pole beans, zucchini, arugula, heat tolerant lettuces, basil, zinnias, cosmos

Intensive planting / square foot gardening

- Maximizes space in your bed which offers so many benefits: more production, less exposed soil means better nutrient and moisture retention, more diversity in your bed confuses pests, invites pollinators, more balanced eco system
- Each plant gets the space it needs, but no more. Not crowding the bed with seedlings, but planting with the mature size of the plant in mind.
- Include plenty of herbs and flowers interplanted with your veggies in order to diversify your garden, help the plants grow with each other, attract beneficial insects and help keep pests to a minimum.



Recipes

Honey Garlic Chicken

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Yasmin Fahr
NYT Cooking](#)[Translate ▾](#)

These sweet and salty honey-garlic chicken breasts are perfect for when you want big flavor, but you're short on time. To ensure golden-brown chicken breasts that stay plump and moist, start with a hot pan and pat the chicken dry to avoid adding extra moisture, then allow the chicken to sear properly. Once your chicken has taken on color, set it aside and create a simple pan sauce of honey, soy sauce, vinegar, garlic and butter.



When the sauce is glossy, return the chicken to the pan and turn it until coated in the satiny honey-garlic sauce. Serve with roasted potatoes, rice or bread to soak it all up.

Total Time” 25 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

INGREDIENTS:

2 chicken breasts, halved lengthwise, or 4 chicken cutlets (about 1 pound)

Salt and black pepper

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons honey

2 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons apple cider, rice wine or white wine vinegar

3 to 4 large garlic cloves, minced or grated

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish (optional)

PREPARATION:

Step 1

Pat the chicken dry. Season all over with salt and pepper.

Step 2

Heat the oil in a large (12-inch) skillet over medium-high for 1 to 2 minutes until hot and shimmering. Add the chicken and cook without moving until it's golden brown on the bottom, about 5 minutes.

Step 3

Use tongs to flip the chicken and cook until just cooked through, about 4 minutes.

Step 4

While the chicken cooks on the second side, mix together 3 tablespoons of water, the honey and soy sauce in a measuring cup.

Step 5

Transfer the cooked chicken to a plate and set aside.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

Pour in the soy sauce mixture and let cook until the liquid reduces, about 1 minute. Add the vinegar, garlic and butter, stirring to melt and incorporate until thick and glossy, about 2 minutes more.

Step 7

Return the chicken to the pan, leaving behind any accumulated juices on the plate, and turn to coat in the sauce. If the sauce is too thick, add the accumulated juices, then serve immediately, garnishing with the parsley, if desired.



Bee's Knees Cocktail

Kathryne Taylor, Cookie + Kate

When life gives you lemons... make a cocktail. How about that? My friends and I have been sending each other instructional videos on how to make our favorite cocktails for happy hour.

I'll never be a gin and tonic girl, but I've been enjoying gin-based drinks as the weather warms up. Gin plays nicely with citrus and fresh herbs, so it seems just right for this time of year.

The Bee's Knees is a classic Prohibition-era cocktail made with gin, lemon and honey. It's brightly flavored, lightly sweet, and just an overall delightful drink—hence the name.

Enjoy one at home on a nice spring day. It tastes even better on a patio or balcony, if you have one. Cheers!



Ingredients

½ ounce honey syrup (see step 1)
1 ounce lemon juice (about ½ medium lemon)
2 ounces gin
Lemon twist, for garnish

Instructions

To make the honey syrup: Combine equal parts honey and water (say, 2 tablespoons each if you're only making a few cocktails) in a microwave-safe bowl

[Subscribe](#)
[Past Issues](#)
[Translate ▼](#)

Before juicing your lemons, use a vegetable peeler or channel knife to peel off a strip(s) of zest for your twist.

To make the cocktail, fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Pour in the honey syrup, lemon juice and gin. Securely fasten the lid and shake until the mixture is very cold, about 30 seconds.

Strain the drink into a coupe or martini glass. Twist the lemon peel over the cocktail to release some of its oils, then drop it in. Enjoy while cold.

Enjoy responsibly.

Poems & Humor



Today
Billy Collins

If ever there were a spring day so perfect,
so uplifted by a warm intermittent breeze
that it made you want to throw
open all the windows in the house
and unlatch the door to the canary's cage,
indeed, rip the little door from its jamb,
a day when the cool brick paths
and the garden bursting with peonies

Bumbly Bees
Clive Blake

I loves ... I loves ...
Bumbly Bees,
With skinny legs
And big fat knees.

With golden rings
And black ones too,
They buzzy buzz
As all bees do.

They hover low
As they have
planned,
Choose a flower
And then they
land.

Grabs some
pollen
And buzzes away,
But will be back
One bumbly day.

I loves ... I loves ...
Bumbly Bees,
With skinny legs



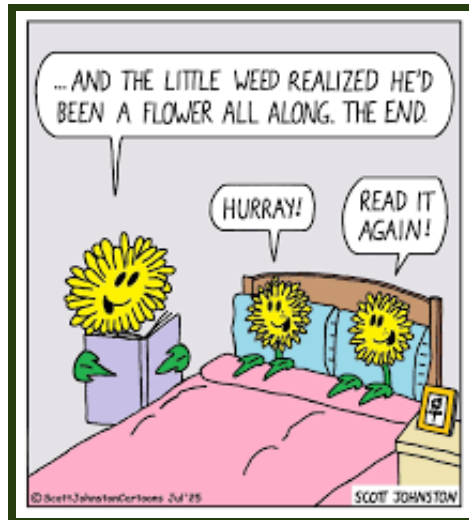
Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▾

a hammer to the glass paperweight
on the living room end table,
releasing the inhabitants
from their snow-covered cottage
so they could walk out,
holding hands and squinting
into this larger dome of blue and
white,

well, today is just that kind of day.



Herb Garden Puns

I'm kind of a big dill.

It's party thyme.

Chive never met anyone quite like you.

Thistle be the best day ever!

Do you have the thyme? I need to get
somewhere around tree o'clock.

Long thyme no see.

We're mint to be.

Good chives only.

I be-leaf in you!

Herb Garden Puns

Sweet chive of mind.

I've got a sage piece of advice for you.

I'm in a basil-ically good mood.

Let's turnip the beet!

You're a rosemary in a world of thyme.

I'm dill-lighted to know you.

I've got the parsley to your heart.

You mint so much to me.

Let's salsa-d your worries away.

I'm chili-n for your company.

You've got the zest factor.



Garden Centers

Pleasantdale Nurseries Inc – 240 Pleasant Valley Way, West Orange
Metropolitan At Caldwell Nursery – 246 Passaic Ave, West Caldwell

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▾

Cerbos Parsippany Greenhouse & Garden Center – 440 Littleton Rd., Parsippany
The Farm at Green Village – 403 Green Village Rd., Green Village
Country Mile Gardens – 1108 Mount Kemble Avenue, Morristown

Educational Platforms

Wildstead is a design practice and education platform for people who are ready for change — ecologically, aesthetically, and personally. Design services. Self-guided curriculum. And an app coming soon. Wildstead® replaces authority with agency through design, education, and stewardship of land as a living system.
<https://www.wildstead.com/>

 **Building Legacy One Brick at a Time**

[Verona Community Garden and That's My Brick!®](#) have joined forces to raise money for our project! The Verona Community Garden is located near HBW Middle School. The goal of this space has been to create a multi-use community centerpiece. The garden has given community members an opportunity to learn, connect and grow together.



This cherished spot has grown over the last 4 years and is fully funded by grants and donations. As the demand for the garden has grown we need a walkway in our public section of the garden. We are asking for your support through an engraved brick fundraiser.

Help us create a legacy for the community by showing your support with this fundraiser.

order here

Stay Connected with VCG!

Join our vibrant community online! Follow us on **Facebook** (*Verona NJ Community Garden*) and **Instagram** (*veronanjcommunitygarden*) for updates, photos, and event highlights. You can also stay in the loop by joining the **VCG WhatsApp Group!**

VCG Manager:

Carol Thomas – veronanjcommunitygarden@gmail.com

[Subscribe](#)

[Past Issues](#)

[Translate](#) ▼

Tara Bratek – tara.bratek@gmail.com

Nina James – ninajames24@gmail.com

If you'd prefer to stop receiving these newsletters or other garden emails, send a message to veronanjcommunitygarden@gmail.com —we'll take care of it.

Copyright (C) 2025 Verona Community Garden All rights reserved.

Our email address is:

veronanjcommunitygarden@gmail.com

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)

