**Bedford Farmers Club**

September 18, 2019 Meeting

**Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming**

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m. by president, Mary Farley.

In the absence of the secretaries, Mary Farley read the minutes from the June meeting. They were unanimously approved.

An important guest, Ann Cabot, was introduced. She grew up on Glynwood Farm and her family was instrumental in founding the not-for-profit agricultural center there. The Center is contained within Fahnestock Park.

Treasurer Roger Vincent, presented the financial report – we are solvent – and passed around the sign-in sheet with the envelope for dues attached.

In the absence of historian John Stockbridge, Mary Farley presented the historian’s report. The Farmers Club has long supported agricultural education. A BFC meeting in October, 1900 featured the director of the Briar Cliff School of Practical Agricultural founded on the large farm of William Law in Briarcliff. The goal was to education primarily city youth in [agriculture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture), horticulture, cold storage, [botany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botany), chemistry, geology, physics, agricultural zoology, [entomology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entomology), [beekeeping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beekeeping),[[66]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Briarcliff_Farms#cite_note-AmGardening-68) [meteorology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meteorology), land surveying and leveling, soils, drainage, irrigation, [tillage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tillage), fertilizers, plant diseases, stock, fruit growing, landscape gardening and bookkeeping. The School only lasted 2 years before it had to move to larger quarters in Poughkeepsie. Eventually, insufficient funds were raised to keep it open and the funds were transferred to the agricultural school at Cornell.

In 1919, the speaker was Professor Herbert Webber of Cornell University. “Prof. Webber began by saying that 25 years ago (i.e. 1884) it would have seemed incredible that a great university would have considered Latin and Greek no longer the main thing, and would have considered classes in horticulture, dairy, poultry, etc., of equal value to training the intellect and developing character. Agriculture is now fighting for recognition as the equal of classics and sciences. Farming is a broader subject than mercantile pursuits, requires greater training, and for success demands the qualities that make a successful business man.”

A subsequent meeting was held at the “Reformatory,” now the Bedford Hills Corrections Center (BFC President James Wood was director), where young women inmates were taught farming and agriculture. It was hoped that these skills would give these young women from destitute backgrounds an alternative to the “life on the streets” that was often the cause of their incarceration.

Pam Sorkin presented her “Timely Tips” for September. She recommended the Echinacea variety “Pow wow” as an addition to any garden. Buying the plants on sale AND splitting them with her jab saw, provided many plants from one purchase. This particular variety is hardy and has strong stems, preventing them from drooping or falling over – an annoying trait of other varieties. Powwow comes in magenta or bright white blooms.

Poison ivy, the scourge of many gardeners, is difficult to kill or to treat. Pam has solutions for both. To kill, her well-tested homemade concoction seems to work:

1 gallon white vinegar

4 cups table salt

¼ cup dishwashing liquid

Dissolve the salt in the vinegar in a large pot over low heat.

Slowly stir in the dishwashing liquid.

Off heat, and allow to cool.

Pour into spray bottles and go drench that poison ivy.

This won’t kill the vine immediately and requires several applications. But it will weaken it substantially. Be careful when pulling poison ivy out – treat it like toxic waste!

To treat the rash, a product called Tecnu Outdoor Skin Cleanser works for Pam. She obtained samples, which she distributed to the group.

A discussion ensued about other treatments for poison ivy, including ingesting the leaves to create an immunity. While some claimed that it worked for them, most were wary of consciously eating a poisonous substance!

Liz Corio and Lynda Prim from Glynwood Farm began our program. Liz Corio is VP of Development and Adminstration and Lynda Prim is Senior Director of the Farm. Liz has attended BFC meetings and we consider her a member.

Lynda gave an overview of the mission and activities of Glynwood, describing the education of the next generation of agricultural entrepreneurs. Glynwood serves as the venue for their own farm dinners and classes as well as for outside events like weddings. There was a wedding party there having photos taken while we were meeting. She explained their scientific approach to farming, currently spear-headed by an intern from Yale forestry school, who was using Excel to quantify aspects of the farm over time in order to make better decisions.

Lynda took us on a tour of the nearby fields, including the sheep and CSA field. We saw the CSA shop and were encouraged to participate next season.

After some delicious treats provided by our members and Glynwood, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Farley

Secretary Pro Tem