

# *Ode to Asparagus poetry reading*

Glen Lake Community Library

May 19, 2018

## **1<sup>st</sup> Place**

### ***Asparagus***

Matt Girard

As a child  
I believed  
That swallowed seeds  
Would grow in me  
Until I'd be  
A stalk, a patch, an apple tree

Older now  
And old beliefs  
Are buried within dreams.  
Above midnight streams  
I sleep and seem  
Of beech, of birch, of summer green

Now I long  
For Leelanau  
Between the inland seas  
I'll eat spring shoots  
So my feet take root  
Feathered limbs following the breeze

## **2<sup>nd</sup> place**

### ***Of Asparagus I Sing***

V. L. Stewart

Cold dawn Springs, of Asparagus I sing.  
O Asparagus, we snapped your crispy heads at the break of day,  
our baskets heavy with your fragrant, green display.  
My Uncle Thor picked and ate you in the field,  
"Spring Breakfast," he called you while cutting down our yield.  
Once picked, Aunt Crystal covered your green and purple crowns  
with dampened cloth to keep you fresh until sold in town.  
O Cold dawn Springs, of Asparagus I sing.

We snapped seven acres of your stalks every morn,  
from late April to Father's Day, it was shorn.  
On muggy, sunny days, picking took all our might,  
we swore we heard you growing, even in the night.  
East sun warmed our backs while your endless rows we tracked.  
We joked and griped through every bend and stoop, bend and stoop,  
Dutifully picking loop after loop.  
When, at last your green-purple crowns went to crazy seed,  
the fairy forest fronds were extraordinary to believe.  
O Cold dawn Springs, of Asparagus I sing.

Although I love your tasty, green empire like none other,  
Was truly glad when the picking season was over.  
O Cold dawn springs, of Asparagus I sing.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> place**

#### ***The Dog Who Loved Asparagus***

Solomon Boothby (age 9)

One night at supper  
An asparagus fell on the floor  
When I looked for it  
It wasn't there any more.

I looked again  
It wasn't there still  
My dog licked his chops  
He didn't look too chill

Did he eat it?  
Does he eat greens?  
What is that look  
On his face really mean?

This time on purpose  
I dropped another, again.  
Just like the first one  
It was gone in a blink.

Now I knew it was him  
Eating it off the floor  
For now he was even  
Begging for more.

In fact when I turned  
My head to tell Mom

When I looked back  
ALL my asparagus was gone!

Empire Asparagus Festival  
Was the very next day  
We saw the big tent  
And headed that way.

What happened next  
You wouldn't believe  
Our dog ran through the gate  
Getting off his leash.

With his nose in the air  
He ran to a booth  
Where asparagus was served  
(I tell you the truth)

The dog growled at the man  
And made him jump!  
The plate flew through the air  
And made it all dump.

My dog munched away  
So quickly and proud  
The workers were shocked  
And so was the crowd.

I ran to my dog  
Hollering "No!"  
I pulled him out  
They were glad to see him go.

His love for asparagus  
Will be remembered best of all,  
For the next many years  
At the Asparagus Festival!

## ***Asparagus in Time***

Fielding Schaefer

Deep back in time, Cronus rewind  
Deep back in space, to our superstitious race  
Deep in the Land, thought still to be mightier than man

Men Women and Children conjoin in town square:  
To dance in distinct direction like their divine's artful order  
To chant the notes of Demeter, entraining their rhythms to one.  
To sacrifice goods to the festival's central fire, submitting their earthly belongings to Hades greater law  
And to circle round the core flame to tame everyone to a goal in the same.

They appeal their harvest to whom's hand plays their fate-  
Nature, their provider, and her sweet birth of perennial asparagus.

Shallow now in time, space,  
We dance the detached direction, carts aisle to aisle  
Sacrifice the least of our earnings  
And chant road rage round the parking lot  
For we are not entrained

Our rituals go unacknowledged to our divine White Lab Coat  
who works not for the lab  
But for the coat's white collar  
Industry, our provider, and its undocumented import of foreign strawberries

For asparagus today we strike due compromise,  
Conjoining locally, chanting our crop in poem, dancing, and sacrificing happily.  
To the power of community and modernity  
Where Cronus and the Chemist intersect  
And balance our fate.

## ***Our Muse, Asparagus***

Annie Lively

Upon initial consideration the stalks do not inspire,  
hardly dancing in the breeze  
and failing to produce sweet scents.

Yes, the sparrow grass is silent in its grandeur,  
often falling second fiddle to the mighty potatoes  
or voluptuous tomatoes so near and dear to the main course.

The grass is patient each year,  
awaiting the festival's arrival,  
ready for its grilled, chilled, and deep-fried debut.

We spend the seasons tapping toes  
and checking the date,  
is it the third weekend quite yet?

Finally, she arrives.  
The spears appear in excess  
and we celebrate in our gluttonous way.

And so, perhaps upon initial consideration  
the stalks do not inspire  
but the love tips shall never be forgotten here.

## ***Asper-Grass***

Carol Ritter

The buds laid like scales,  
Green spears from the soil.  
The lizard of veggies  
Steam...roast - but don't boil!

Mario loves it  
So does Bourdain.  
Decked out in glory,  
Pickled or plain.

At worst it is stringy  
At best, divine.  
With sauce, so yummy  
Quintessential...springtime!

## ***Veggies Ode to Asparagus***

Joseph Povolò

If you have any fears, about eating those spears,  
your fears are quite fictitious.  
By tasting you will find, if you keep an open mind,  
that those spears are quite delicious.

Some veggies will attest, that asparagus is the best,  
that it simply can't be "beet"  
While "thyme" is on your side, asparagus has never lied,  
it really is quite a treat.

Your interest may have peaked, as information "leek"ed,  
that my "celery" was rather low.  
But that doesn't matter, you'll still find it on my platter,  
'cuz it doesn't really cost a lot of dough.

Many veggies taste fine, some "romaine" on the sideline,  
asparagus stands straight and tall.  
"Turnip" the music and dance,  
"lettuce" give "peas" a chance, while others don't "carrot" all.

"Tomatoes" (to-my-toes) I will stand, I give asparagus a hand,  
there is not "mushroom" to say more.  
So to the very end, asparagus I will defend,  
buy it when you see it at the store!

So do as you desire, when you are in Empire,  
And buy it by the bunches,  
It's nutritious you see, and all the veggies agree,  
For breakfast, dinner and lunches!

*NOTE: Joseph won the Audience Choice award for the best recitation, aided by a bag full of veggie props.*

## ***Asparagus***

Elizabeth Morrison

Long staff reaching for the sun  
Harbinger of spring  
Looks to the future  
Looks to the past  
A vegetable re-past  
That takes us to the feast  
That summer brings.  
Each plant a tower  
Straining toward the sun  
Each tip small buds  
Waiting to be unfurled  
The stalks a green of spring  
Renew the promise  
Of the summers bounty.  
Asparagus today the early  
Voice of spring  
And stalks that grow  
So quickly from the earth  
Meet the sun and rain  
And gain a higher view  
Of the field of  
Family members standing in salute.

## ***Ode to Asparagus***

Marcy Cook-Fine

O, spears as spires  
to heaven rise  
To feed our souls  
and soothe our eyes  
O, spears of Spring  
such joy you bring  
To you from whom  
aroma wings  
O, sweet Asparagus  
to you we sing!

*NOTE: Marci received the Perseverance Award for this short, sweet poem, which she had submitted for the third time.*

## ***When Life Grows Thin***

Samuel Hartley

Who knows where the path will lead  
As you place your foot upon life's road,  
And you take it as it comes--?

Oh! There's bound to be those easy spots  
Where the road widens out—  
Where the lights are bright, and jukeboxes blare out to the night—

Where there will be woman and man, false laughter, and sin,  
And the party will go on for a spell—but only a spell  
Where the wide, smooth, streets which beckon, "This way!—  
Where the pleasures lay!",  
Will all peter out where the sidewalks end.

And throughout it all,  
Through the laughter and song, and the dizzying light,  
One mustn't lose sight,  
At the opposite end, the road squeezes down to a man track;  
And, the lights will dim and be lost in the dusk,  
And, the music will fade to the rear.

While the lonely road,  
With its unknown forks and dangerous curves  
Stretches on there,  
Where a man, he faces the end—  
Alone---  
With his God.

## ***Oh Beautiful Asparagus***

Erwin P. Spote

Asparagus oh beautiful Asparagus,  
    You stand so straight and true,  
We thank you forever,  
    For all the healthy things you do.  
We steam you and cook you,  
    To save your dark green color,  
This preserves your beauty and flavor,  
    In a way like no other.  
We see you in a store,  
    With your feet in a bed of water,  
You stand proud and tall,  
    Like a cattle going to slaughter.

Then someone came along,  
And bleached you very white,  
We wonder what your mother thought,  
You must have been a sight.  
But all and all Asparagus,  
We are very proud of you,  
We really love you dearly,  
And to you we'll always be true.

## ***Oh Sweet Asparagus***

Sean Campillo

Oh Sweet Asparagus...  
You taste so good.

Thank you for growing so well...  
In my Neighborhood!

You're so sleek and slender...  
vibrant and green.

Doctor says if I eat enough of you...  
I'll have a healthy spleen!

Every year you bless our dunes...  
With your rising stalks galore.

When I see the hills turn green...  
I want you more and more!

Oh My Dear Asparagus...  
I wish I could have you at every meal...

I'd gobble you up 3 times a day...  
That would be the sweetest deal!

I want asparagus with my Biscuits...  
And asparagus with my Steak.

Next year on my birthday...  
I even want asparagus on my cake!

Every year when you grow wild...  
It marks the start of summer...

Out of All the Green Veggies I choose you...  
Even over the cucumber

I behave all year, so Santa knows...  
All I want is you wrapped up.

You taste so good my Delightful Asparagus  
I even share you with my pup!

Each town in the whole world should honor you...  
And throw you a fest.

I love you, you beautiful vegetable...  
YOU TRULY ARE THE BEST!

*NOTE: Sean's original poem is accompanied by charming illustrations. It's available to view in the library.*