

## Glen Lake Community Library Ode to Asparagus 2024

**Joseph Povolo**

**Audience Choice Award**

### ***Astrological Asparagus***

The Pisces Fish is both compassionate and kind, a more sensitive sign you will not find;  
asparagus it seems goes well with many dishes, but it goes especially well with freshwater  
fishes!

The Aries Ram can charge ahead, foraging for asparagus until it's fed;  
with it's adventurous spirit and creative mind, if it finds asparagus, it will leave you behind.

The Taurus Bull is stubborn and possessive, it knows asparagus is quite impressive:  
though sometimes patient and reliable, it's love of asparagus is undeniable.

The Gemini Twins are smart and witty, their recipe for asparagus is creative and pretty;  
But twins you know are like seeing double, and two personalities can lead to trouble.

The Cancer Crab is secure in it's shell, though insecure without a place to dwell;  
it's clingy and moody and has its flaws, it will grip the spears in its protective claws.

Leo, the Lion is king of the jungle, it prefers asparagus to anything fungal; though dominant,  
dogmatic and ever the boss, it prefers its asparagus with lemony sauce.

To the Virgo Virgin, everything is new, and it finds asparagus quite easy to chew; critical, fussy,  
perfectionist at heart, each time it prepares asparagus it's a brand-new start.

The Scales of Libra seek balance and equality, while also enjoying idealism and frivolity;  
asparagus must therefore be cut in even pieces and shared equally with every single species.

The Scorpio Scorpion is determined and wields power, the unwitting asparagus it will soon  
devour; stay out of it's way and avoid it's sting, and you may live to enjoy asparagus this spring.

The Sagittarius Archer with its arrow and bow, will hunt for asparagus come high or come low;  
adventurous, optimistic and ever jovial, their quest for asparagus is a culinary testimonial.

The Capricorn Goat is disciplined and prudent, they probably make a very good student; but  
their miserly side won't let them share, asparagus, leeks, or other spring fare.

The Aquarius Water Bearer is a wise old sage, loyal and honest and easy to gauge; asparagus needs water at its earliest stage, and this of course is the dawning of the age.....

*(Musical conclusion, sung to the tune of **Age of Aquarius**, with audience participation)*

Doot da doo, doot da doo, doot da doo, doot da doo....

When the Moon is in the Seventh House  
And Jupiter aligns with Mars  
Then peace will guide the planets  
And love will steer the stars

This is the dawning of the Age of Asparagus  
The Age of Asparagus  
Asparagus  
Asparagus

**Carol Smith**

***Celebrate Asparagus***

In a garden bed, spears of green stand tall,  
Asparagus awaits, the springtime's call.  
With tips like crowns, and stalks so lean,  
A veggie king, in the garden scene.

Its flavor? A mix of earth and zest,  
A hint of nuttiness, it's simply the best.  
Grilled, steamed, or in a quiche baked tight,  
Every bite a delight, morning, noon, or night.

So here's to asparagus, so slender and fine,  
A taste of spring, in every line.  
From Empire's fields to our home plate,  
It's a veggie to savor, and to celebrate!

***Grandson's poem***

Asparagus and Me  
I don't like it.  
Because it's yucky.

## **Andy Beaudry**

Asparagus, what have you done to me?  
With you back in my life, so is my stinky pee

Your stems so tender when enticed with steam  
An explosion of flavor that tastes like a dream

A special sign of sunshine to come  
Winter has passed, as has the chill that left me numb

## **Ann Burnett**

There once was man named McFeragus  
Who grew fields and fields of asparagus  
We ate it and peed  
And it smelled like a weed  
It seemed he wanted to embarrass us!

## **Jayne Robinson**

### ***Asparagus***

Asparagus is ---  
way too many syllables; and  
too short a season

## **Wayne Anderson**

### ***Canapes not taken***

Asparagus prices are getting steep –  
but I have charcuterie to keep;  
and hor deurves to make before I sleep;  
hor deurves to make before I sleep

**Roger S. Dewey**

***The International Asparagus Fairy***

[An ode after the manner of (and with sincere apologies to) the late Ogden Nash] Do you

believe in the Asparagus Fairy  
Who brings little German Kinder spears of Spargel? I think  
that all opinions to the contrary  
Are merely sanctimonious argle-bargle.

Surely the Fairy would drop a load of Swedish sparris To save  
little Flicka a flight from Stockholm to Paris, Where all the  
tiny garçons and filles need to converge To see the Fairy  
deliver a batch of les asperges.

Should the Fairy fly some tacos of espárragos to the Spanish,  
I'm pretty sure the niños y niñas would quickly make them vanish. But  
just as our Fairy takes tons of sparzha to the Ukrainians, She'll also drop  
a bunch of šparagai on the Lithuanians.

Of course, everyone knows that those teeny Italian bambini  
Always choose a plate of aspañago over fried zucchini.  
So if you want all the kids of the world to be gregarious, Just wish  
the Fairy to drop them all a bag of asparg-ious.

***Phonetic asparagus pronunciations (emphasis on capitalized syllable):***

Do you believe in the Asparagus Fairy  
Who brings little German Kinder spears of **Shpar-gle**? I think  
that all opinions to the contrary  
Are merely sanctimonious argle-bargle.

Surely the Fairy would drop a load of Swedish **Spa-reece**  
To save little Flicka a flight from Stockholm to Paris, Where all the  
tiny garçons and filles need to converge  
To see the Fairy deliver a batch of **lays Aa-spurge** (French in the style of Nash)

Should the Fairy fly some tacos of **āy-Spair-rah-gos** to the Spanish, I'm  
pretty sure the niños y niñas would quickly make them vanish. But just as  
our Fairy takes tons of **Spar-zha** to the Ukrainians, She'll also drop a bunch  
of **shpa-Rah-gay** on the Lithuanians.

Of course, everyone knows that those teeny Italian bambini Always  
choose a plate of **aa-Spar-ah-go** over fried zucchini. So if you want all  
the kids of the world to be gregarious,  
Just wish the Fairy to drop them all a bag of **uh-spaigr-ious**.

**Sky Vanderberg**

***Asparagoose***

Hey what's that?  
A tree of spruce?  
No no, let me deduce  
Aha yes! The asparagoose!  
With a head of an asparagus stalk,  
And feathers as white as chalk!  
At the peak of midnight,  
You hear a rounded beak  
Creak, creak,  
Knock, knock,  
SQUACK!

**Thomas K Wright**

From Michigan's sandy soil leaps a veggie or renown,  
Tho' other produce here abounds, Asparagus wears the crown.  
It's verdant spears delight our tastes in recipes diverse,  
To dine without Asparagus would truly be a curse.

Sauteed, in soup, salad or roast,  
A cherished springtime pleasure,  
Arising quickly from its beds,  
Nothing beats this tasty treasure.

We welcome back this springtime treat,  
Good food for man and bunny,  
Delicious, nutritious, and best of all,  
It makes your pee smell funny.

**Laura Labriola**

***Ode to Spargle fumes in a softly lit latrine***

Pikestaff vegetable  
Piercing sulfur chemical  
Pee smells terrible

**Carol Ritter**

***Asparagus***

Buds shingled like scales,  
Green spears from the soil.  
The lizard of veggies:  
Steam...roast... but don't boil!

Great chefs love it  
Side dish or main,  
Decked out in glory,  
Pickled or plain.

Charred on the grill,  
With butter, divine.  
With sauce, so yummy  
Quintessential springtime!

**Mae Stier**

***Becoming Unkempt***

Cultivated into neat rows,  
they emerge prim and proper,  
a field of soldiers at attention  
or girls practicing etiquette, a stack of books  
balanced on their heads. Crowned in quiet glory,  
pluck them at the right time, and they nestle  
quietly on a plate beside lake trout  
and potatoes. But what I love most  
about the asparagus is its penchant  
for growing unruly. How easy it is to miss  
the window of order, how they seem to stretch  
and stretch out of the earth on a path to becoming  
unkempt. One day, they are obedient and tame,  
but let them go, and they grow wild-haired,  
having escaped our dinner plates, now turned  
to ferns, to fields of laughing grain, escaped prisoners  
dancing in the wind.

**Daniel Egeler**

***Asparagus***

Apron

Sam

Papa

Alphabet

Racecar

Applesauce

Gut

Um

Sandy



Abram  
Sam  
Papa  
Alphabet  
Racecar  
Appksauce  
Gut  
Um  
Sandy



DA hie

**Patty Braem**  
***Ad for Asparagus***

No need to curse.  
No need to cuss.  
You're going to love  
asparagus!

Eat it creamed  
or spear by spear.  
(Some people add it  
to their beer.)

I would never  
steer you wrong.  
Eat a bunch.  
It makes you strong.

Just relax and  
use your smarts.  
Eat it deep fried.  
Go to Art's.

That is all.  
This is the end.  
Enjoy your asparagus my friend.

## Tim Chandler Hoerner

Asparagus, Asparagus,  
Why do you embarrass us?

We plant you, water you and love you so,  
We wait all year for you to grow,

Year two comes and passes by,  
And still no sign, why oh why?

Alas year three was worth the wait,  
We gaze at you upon our plate,

We love your stalk, and yes your tips,  
Can't wait for them to touch our lips,

We cannot stop, spear after spear,  
You are a star, you have no peer,

You've put us underneath your spell,  
With your texture, taste and smell,

Yet, afterwards when we're alone,  
We sit as kings upon the throne,

Remembering then, we start to see,  
The embarrassment, that comes from thee..

**Jacqueline Hearne**

***Oh, Asparagus!***

Oh Asparagus, so tall and green  
White at the base you grow so lean  
Leaves like feathers so rough  
In the fields you stand so tough  
The moisture you need  
In Michigan to breed  
Eaten by squirrels one day  
Another on our plates you lay  
Good with salt and pepper  
But in ice cream a social leper  
In quiche and soup taken  
But best when served with bacon  
From early May to late June you grow  
Oh Asparagus, please don't go!

**Lauren Hearne**

***Ode to Life: From the Perspective of an Asparagus***

Spring is fleeting in the northern woods,  
As snow dissolves, tubers sprout  
And we embark on our inevitable odyssey from seed,  
Humble dreams in tender shoots,

I am the green stalk, an asparagus plain,  
With purpose preordained, I rise and root,  
Node by node, I stretch towards light,  
A column in the sun's unyielding sight.

Though small, my mission clear,  
I've grown wise through seasons of joy and fear,  
My aim is to grow strong for my farmer,  
To bring for his home honor.

Why this suffering, this relentless strife?  
Through frost and drought, the sneering life,  
Is weather's scourge a penance borne?  
My kin lay wasted, by frost and scorn.

Across time and space, my family has been,  
In a park once pure, untouched by Eve's hand,  
And in a patch where my grandfather watched Judas' sin,  
We've lived in gardens great and meek throughout the land

I am wrought from a resilient thread,  
The soil my cradle, my farmer's poor prayer,  
I yearn to sway in breezes fair,  
To live my span in sunlight's spread.

Even in death, my role persists,  
A warm bath with salt and oil's simple kiss,  
On the platter, with meat and bread,  
A final supper, my path is led.

In the distance, the creatures gaze,  
We share our fate, in cyclical praise,  
To serve the farmer, our duty done,  
In life and death, we are one.

**Stephen Robinson**  
***Love and Asparagus***

The woody stems remain  
    Would she see  
I am embracing all of her  
    Of course she wouldn't  
Blanched and seasoned just right  
    She tastes and smiles  
I had no idea I could cook  
Delighted, her eyes brighten  
    Funny, what love can do  
    She awaits my words  
I blubber about the uncut ends  
One finger to my lips, she understands

***Love and Asparagus***  
***Part 2***

The earth, years, and faded youth  
Seeds chosen over spears  
Cherished with affection  
Our life and every crop  
    The plot grows  
Joy and bountiful harvests  
    Nearing the end...  
A last, lustrous spring  
Oh so gently she suggests  
    Spears? This year?  
    No, no, seeds again  
    But darling, I just, I...  
A finger wipes a tear  
    Ends on her lips  
    She understands

**Elleanna Voran**

***The Mouse with the Asparagus House***

If I were a mouse, what would I see?  
A forest of green growing next to the peas  
The color of a frog  
I could chop them like logs  
The tips purplish hue  
I could put in a stew  
And season with lemon and dill

The unchewable stump  
Where they sprout in a clump  
Would hold up just right  
To build a house nice and tight  
And the triangular leaves  
Would collect dew under the eaves  
On a rainy morning in April

Every day and night  
Life would be just right  
All I'd need to survive  
And be happy and thrive  
Would be provided for me  
All for free  
If I were a mouse  
Living in an asparagus house

**Natasha Uzdensky**

***Asparagus***

So.  
Picky eater  
That I was,  
Could eat a meter  
Of asparagus,  
But could not bring  
Myself to even touch,  
After playing on the swing,  
Any other vegetable much.  
My parents wished  
I would eat  
What they fished  
As my meat  
But I could  
Not get  
Enough  
Of my  
Asparagus.  
And so  
I ate and  
Ate and  
Ate, but  
Unlike  
Candy,  
Which  
Could  
Make  
One  
Sick  
I never  
Became  
Sick  
Of Asparagus



**Wendy Hilty**  
***Asparag-Us***

It's early spring, the season of new things  
Plants, beginnings, loves  
Straight young shoots with scale-like tips break through the soil  
Conversations break through awkward silence  
"It's nice to see you. We've met before. Years ago, we shared a common space."

The asparagus is slow to mature  
Full sun, room to spread, 3-5 years before a harvest  
Relationships grow when tended carefully  
Nurtured by discovery and confirmed mutualities  
"Where were you in 2010 or 12 or 15?  
What could we have built if we'd known each other then?"  
Now is enough.  
The sun is shining.

Once finally mature, the asparagus must be harvested often.  
No time to be lax  
Turning romance into love is a lifetime of work.  
Commitment is harvested over and over.  
I love you.  
Do you trust me enough to love me back?

When the harvest is over  
Light and airy ferns change to a golden yellow in the fall.  
The asparagus is yearning to sleep through the winter.  
I have lived through many seasons.  
Love me into old age.  
I see you in forever.

**Brian Lakey**

***The Asparagus Grinch***

Asparagus, ashmaragus,  
What's all the fuss, what's all the muss?

You feast and feast and feast some more.  
I ate then hate and ate-hate s'more.

You will eat sparrow grass pudding,  
And your rare sparrow-roast cooking.

This "Holiday who-be what-ee?"  
Hate, hate, hate. Double hate. I decree.

It's not because they're green, most times.  
Oh, no. I am speaking in rhymes!

Are you eating because you're bored?  
I ate-hate; I want no mored.

I cannot stand, not in the least.  
Go 'head, cut-off, this green spear feast.

What is that stench? It's fantastic.  
Don't loathe entirely, it's gastric.

**Jennifer Gross**  
***Empire Gift***

This Empire gift trails a taxing toil,  
When skinny stalks push through fertile soil.  
Spears upon spears of bright green arise,  
Mother Nature yields a verdant prize.

This simple plant grows in lovely rows,  
Sways in the breeze, gently to and fro.  
With stalks so slender, tender, and true,  
Waiting for harvest—a splendid view.

Asparagus is so versatile,  
Sautéed, roasted, or tossed on the grill.  
With a savory bite in every crunch,  
They beckon chefs to boil by the bunch.

A feast for the body and the mind,  
Vitamins; minerals; all enshrined;  
Nutrients packed in these sprightly sprigs.  
Consume in little bites or big swigs.

Buy local for fresh flesh; a key step.  
Some advice to perfect your meal prep:  
Snap their lean stalks, but not at both ends;  
Secure large bundles; share with good friends.

Sparrow grass is so tender and sweet.  
Smell an odious sulfur excrete?  
It's the singular proof that you chewed.  
Let's toast this noble, yet humble food.