

News from the Furrow

Mira Kilpatrick's Report



“It was a gorgeous week weatherwise, though we could use some rain. We are continuing to plant a lot: peppers, cucurbits [for cucurbits, see [here](#); photo of female cucurbit flower, left, [here](#)], more greens, herbs, and so forth. We’re trying to catch up on handweeding and hoeing—the workshares have been helping a lot with that—freeing up broccoli and swiss chard. Once weeded, the broccoli plants were too enticing for the groundhogs to resist. We set up more traps around that field and caught one so far. Aby tilled some beds so they were beautiful to plant in. We’re hoping to seed more carrots this week. We’ve also been getting some help from the Sisters’ grounds crew to remove debris and begin opening up the parking area again. Among crops that may be coming up soon are kohlrabi, beets, kale, and more escarole and endive.”



(From Melinda: in looking for photos, I came across this amazing gallery of cucurbit photographs, male and female, [here](#). It’s typical of cucurbits [e.g., squash] to have male and female flowers on the same plant, a trait called *monoecious*. The ovary on the female flower develops into the fruit of the plant (see top photo), but the male flower is also extraordinarily beautiful.



Take a look at this site and you’ll never see squash or cukes as “ordinary” again!!! [photo above left, the male flower’s pollen-bearing stamen; below, left, male flower tissue; right, tri-lobed female stigma that receives pollen]



Tidbits—Food News

Aby Wright sends us Dan Koepfel’s essay, “Yes, We Will Have No Bananas” (*NYT*, 18 June, [here](#)), about the



coming demise of bananas, thanks to mismanagement by corrupt companies—mainly Chiquita—over many years. The problems are two-fold: one is the brutal treatment of Latin American workers by corporations (practices that continue today; Chiquita recently pled guilty to transacting with Colombian terrorists to protect Chiquita holdings—see [here](#)). The second problem is the banana industry’s choice of only one variety of banana (out of 1000+) for commercial export. Now, thanks to its monoculture, this variety, the Cavendish, is threatened by a fungal disease that could wipe it out entirely. Yet another writer, *Newsweek*’s Sharon Begley, points out a different banana problem (see [here](#)): global warming affects tropical plants more disastrously than temperate-zone plants because tropicals already exist close to the maximum temperatures at which they can survive: “Any warming pushes them beyond the optimum for photosynthesis and yield,” says Penn State’s William Easterling. **What could you eat locally that approximates a banana? Consider the fruit of the pawpaw**, a relatively pest-free tree native to temperate zones of the eastern U.S.! (See [here](#) for more.) And, pawpaw trees are available from **Redbud Native Plant Nursery** in Glen Mills (see [here](#)). Now that’s local!



One local restaurant, **Talula’s Table** in **Kennett Square**, has made it big—reviewed in the *NY Times*! (See [here](#).) By day an unassuming general store and coffee shop (with some mighty fine local foods), by night Talula’s becomes a fabulous but tiny restaurant serving no more than 12 people. (Though a friend told me they’ve just added a table for 4 in the kitchen!) But don’t rush out there for dinner—you need to reserve a year in advance!



Two Media, PA, restaurant tidbits: first, **Brodeur’s on State Street** is now featuring **organic** chef’s specials—called “Naturally Brodeur’s”—with produce locally sourced (Kennett Square, Lancaster), along with organic wines and beer. There was an article about this in the

Delco Daily Times, 19th Mar. (See [here](#) for Brodeur's.) Further, the **Court Diner**, that great old institution on Baltimore Pike, has added vegetarian and vegan menu options! They also have a beer and wine list now.

The Green Lantern—Make this refreshing, healthy parsley beverage as a soft drink or a cocktail!

- ❖ 1 cup packed parsley sprigs
- ❖ ½ tsp grated lime zest
- ❖ 1 cup cold water
- ❖ ½ cup fresh lime juice
- ❖ ½ cup sugar
- ❖ 1 ten-oz. bottle club soda or seltzer



Purée all ingredients except club soda in a blender 1 min. Strain thru a fine-mesh sieve into a large glass container. Serve over ice & top off drinks w/ club soda. For alcoholic cocktails, add 2 tbsp gin or vodka. Makes 6. ([source](#))

Frisée Salad with Cucumbers and Radishes—Frisée is that *frilly endive* we got in last week's pickup. A beautiful veggie!



- ❖ ½ seedless cucumber (the long kind we've been getting), peeled [or not], halved lengthwise, and thinly sliced

- ❖ 2 tsp rice vinegar
- ❖ 2 tsp olive oil
- ❖ ½ tsp salt & ¼ tsp black pepper
- ❖ 3 cups washed, loosely packed frisée
- ❖ 3 cups loosely packed watercress & 2 cups loosely packed spinach (or substitute 5 cups prepackaged mesclun [baby greens] mix)
- ❖ 6 radishes, sliced thinly or sliced into matchsticks

Toss cucumber w/ vinegar, oil, salt & pepper in large bowl. Let stand 10 min. Add frisée, other greens, and radishes & toss well. [Taste & adjust seasoning & amount of oil & vinegar if you wish.] Serves 4. ([source](#))

Escarole with New Potatoes—Marcy & I were joking that all greens recipes have "oo&g"—olive oil & garlic!

- ❖ 8 small new potatoes
- ❖ 2 medium onions, chopped
- ❖ 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ❖ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 1 lb escarole leaves
- ❖ 1 cup chicken or veggie broth

Boil potatoes in their skins in saucepan till tender (~20 min), drain & reserve. Meanwhile sauté onion & garlic in oil in large skillet till tender. Tear escarole into 2" pieces & add to skillet, stirring a bit till escarole wilts. Quarter potatoes & add to skillet. Stir in broth, boil, season w/ pepper [and salt if desired]. Serves 4. ([source](#))

Italian Wedding Soup w/ Escarole—4 servings

- ❖ ½ lb extra-lean ground beef (or veg substitute)
- ❖ 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ❖ 2 tbsp dried bread crumbs
- ❖ 1 tbsp grated parmesan cheese
- ❖ ½ tsp dried basil (or a tbsp chopped fresh)
- ❖ ½ tsp onion powder
- ❖ 5¾ cups chicken or veggie broth
- ❖ 2 cups thinly sliced escarole
- ❖ 1 cup uncooked orzo pasta
- ❖ 1/3 cup finely chopped carrot

In medium bowl, combine meat, egg, bread crumbs, cheese, basil, & onion powder; shape into ¾" balls. In large saucepan, heat broth to boiling, stir in escarole, orzo pasta, carrot, & meatballs. Return to boil, then reduce heat to medium. Cook at slow boil for 10 min, or till pasta is *al dente*. Stir often & serve w/ extra parmesan. ([source](#))

Spaghetti w/ Frisée (Curly Endive) & Balsamic Vinegar—Here's another "oo&g"! Serves 4.

- ❖ 1 lb spaghetti
- ❖ 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- ❖ 3 tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 1 head endive, trimmed & cut in bite-size pieces
- ❖ 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ❖ salt & pepper

Cook spaghetti till it is *al dente*. Meanwhile, sauté 3 garlic cloves in ~2 tbsp oil, then quickly sauté endive in this mix. Add vinegar, cook for a moment [or a few moments], then remove from heat. Season w/ salt/pepper. Drain pasta, toss w/ remaining garlic & oil, then serve each portion of pasta topped w/ big spoonful of sautéed endive, adding extra vinegar if desired. VARIATIONS: Add 6 oz cannellini [or other] cooked or canned beans when you sauté endive & season w/ dried red-pepper flakes; alternatively, substitute other greens for the frisée endive (lettuces, radicchio, pea shoots, etc.) ([source](#))

*"Roses are red,
Violets are blue;
But they don't get around
Like the dandelions do."*

Slim Acres