

*"The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth."*

... Dorothy Frances Gurney

SAGE LEAVES

The Herb Society of America – Wisconsin Unit

July/August 2020 – Vol XXXXI #4

Unit Meetings

There will be no unit meetings in July or August.

Renewed Membership cards have been mailed to your home – please contact Denise Nelson if you have not received your 2020-2021 HSA Card

2020 Calendar of Meetings and Events (Tentative)

***Unit Meetings:** 9:30 am Social, 10:00 am Meeting, Luncheon at 12:00 pm



***September 19 (Saturday):** St. Christopher's Church - Annual Meeting

***October 20:** St Christopher's Church – Tricia Hallam

***November 17:** St Christopher's Church – Herb of the Year - Parsley



December 9 (Wednesday): Holiday Luncheon – Town Club, Fox Point, 10 a.m. Social, Noon Luncheon

Please mark your calendars for the above dates and locations

Editor: Diane Kescenovitz, kescenovitz.diane@att.net – if you will be going out of town for an extended period of time, please notify Diane of change of address or request e-mail copy – thanks!

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Wisconsin Unit Web: Herb-Society-Wisconsin.org

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NEWSBUDS...

Summer Greetings Herb Members,



We so wished we could have met in person at the church for our June wrap up meeting. Our Zoom meeting had some members showing their plants or jars of herbal vinegars, but it's not the same as sharing in person. We look forward to our Annual Meeting in September for a new start to next herbal year 2020-2021 and our special 45th anniversary. Thank you to the Board Members and members who have supported our meetings and events this past year; you are greatly appreciated.

Did you get a chance to view the HSA webinar SW Herbs/Missions? The speaker has two interesting sites (especially interesting if you travel to SW or cook)

<https://gardeningwithsoule.com/> It's the "right plant for the right place" idea. <https://savorthesw.com/> Recipes. I did subscribe to the news and especially liked : Savor the Southwest AAS https://savorthesw.com/fennel-and-strawberry-salad/?mc_cid=ec50c2de37&mc_eid=630c7e3d14 Article has history of mission plants/herbs from Webinar link. The next HSA webinar will be **How to Grow and Use Lavender for Health and Beauty** with Janice Cox, July 21st, 1pm EDT <https://www.herbsociety.org/portal-log-in-page/hsa-webinars.html>

If you did not get a chance to view the HSA Annual Meeting, on May 30th or read my summary notes, it is recorded on the national website. Log in as a member to <https://www.herbsociety.org/> See the you tube or the transcript of the meeting on the first link: "What's New HSA Annual Report" I believed you will especially enjoy the inspiration by Susan Belinger, finishing as Honorary President of HSA and her references to the spring season and also the "Green Spark". National Herb "people to know" introduced at the Annual Meeting included: Amy Schiavone moved up to be president and Pam Ruane becomes the new vice president of HSA. The new Honorary President is Chrissy Moore who is one of the two blog masters for HSA and is currently the curator of the National Herb Garden at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, DC. Some of us met Amy in Madison last summer and hope to see them in Baton Rouge for EdCon 2021.

Keep calm and garden on: It is easily felt and scientifically proven that time in nature (even just 15 minutes) improves your overall health! From your mental health to your blood pressure, to everything in between! Nature heals!)

If the weather is stormy, try some coloring with herb or floral themes: <https://learningherbs.com/remedies-recipes/herbscoloringbook/> or https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0072/0909/1117/files/Gift_Zinnia_Nancy_Blum.pdf?_=1588170739

Stay safe this summer—see you for the September Annual Meeting,

Melody, WI Unit Chair

REMEMBER – TO CHECK FOR BUSINESS ENVELOPE COMING IN EARLY SEPTEMBER – IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE IN IT!

Announcing our 2020 Scholarship Winner!

The Unit's annual \$1,000 scholarship offering to eligible bakery and culinary arts students enrolled at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) and Waukesha Area Technical College (WCTC) was awarded this year to Adrienne Bain of WCTC. Adrienne is enrolled in a double major, pursuing Associate Degrees both in Baking and Pastry Management as well as Business Management, achieving a 3.77 GPA. Adrienne manages a double major while also working 16-20 hours per week as a pastry prep cook at the Bartolotta's corporate kitchens. Wow!

Adrienne's references are stellar. Her supervisor at Bartolotta's says that "she works very, very hard, is always willing to jump in and help. She wants to learn, takes great pride in what she does...is a good team player. She's self-directed, wants to learn as many skills as she can. She absolutely always gives you 100%, is very easy to work with, a real joy. In fact, she has a very positive attitude, even in this very crazy time we're going through."

Michelle Gasparek, one of Adrienne's instructors at WCTC, added that "she is a rare person, enthusiastic, always willing to lend a hand to teammates." Ms. Gasparek leads a Service Learning Project at WCTC that provides baked goods to organizations like the Make a Wish Foundation, the Ronald McDonald House and the Women's Center in Waukesha, and notes that Adrienne willingly and enthusiastically works as a volunteer with this Project.

Adrienne will be joining us at the January 2021 meeting to speak about her school and job challenges and successes, so we will all meet her then.

The Grants and Scholarship Committee is composed of Nancy Kelly, Karen Klimczak, Denise Nelson, Nell Schneider, and Susan Williams. Chair Lore Borth once again thanks them for their unflagging enthusiasm and hard work, and adds that in the untimely passing of Donna Rae Knop, the Committee has lost a dear heart on whom we could always count for insightful, intelligent and timely decisions.

Submitted by Lore Borth

<i>Out & About</i>	<p>Sunday, August 2, 2020 - 1860's Tea in the Afternoon</p> <p><i>The Elmbrook Historical Society will present an Old Fashioned Tea in the Historic Dining Room of the Dousman Stagecoach Inn Museum, 1075 Pilgrim Parkway, Brookfield on Sunday, August 2 at 1:00. Tea includes a selection of teas, tea sandwiches, a selection of scones, biscuits, or fruit breads, fresh fruit, cookies, tarts, pies or cake, tea or lemonade. A docent led tour of the Inn is also included. Menu reflects foods of the period.</i></p> <p><i>Cost is \$20 per person. Contact elmbrookhistoricalsociety@gmail.com pre-registration and pre-payment is required. To date nine members have registered.</i></p> <p>Louise</p>
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RECIPES

Always add fresh, frozen or dried herbs the last few minutes of cooking as they tend to lose their flavor. The only exception is bay leaves which become more flavorful during long periods of cooking.

Kitchen Tips - Using Fresh Herbs

(Herb n Cowgirl 2/13/20)

There are a number of gadgets on the market that claim to make the job fast and easy. Personally, I have yet to find one that works as advertised. So to help you with this problem, here are four tips on finely chopping fresh herbs.

Sharp Knife - Always, always use a sharp knife. A dull knife will essentially mash the herb edges. When you're chopping or shredding basil, mashed edged will quickly turn black when exposed to air and look less than stellar.

Food Processor - Using a food processor or small spice grinder to chop herbs will tend to create a paste. If you are making pesto, that will be fine but if you are adding the herbs into baked goods (like this week's cake) it will work better if you combine the fresh leaves with part of the dry ingredients. If you are making something from scratch, combine it with the sugar in the recipe. The sharp edges of the sugar crystals will speed the process and improve the final texture of the herbs.

Hidden Herbs - Sometimes you want the flavor but not the presence of the green leaves. In that case, you need to infuse a liquid in the recipe with the herbs and strain out the spent leaves. When I make lemon balm lemonade I boil the water and make a tea from the lemon balm leaves, strain out the remainder and add that to the lemonade.

Spice Ball - For soups and stews, you can take advantage of a spice ball. This is made from two hemispheres of fine mesh that attach together and have a hook-and-chain to make it easy to remove at the end of the cooking. The flavor goes into your dish but the herb remains can be removed.

Rosemary Chicken Skewers

(AJ Star – Food & Wine)

½ small white onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 dried chiles de arbol, crumbled (or 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper)
1 teaspoon minced rosemary
1 teaspoon dried Mexican oregano, crumbled
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
Kosher salt
Pepper
8 sturdy 12-inch rosemary sprigs, leaves on bottom half removed
Lime wedges, for serving

Instructions:

In a large bowl, combine the onion, garlic, chiles, minced rosemary, oregano, lemon juice and olive oil; set aside 1/4 cup of the marinade. Season the chicken with salt and pepper and add it to the bowl. Mix well, cover and marinate for 30 minutes.

Light a grill. Remove the chicken from the marinade and thread the pieces onto the rosemary skewers; discard the marinade. Oil the grate and grill the chicken over moderate heat, turning occasionally and basting with the reserved marinade, until golden and cooked through, 15 to 20 minutes. Serve with lime wedges.

Candied Flowers

(All About Thyme, 6/1/20)

Flowers are the sweetest things God ever made.—Henry Beecher (1858)



So many flowers are in bloom in the garden right now that we're dazzled. It's time to preserve some for summertime sweet treats, so plan on spending a few pleasant hours making those flowers even sweeter.

Candied blossoms add elegance to cakes, petit fours, cheesecakes, candies, and other dainties. This is a family-friendly project (perfect for National Candy Month), so gather the kids and get started! Here's how.

- Gather flowers and herb leaves. Good choices: Borage flowers, violas (pansies, violets, Johnny-jump-ups), redbud and lilac florets, rose petals, plum and apple blossoms, mint leaves, lemon balm leaves. Nip off the stems, wash them, and dry them on a towel. Transfer to paper towels to ensure that they are thoroughly dry.
- Gather ingredients and equipment. You will need 2 room-temperature egg whites, water, a cup or more of superfine sugar in a flat bowl or saucer, a clean tweezers, and a waxed paper-lined cookie sheet or tray.
- Candy the flowers. Beat the egg whites until they just froth. Holding a flower or leaf with the tweezers, dip it into the egg white. Hold it over the sugar, and gently sprinkle sugar over the whole flower, turning it as you work to coat all the surfaces. Place the candied blossom on the wax paper. Repeat until you've candied all your flowers and leaves. Put the cookie sheet in a warm, dry place to dry. If the humidity is high, this may take up to 36 hours. Alternatives: put them in an oven with the pilot light lit overnight; or set the oven at 150° and dry them with the door open for several hours; or use a dehydrator. Store your candied blossoms in airtight containers (tins or plastic), separating the layers with waxed paper.

Holding You in Our Hearts

Donna Knop



We are sad and devastated at the news of Donna Knop's passing this Mother's Day, May 10. Donna was a dear friend to many of us in our Herb Unit. Donna often spoke to us of her wonderful rides with her husband to the East and the Southwest every Spring and Fall as well as northern Wisconsin to visit her children and their families for their birthdays – and her special fondness for the Southwest. Many of us in the unit have her grandmother's geranium plants in our homes and gardens.

Donna has been an active member of our Unit for many years, continuously on the board having been Co-Chair of our Unit, and for many years By-Law Chair and Co-Chair of the Artisan Room for our Herb Fair, as well as Chair of the Tasting Room for our Symposium. She has been a dear and kind friend to so many of us.

Please look in our web page under Members Only/Meetings for more pictures of Donna.



"The enjoyments of a garden being so manifold and continuous, bringing brightness to the home, health to the body, and happiness to the mind, it is for us, who have proved them, whose daily lives are made more cheerful by their influence, out of our gratitude and our good will, to invite and to instruct others, that they may share our joy."

... S. Reynolds Holie



Blackberries vs Raspberries: A History of Thorny Fruits (Rubus: International Herb of the Year)

Edible brambles are everyone's favorite hiking snack. They grow along hedgerows, in the borders of woods and fields, and occasionally right in the backyards of city and suburb alike. We find blackberries and raspberries as delicious today as our ancestors did hundreds of thousands of years ago. Unlike other cultivated berries, these globe-trotting, practical pricklers have been around for a long time.

Blackberries: A Brief History

Blackberries are a member of the rose family, Rosaceae. They are closely related to the raspberry in growth habit. Both plants produce biennial canes and perennial roots and crowns. These biennial canes grow erect, semi-erect or put out trailing stems throughout their two-year life span. When they are ready to bear fruit, these canes produce black or reddish purple fruit. Each fruit is composed of = aggregates of drupelets, dangling deliciously from thorny stems.

Geographic Origins

It is easier to locate places blackberries have not put down roots than to isolate every blackberry stronghold. Blackberries are native to temperate climates across the globe. Native peoples and animals in North America, South America, Asia, and Europe enjoyed this succulent treat for over 30 million years. The only continents where blackberries do not grow native are Australia and Antarctica. Antarctica remains blackberry free to this day. Australia, on the other hand, is experiencing a blackberry invasion. The thorny plant is an invasive species on the continent and has infested roughly 9 million hectares.

The blackberry has not changed very much over the years. Over their 30 million year life span, blackberry varieties interbred and self-selected into thousands of varieties. Scientists are not sure exactly how many strains of blackberries exist in the wild.

Medicinal Uses

Ancient cultures enjoyed more than nibbling on the juicy fruits. Blackberries have a high tannin content, making them an astringent. Many peoples used them to lessen bleeding, help treat minor infections, alleviate hemorrhoids and tighten tissue. The fruits and leaves were used for a variety of common afflictions. Ancient Greeks treated gout with blackberries and the Romans used the leaves to treat sore throats, diarrhea, and mouth ulcers. Ancient Egyptians found an additional use for the dark fruit: hair dye. Perhaps blackberries assisted Cleopatra in her seduction of Julius Caesar.

Folklore

Blackberries have an interesting history. Early Christian peoples associated the berry's dark juice with the blood of Christ and the canes with Christ's crown of thorns. Other cultures associated blackberries with witchcraft. Blackberries were supposedly used both by witches and by ordinary families to deter evil spirits. The only spirit the blackberry is legitimately associated with is blackberry wine.

The Blackberry Today

Blackberries were not cultivated until recent times. Most people seemed content to harvest the berry from the wild. Americans were among the first to attempt to tame the bramble. Judge Logan began experimenting with blackberry varieties in 1880 at his home in California. The result is the Loganberry we know today.

Judge Logan's attempts caught the interest of other fruit growers. Several strains of thornless berries appeared shortly after his Loganberry hit the market. Growers today still experiment with thornless varieties, aiming for hybrids that do not suffer in quality or taste. One of the most successful varieties is the Triple Crown Blackberry. This thornless variety produces large fruits on vigorous plants with a delicious flavor.

Many gardeners get around the thorns by cultivating thorned varieties carefully. Pruning, trellising, and protective gloves make blackberries an excellent addition to the backyard garden. Wildlife love blackberries almost as much as humans. Bears, birds, and many other animals are attracted to the sweet berries. This makes for interesting sight seeing while picking wild berries.

Raspberries: A Tangled Past

Red raspberries have a slightly different story than their blackberry cousins. The fruits of the raspberry are distinguishable from unripe blackberries in two ways. First, the fruit of the raspberry separates from the receptacle. The berry appears hollow, leaving behind the pale receptacle on the stem. Second, the fruit itself is covered with fine hairs, unlike the smooth aggregates of the blackberry.

Raspberries put out biennial canes that bear fruit in the summer and autumn. Some varieties bear fruit in the cane's first year when it is called a primocane. Others wait until the canes become mature floricanes in their second year before they yield a berry crop.

Geographic Origins

Raspberries are hardy, opportunistic plants. Greek legend claims that raspberries were discovered on Mount Ida. The Greeks went so far as to name the berry *Idaeus*, which translates to "from Mount Ida." Seeds found in Roman settlements around Europe indicate that the Romans promoted raspberry cultivation and may have been the first to do so. The Romans brought these seeds with them to England during their conquest.

Northern Asia, Eastern Europe, and North America all have native raspberry species. Like blackberries, these species are hard to separate into distinct varieties because so much hybridization, cross-breeding, and self-selection occurred naturally.

Medicinal Uses

The raspberry plant is historically associated with pregnancy. The berries and leaves are rich in iron, potassium, phosphorous and magnesium. Women throughout history drank raspberry tea and raspberry juice to ease difficulties during pregnancy and labor.

Raspberries Today

Raspberries are cultivated around the world for their delicious and nutrient dense fruit. Several summer bearing and everbearing varieties are produced commercially. The variety varies depending on the region. There are even odd colored varieties like the yellow "Goldie" available for the more adventurous berry lovers.

The hardy nature of raspberries makes them a locally invasive species. Raspberries are among the first plants to reclaim soil after logging or a fire. Their ability to quickly colonize soil open ground makes them a nuisance in certain areas.

Be A Part Of History

Be a part of the lengthy history of blackberries and raspberries by planting a few canes of your own. These hardy perennials yield a healthy, delicious crop year after year, provided they are properly cared for. Both berries come in thorned and thornless varieties. If you don't want to cultivate blackberries or raspberries on your own, consider finding a local grower or wild patch near you.



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Diane Kescenovitz
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HISTORY OF LAVENDER

*When Eve met Adam, the apple wasn't her charm
'Twas a bouquet of lavender she clasped in her arm
The rib he gave her may have been that scented twig
A lavender sprout that was just too big.*

*Cleopatra might have plotted with lavender steam
To coax Mark Anthony into her dream
It certainly led to circumstances unique
When Mark succumbed to her lavender mystique.*

*Victoria was known to use and adore
The study of lovely lavender-lore.
We must wonder if Albert did enjoy
Lavender posies Vicki would employ?*

Jejanssen "Under the Leaf"



If you have an event, article, recipe, etc. in which you feel members might be interested, please send to Diane at kescenovitz.diane@att.net and I will try to put it in the next issue of SAGE LEAVES if there is room.

Future SAGE LEAVES will be mailed out to arrive by 9/1/20 and 11/1/20.

