



“The joy of brightening other lives...  
becomes for us the magic of the

*holidays.”*

.. W C Jones

# SAGE LEAVES

## **Herb Society of America – Wisconsin Unit**

November/December 2020 – Vol XXXXI #6

### **Unit Meetings**

#### **Saturday, November 21, 10:00 a.m.**

**Program:** Herb Study: International Herb of the Year – Parsley

**Location:** Zoom Meeting on Your Device

**Area of Study:**

History  
Growing  
Nutritional Value/Health Benefits  
Folklore/Books  
Recipes

**Name:**

Marji Bell

Everyone – please plan to share your favorite way of using parsley.  
If you have a recipe you would like to share, please email to Pat  
Greathead and she will send to members once compiled.

Contact Marlene ([mravikmarlene@gmail.com](mailto:mravikmarlene@gmail.com)) if you would like to volunteer to present Growing,  
Nutritional Value/Health Benefits, or Folklore/Books.

### **Holiday Luncheon at The Town Club is Cancelled**

Sadly, our December 9, 2020 Holiday Luncheon at The Town Club has been cancelled. The Club is spreading out their events and as we are guests, not members, they will not have room for us this year. Since we can't meet this year at the Town Club, we will be holding a Zoom Holiday Celebration.

Please mark your calendar to save **December 8, 2021** for our next Herb Society – WI Unit Holiday Party. If you have questions, please call me at (262)376-0482.

~Denise Nelson, Event Chair

#### **Wednesday, December 9, 10 a.m. Holiday Luncheon**

**Program:** Zoom Holiday Celebration (See Melody's comments on next page.)

# NEWSBUDS...

## From the Chair:

### Fall Greetings to Friends in WI Unit,



**Happy Autumn!** It is a great time to get outdoors, enjoy nature and reflect on the beauty around you. Use this beautiful season to collect and plant seeds for future garden areas. I typically collect a variety of marigold seeds from my gardens (short/tall and yellow/orange) to plant next year. I'm hoping my new dill patch will self-seed. The days are now shorter and it's time to put our gardens to bed. Plan some time to read herbal books, try new herbal recipes, and watch some past HSA webinars.

**Herbal Christmas** - Please send ideas for our Zoom Christmas Celebration for Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> to me. Pat suggests ugly sweaters.... What else might we like to include for fun; no board meeting and no business meeting in December. Since we are not meeting in person for a Holiday Party, that does not mean we cannot have holiday joy and a heartfelt joyful time together virtually.

I just started reading Susan Wittig-Albert's book of China Bayles series, *Holly Blues*, which has some great recipes and craft activities, example: Hot Spiced Holiday Tea and Pomanders

See the Herb of the month for December Cinnamomum spp. - Cinnamon that will be linked on our website Dec. 1st. View in the HSA Archives of Webinars search by topic -- Christmas Herbs Donna Wild 2017 has three holiday projects : cinnamon star ornament, spice potpourri ball, and baked cookie shapes.

Watch for the annual journal, the *Herbarist*, to arrive by mail. We have an ad recognizing our 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Hopefully we can meet outdoors in spring/summer and celebrate in person. Start thinking of ideas for a future celebration and share them with me.

Let us delight in herbs today and through the fall and start of winter!

Warm regards,

Melody

### HSA Webinars

Nov. 12 - Enhancing Brain Health & Natural Botanicals

### Wintery Reminder



Once we are no longer having Zoom meetings, if Milwaukee Public Schools are closed for inclement weather on a Unit meeting or Board meeting day, our meeting will be cancelled also. If you are out of the closing announcement area, please send me your cell number now and I will send you a text. Melody

## **Congratulations – 2020 Membership Pins**

25 – Valerie Brumder

25 – Nino Ridgway

15 – Susan Williams

10 – Joan Amundson

10 – Jane Hawley Stevens

10 – Helen Pizzi

5 – Louise Block

5 – Maureen Powers-Todt

## **OUT AND ABOUT**

Hello,

Our next Book Club zoom-discussion will be Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

Because we need to get our notice into *Sage Leaves* before discussions, suggestions for books have to be made either at the discussion or within the following two weeks.

It's too late to use the 2-week time slot this time, I know, but in the future if you miss a session but want to offer us a good read and discussion, please just email me and I'll send it out in the *Sage Leaves* note. ([joa38rugg@gmail.com](mailto:joa38rugg@gmail.com))

With questions sent to us beforehand, which she prepared for discussion, Carole Kincaid lead us nicely through *Tea With Jane Austin* and *A Plain Vanilla Murder*, two enjoyable books of very different genres.

Our third book sounds equally interesting as both Melody and Carole have recommended *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom of Science Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

Ms. Kimmerer is a Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology at State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. She grew up as a member of the Potawatomi Nation and embraces the notion that plants and animals are our teachers through the gifts and lessons they give us. She shares these ideas in a series of short stories within the book.

Hope to see you soon.

Joanne

### **Bookclub**

**Readership Guide** to **Braiding Sweetgrass** by Robin Wall Kimmerer

For Wed., January 6, 2021

**GUIDELINE from Carole K :** When you Join the Bookclub for next January, First, choose one chapter and plan to lead the discussion of that one chapter. Please email Joanne ([joa38rugg@gmail.com](mailto:joa38rugg@gmail.com)) the chapter you have selected. I have chosen the chapter, **The Gift of Strawberries**

Here is my List of Discussion Topics & Questions for my chapter. You may use this format or one of your own for your chapter.

1. **KEY WORDS** – choose key words from your chapter to discuss. Example p22 “raised by a river”
2. **Define the Key Words** – Example “my sense of the world, my place in it”
3. **Question for Discussion** – Where we’re you raised? How has it defined you? Example: If you grew up in Milwaukee, how has Lake Michigan impacted your ideas?
4. **Question for Discussion** – How different would you feel if you had grown up elsewhere, such as the “borderlands” of desert in New Mexico?
5. **Question for Discussion** – How do you experience a Place with your 5 senses? Example: Colors, Smells, Textures
6. **Question for Discussion** – What is the definition of a Gift? What is reciprocity?
7. **Question for Discussion** – How is nature an “Ecology Classroom”? Example Our National Parks, land seen as a gift for all to enjoy versus Private Property and a Market Economy.
8. **Question for Discussion** – How does the author define herself as both a Poet and a Scientist? How does she use Strawberries as a Metaphor?  
To learn more and get OneNote, visit [www.onenote.com](http://www.onenote.com).

## **Recipes**

### **Baked Chicken with Balsamic-Orange-Vanilla Sauce**

(from “A Plain Vanilla Murder” by Susan Wittig Albert)

½ c	chicken broth	¼ t	orange zest
½ c	balsamic vinegar	½ t	salt
¼ c	fresh orange juice	3"	piece vanilla bean, split lengthwise
¼ c	packed brown sugar		Cooking spray
¼ c	finely chopped green onions		8 skinless, boneless chicken thighs
1 t	finely chopped fresh rosemary		Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Combine first 8 ingredients in a small saucepan. Scrape seeds from vanilla bean; stir seeds into broth mixture.\* Bring to a boil Reduce heat and simmer occasionally, until reduced to ½ c (15 min). While the sauce is reducing, coat the bottom of a roasting pan with cooking spray. Arrange chicken in a single layer. Salt and pepper to taste. Cover and bake for 10 min. Brush half of sauce over chicken; return to oven for 15 minutes, uncovered, or until a thermometer registers 180 degrees. Serve over pasta or rice.

\*Bury the piece of vanilla bean in a canister of sugar. Wonderful in tea, coffee.

### **Vanilla Extract**

(from “A Plain Vanilla Murder” by Susan Wittig Albert)

3-5 Vanilla Beans

8 oz. vodka, rum, or brandy

Split the beans and chop into chunks. Put them into a lidded jar and add your choice of alcohol. (Vodka is neutral. Susan’s personal preference is brandy.) Screw on the lid, put it on a dark shelf and give it a good shake from time to time. Use when its flavor suits you. Add more beans and bean scraps and top off the jar with alcohol for an infinite supply.



*“For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone.” (Audrey Hepburn)*

## **Parsley: You Can Grow That!**

(Southwest Gardening, Ann McCormick 7/11/19)



Whether it's curly parsley (shown here) or flat-leaved parsley, this is an herb that should be growing in every garden, even when that's just a container or two on the porch.

How about something easy to grow, flavorful in the kitchen, and attractive to butterflies? Introducing parsley – a must-have herb for your spring garden. It grows happily for gardening beginners and experts and will provide fresh flavor for the kitchen for months to come.

### Buying Parsley

When shopping for parsley in nurseries, you'll find two varieties – curly and flat-leafed. Both provide flavor but cooking experts prefer the darker flat-leafed (a.k.a., Italian) parsley for its pungent flavor.

Avoid purchasing parsley plants or sowing parsley seed before temperatures begin to rise in spring. If a plant is exposed to prolonged cold, it will be stimulated to begin the second year of its life cycle (even if it's only a month or two old). The leaves will turn bitter and the end-of-life flower stalk will appear, bypassing the productive first-year growth.

Flat-leaved or Italian parsley is regarded by the experts as having the better flavor. Speaking of flavor, be careful when buying in the garden nursery or store. Flat-leaved parsley looks a lot like cilantro (sometimes called Chinese parsley) but has a very different flavor.

### Planting & Growing

Parsley is a no-fuss garden herb. Just plant it in morning sun or part shade and give it regular water. It will thrive in garden soil or containers, anyplace where you might grow annual flowers. Fertilize every 4 to 6 weeks to encourage lush leaf production.

Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) is biennial, meaning it grows just two years. The first year it produces a bushy rosette of flavorful long stemmed dark green leaves we harvest. The second year the leaves become bitter and a 2-3 foot flower stalk appears that is enjoyed by butterflies.

Because parsley grows very differently the first and second year of life, you have two options when planting it in your garden. If you want to keep it only one year for the leaves, grow it near other showy herbs or ornamental plants as an edging or border plant and pull it up at the end of the year. But if you're patient, you can let it go to flower and attract butterflies the second year. If that's your goal, plant it in the back of your bed to accommodate the 2 to 3 foot flower stalk.

Fresh, finely chopped parsley can be used in dozens of ways in the kitchen. Grow your own and you'll have this herb available anytime the mood strikes you to cook healthy.

### In the Kitchen

Clip and use fresh parsley anytime during the first year of growth. You can cut all the leaves at once to stimulate new growth or just snip a few leaves for immediate use. To preserve, rinse and lay the leaves flat to dry. Once the leaves are dry and crackly store them in an airtight container.

Parsley can be used in many foods. It helps blend the flavors of other herbs together in dishes. Add a pinch of parsley leaves and some black pepper to scrambled eggs. If you're new to using herbs, try adding parsley to potatoes or rice as a first step. I think of it as a starter herb in the kitchen, especially when you cook for picky eaters. Once they get used to seeing parsley on their food you can start adding other herbs.

So next spring add some parsley to your garden shopping list. It's easy to grow and adds great flavor to foods.

## **The 12 herbs of Christmas**

(lovethegarden.com 12/19)



With Christmas just around the corner, quite literally, here's the lowdown of our 12 Herbs of Christmas, the essential accompaniments for a flavorful festive season. We apologize in advance for the puns, we hope your Christmas spirit will forgive us for them!

### **12. Myrtles Leaping**

No, not the moany one from Harry Potter, but the hardy evergreen, Myrtus or myrtle. With our recent warmer winters, the green foliage can now survive outdoors in this country. The plant's dried leaves can be used to flavor game dishes, so if you're having an alternative to the Christmas turkey this year, myrtle could be the perfect partner.

### **11. Chervils Dancing**

Chervil, a cousin of parsley, is an enthusiastic annual that grows quickly. It is often associated with summer dishes, but if you're planning a salad with your leftovers, its aniseed flavor can lift these lighter dishes. It can also be added last minute to soups, or used as a seasoned butter or mayonnaise to go with richer meat. It's also been said to aid digestion, helpful in the season of indulgence and excess!

### **10. Borages Piping**

Another annual plant, the starflowers of borage are often grown as a companion plant for tomatoes as it is supposed to deter tomato hornworms and improve their flavor. The herb's leaves, best used when new, are an excellent partner to cocktails. Try adding them gin and tonic with cucumber, or in lemonade with strawberries for the non-alcoholic version. The delicate flowers can also be used, making a colorful addition to salads.

### **9. Lemon Thymes Drumming**

Thymus citriodorus, or lemon thyme to you and I, is an evergreen perennial used as a culinary herb and a great alternative to regular thyme. It can be used in reheated meat, or even in lighter cakes to offset the heaviness of other seasonal desserts.

### **8. Tarragons A Milking**

Tarragon, the aromatic perennial herb reminiscent of aniseed, is the ideal component of creamy sauces like béarnaise, a great alternative to cranberry or bread sauce this Christmas. You can also add the sprigs to vinegar for a flavorful addition to turkey sandwiches.

### **7. Bay Leaves A Swimming**

A must for adding to soups, sauces and stews. The subtle background hints of menthol and eucalyptus add a distinct aroma. Best used when fresh, buy a sprig and freeze them. They'll not only last you over the

Christmas season but for years to come. They also make really nice additions to gift tags on Christmas gifts if you have too many other goodies in your freezer!

## 6. Mints A Laying

An essential in any festive mojito (virgin or rum-based), mint, a perennial, is an essential aromatic for Christmas. Mint sauce is a classic addition if cooking lamb this season. Or to cut through a heavy meal, add some fresh leaves to boiling water for a refresher between courses.

## 5. Lavender Rings

Lavender is a flowering plant of the mint family. Culinary lavender flowers are a colourful addition to many dishes. Perfectly partnered with honey and lemon dressing on salads, or to perk up deserts. The **Boulder Locavore blog** has a great recipe for Pink Lemonade sorbet with lavender and thyme.

## 4. Oregano Birds

Also, a genus of the mint family (a common theme!) this pungent perennial herb closely related to marjoram, is easy to grow and a great versatile addition in the kitchen. It can be used in meat stuffing or on leftover turkey pizzas

## 3. Basil Hens

Arguably one of the most popular annuals, basil is the king of culinary herbs. The sweet version, often used in Italian cooking, add at the last minute to sauces to keep its flavor. Blanch in boiling water before freezing to keep its freshness. For an alternative, use Thai basil if you're cooking leftovers in Asian dishes, especially Thai cuisine.

## 2. Sage Doves

Sage has been around far longer than the new kids on the block such as coriander et al. Taking a starring role in stuffing, famous for being a partner to pork, but it can also be used in richer meats like a goose, as its oil helps cut through the fat. You can also fry off the offcuts and offal of the bird in a sage butter cooked quickly, or chopped finely in vegetable side dishes. A truly versatile favorite.

## 1. Thyme In A Rosemary Tree

Yes, lemon thyme is a great herb to have fresh for Christmas, but you can't have Christmas without its more popular cousin. There's always 'thyme' for this herb to flavor stuffing, meat and nut roasts at Christmas. Sorry for that terrible pun. No 'thyme' to dwell, it's time for the number one.



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Wisconsin Unit Web: [Herb-Society-Wisconsin.org](http://Herb-Society-Wisconsin.org) (Editor: Diane Kescenovitz)

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Herb Society of America web: [www.herbsociety.org](http://www.herbsociety.org) – reminder: password for members is HSA-WI@76

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*Winter Blessing*

*As the snow covers,  
The ground stays moist and insulated,  
Ready for the next season's sowing,  
Growing, and harvest.*

*This Is a time of preparation,  
A time of stillness and quiet.  
Even the creatures of the ground  
Sleep in their dark, silent homes.*

*This is an ending, and a beginning,  
An open season of plans and possibilities.*

*May this season of rest  
Bring forth richness and beauty  
In the months to come.*

*... Paula E. Kirman*



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](mailto: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 1/1/21 and 3/1/21.

