

“A garden of herbs is a garden of things loved for themselves in their wholeness and integrity. It is not a garden of flowers, but a garden of plants which are sometimes very lovely flowers and are always more than flowers.”

...Henry Beston, Herbs and the Earth

SAGE LEAVES

The Herb Society of America – Wisconsin Unit

May/June 2022 – Vol XXXXIII #3

Unit Meetings

Tuesday, May 17 – 9:30 Setup and Greet, 10:00 Meeting, 11:00 program

Program: “Edible Weeds”

Finalization of Herb & Artisan Fair plans – May 21

Location: St Christopher’s Church and Zoom

Saturday, June 18 - 9:30 Setup and Greet, 10:00 Meeting

Program: Wrap-up Meeting for Unit events

HSA GreenBridges™ Program – Denise Nelson

Plans for Herb Day at Boerner, Sunday July 24

Location: St Christopher’s Church and Zoom

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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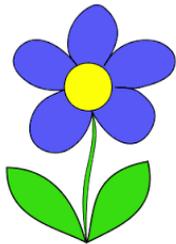
Wisconsin Unit Web: herb-society-wisconsin.org (Editor: Diane Kescenovitz) Member Area: HSA-WI@76

Herb Society of America office: Herbs@HerbSociety.org

Herb Society of America web: www.herbsociety.org

NEWSBUDS...

Notes from Melody



It's SPRING! As the world comes alive outside, buds swell and crocus & daffodils bloom. Let's embrace this feeling of hope, growth and possibility. Our plans are growing for the May 21st Herb & Artisan Fair. I'm especially excited about the return to the in-person fair this year; our last fair was 2019. We have opportunities to enjoy the day together: hear speakers, shop at vendors, and assist in the busy tea room & heirlooms sale. Pat arranged many vendors, Mary Kay is handling the Artisan Café food sign up for breakfast and lunch, Denise has the signup list for the tea room, and AJ will cover the Herbal Ladies' Heirlooms. We will pull together final details at our meeting on Tuesday, May 17th.

HSA Webinars

May 10th Webinar - Unburying the Secrets of The Lost Apothecary with author, Sarah Penner. I recommend this book; I read it last month. It's a NY Times fiction best seller and is in the works as a drama series at Fox.

I enjoyed the past winter webinar, A Green Revival: Cultivating Gardens for People, Places and Plants. They mention the Placemakers Academy at their blog which has good information:

<https://theplacemakersacademy.com/gardentalk/>

HERB FAIR, Boerner Botanical Gardens, MAY 21, 9 a.m - 3 p.m.

This is your friendly reminder that our herb fair will be on May 21 from 9:00 am to 3:00 p.m. Please plan to help by baking for the tea room, cooking for the cafe, and giving at least two hours to help the day of the sale. All proceeds benefit grants and scholarships. We thank you for making the herb fair a success in the past. We look forward to seeing you at the fair.

REMINDERS from the ARTISAN CAFE: Mary Kay McDevitt, Luncheon Chair

Thanks to all of you who volunteered to bring your delicious food items to the ARTISAN CAFE, located on the upper level of the BBG Atrium.

*Breakfast begins at 8:00 a.m. Please bring your BREAKFAST items to the kitchen as early as you can, ready to serve.

*Please identify all your dish(es)/utensils. Use address labels.

*Lunch begins at 12 noon. Salads, casseroles, sandwich fixings, etc. - quantity to serve 10-12. Frig space is limited. We can plate some things for you, but need your serving piece.

*Please pick up your dishes/utensils before the Artisan Cafe closes - 3 p.m. Any leftovers will be wrapped for you and must be taken home.

*Warming trays, electric cords, ice, provided. You can bring your own electric appliance for your hot dish, if you wish.

Any questions? Please call or email: 414-418-2322/mkmcd@me.com.

Marlene Mravik and Joanne Ruggieri have graciously volunteered to help us again this year in the Artisan Cafe.

Tea Room – Denise Nelson

The Tea Room is one of 2 areas at the Herb Fair that raises money for our Grants and Scholarships. Your donations to the Tea Room are GREATLY APPRECIATED. Please donate generously. If everyone brings as much as they have in the past, we will be in good shape.

- Package your items in plastic baggies tied with pretty ribbon.
- Label your items with the name of the item, ie Chocolate Chip Cookies with Mint - Address labels work well. Please write "NUTS" on your label if your item contains nuts.

- Cookies, bars and scones work well in a baggie, unless they are fragile or have gooey frosting. 4-6 cookies per bag or whatever amount looks like a dollar's worth. Crumbles and crisps, coffee cake, slices of tea bread are best on a plate and then put in a baggy and tied. Small tea breads and large sweet breads can be bagged whole.
 - Kate Normoyle has very generously offered to print labels for members. You need to call her well in advance (early May) with the name of your items and the number of labels needed for each item. She will take requests until May 13. She will bring your labels to the meeting on May 17. Kate contact info: 262-643-4402. Leave a message if she doesn't answer (your name, the name of the bakery items and the number of labels needed for each item, indicate nuts for the items that have nuts on them)., email: knormoyle1@wi.rr.com Please put the labels on your bagged items.
 - Bring your packaged donations to BBG on Saturday morning. (The Tea Room opens at 9:00. We are very busy in the morning.) There will be a table in the atrium with a sign to place your items. Fill out a slip of paper with your name and the name of the items you brought and the quantity and put it with your things.
 - I will pick up donations on Friday, May 20th, at the Bed Bath & Beyond parking lot on Port Washington Road and Mequon Road at noon. Please call Dense at 414-335-8610 to let her know you will be meeting her.
- Happy Baking! Thank you so much for your generous contributions.



Free Parking • Free Event Entry
Admission fee if you'd like to visit the gardens.

-  For Sale: Herbs and other plants
 Artisan Vendors: herbal, gardening, jewelry, ceramics, garden art, and Herbal Ladies Heirlooms
-  Fresh baked items
-  Children's activity

Education sessions:

- 10:00 am Jane Hawley Stevens
 "Teatime in the Garden for Increased Well Being"
- 11:15 am Michael and Kathi Rock
 "Gardening for Hummingbirds"
- 1:00 pm Rory Petry
 "Ferns, the Hidden Herbs"

Save the Date: Herb Day at Boerner– Sunday, July 24



Presented by:

The Herb Society of America - WI Unit

Website: herb-society-wisconsin.org

Facebook: [HerbSocietyofAmericaWIUnit](https://www.facebook.com/HerbSocietyofAmericaWIUnit)



Unit Membership Renewals are due May 17, 2022

My thanks to so many of you for already mailing in your membership renewals. If you have not done so yet, please send your renewal fees for the 2022-2023 business year to me by May 17th. You should have received a renewal form with the amount due for your type of membership (individual, joint or business) in the March newsletter. If you need a replacement form, please let me know. On that form is a survey, so the Board can assess what members would like to do in the next year and who has an interest in helping on various committees.

(If you are a committee chair and have receipts for budgeted expenses, please send them to me for reimbursement.)

Please send your check (payable to HSA-WI Unit) to me at the address listed below. Thanks!

Denise Nelson – HSA-WI Unit Treasurer, W72N904 London Court, Cedarburg, WI 53012

Thank you to Denise and Tricia for doing a terrific job these past two years serving as Treasurer and Secretary - and for your willingness to serve another two years!

Nominating Committee

Herb of the Month for March 2022

Calendula or pot marigold (*Calendula officinalis*)

(Nino Ridgway)

Calendula is a hardy annual plant in the aster family. It is native to southern Europe and the Mediterranean area, but it is grown worldwide. It is often called "pot marigold", because of its culinary history. However, it is only distantly related to our common garden marigolds (*Tagetes*), and "calendula" is the preferred name.

Calendula is a very useful plant! It has a long medicinal history, most notably as a treatment for skin ailments. The flowers and foliage are edible, though the petals have little flavor and the leaves are bitter. Fresh flower petals are used in salads, teas, soups, as a garnish, or to decorate baked goods. Dried petals look exactly like saffron, and they are often used to flavor and color rice dishes.

Calendula is a long blooming annual, and its cheerful yellow or orange flowers are welcome in flower and herb gardens. It is early to bloom in spring and keeps going all year until October or even November. It self-seeds, so I don't even have to plant it! Many varieties are available from seed companies, but some, such as "Erfurter Orange" and "Radio" have higher medicinal content. I like to grow the dwarf variety "BonBon" as it is very floriferous and doesn't get leggy. You can start seeds indoors and transplant for extra early bloom. However, planted or self-sown seeds come up in May and bloom fairly early without all the transplanting bother. Plant in full or morning sun. Calendula is trouble-free except for occasional mildew or aphids in mid-summer. Deadheading will keep the plants blooming profusely except perhaps in very hot weather. Collect seeds late in fall or allow them to fall where they will for pop-up plants next spring. Keep seeds only 1-2 years.

Herb of the Month for April 2022

Sweet Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)

(Nino Ridgway)

Basil, the king of herbs, is a tropical plant in the Mint family, native to the Mediterranean, India, and SE Asia. Basil is extremely popular and is used by cooks of every nationality. In addition, basil may have health benefits as it is anti-fungal, anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-depressant, and is good for your digestive system!

Sweet basil refers to a large group of culinary types including Italian, bush, Genovese, Thai, and cinnamon. All sweet basil types have hints of anise, clove, citrus, and/or mint. A bewildering number of varieties have been selected for culinary flavor, leaf size, plant height, disease resistance, leaf color, or limited flowering. My current favorite is "Everleaf", a Genovese type with columnar form and little or no flowering. For flavor I also enjoy purple and Thai basil.

Basil can be challenging to grow as it HATES cold weather. Anything less than 50 degrees produces weak, malingering plants. Start plants from seed indoors in a warm sunny spot or buy greenhouse-grown plants. Transplant outside only after hot weather arrives, usually about June 10 in SE Wisconsin. If flowers and buds form on your plant, the flavor will quickly deteriorate, becoming bitter and harsh. It can be a major challenge to keep ahead of flower formation. As soon as a bud is spotted, remove it AND the surrounding rosette of 4 leaves. Removing only the bud or flower will result in 2 more buds by tomorrow. The best practice is to harvest the tips of your basil branches frequently and add them to your salads, soups, pasta, pizza, sandwiches, or make pesto. If it gets away from you, prune the plant down drastically; if the weather is hot, the plant will regrow quickly. Young cuttings (without flowers or buds) can also be easily rooted in soil or water to produce new plants. Basil can be grown in a pot, but fertilize often with organic fertilizer and do not let it get potbound.

Basil is relatively pest free. Plants may occasionally get a fungal disease, and you must dispose of these plants immediately. Occasionally plants will develop large holes in the leaves, which are due to either grasshoppers or slugs. Slugs can be dealt with, while grasshoppers have usually moved on by the time you spot damage.

Recipes

Easter Mendiants

(Eva Boldt – Tea Time Mag 2/18)

Yield: 20

- 2 (4-ounce) bars white baking chocolate
- ¼ cup finely chopped roasted, salted pistachios
- ¼ cup finely chopped dried apricots
- ¼ cup finely chopped crystalized ginger

Instructions

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with a silicone baking mat or wax paper.
2. Melt white chocolate according to package directions. Using a levered 1-teaspoon scoop, drop melted chocolate onto prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle chocolate evenly with pistachios, apricots, and ginger.
3. Refrigerate until chocolate is firm and easily lifted from pan, approximately 30 minutes.
4. Store in a covered container at room temperature.

Kitchen Tip: Pistachios in the shell are brighter green and make a prettier presentation than preshelled pistachios.

Cranberry and Feta Pinwheels

(Eva Boldt)

Yield: 24 servings

Ingredients

- ¾ cup dried sweetened cranberries
- 1 (8 oz) package cream cheese, room temperature
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ¼ cup chopped green onion
- 2 large flour tortillas, wheat or spinach for pretty color

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients except tortillas, mix well.
2. Divide and spread mixture evenly among tortillas.
3. Roll up tightly, wrap in plastic and refrigerate at least one hour.
4. To serve cut each roll into 12 slices.

Notes: You can actually make the log a couple days before and then slice the day of for best results. Make sure you don't use reduced fat feta. It's too dry for these.

Fruit, Herb, and Spice Liqueurs

(All About Thyme, Susan Wittig Albert 1/4/21)

These wonderful herbal liqueurs had their beginnings in medieval monastic gardens and stillrooms. Most are easy to make, but they do take time to age. If you start now, you'll be offering your liqueurs to guests at your summer outdoor parties (we *will* have parties again, won't we?) or spooning them onto ice cream for a delightful hot-weather dessert. To ensure that your liqueurs are worth the time it takes to make them, use the best ingredients, store in glass or ceramic containers, and age in a cool dark spot. These recipes use vodka and white wine; brandy or white rum are also good.

Rose Geranium Berry Liqueur

2 pints blackberries or raspberries (fresh or frozen)
1 cup fresh rose geranium leaves
4 cups vodka
1/2 cup white wine
Syrup:
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup water

Combine the berries, geranium leaves, vodka, and wine in a wide-mouth jar with a tight-fitting lid. Steep for one month in a cool, dark place. Open and crush the berries slightly with a potato masher and steep for another 4-5 days. Strain, pressing the juice from the berries, then filter through a coffee filter or double layer of cheesecloth. To make the syrup, bring the water to a boil in a small saucepan, add sugar, and stir until dissolved. Cool. Add half the syrup to the liqueur; taste, then continue to add and taste until it is as sweet as you like. Pour into a bottle, cap it, and age for three weeks in a cool, dark place. Makes about 1 1/2 quarts.

Spiced Pear Liqueur

8 ripe pears, juiced (about 4 cups juice)
2-inch piece fresh ginger root, peeled, sliced
1 whole nutmeg
1 cinnamon stick
4 cups vodka
1/2 cup white wine
Syrup:
2 cups sugar
1 cup water

Combine the pears, ginger root, spices, vodka, and wine and proceed as above, steeping for 5 weeks. Strain, filter. Make the syrup and add as above. Bottle and age for about 4 weeks.



Herbal Basics

(Melinda Myers)



Add some flavor and fragrance to your garden, meals, beverages, and garden parties with homegrown herbs. Whether growing in a container, mixed in among flowers and vegetables or in a garden of their own, you will enjoy the herbal addition to your landscape!

Here are 4 simple steps to success:

Selection - Start by growing the herbs you like to use in your favorite meal and drink recipes, dried arrangements, and potpourri or other crafts. But don't be afraid to try something new.

Location - Most herbs prefer full sun and moist well-drained soil. But check the tag and grow the herbs you select in their preferred location. And be sure to give them the room they need to grow and reach full size.

Care - Water new plantings thoroughly and often enough to keep the soil slightly moist. You'll need to check container plantings daily. Once established water plants growing in the garden thoroughly when the top few inches of soil are crumbly and just slightly moist.

Reduce maintenance and improve plant health by mulching the soil. A thin layer of shredded leaves, evergreen needles or other organic material helps conserve moisture, suppress weeds and improve the soil as they decompose

Enjoy the Harvest - Snip a few leaves or stems as needed throughout the season. Use a pair of garden scissors or pruners for harvesting. Make your cuts above a set of healthy leaves to keep plants looking good. Keep in mind you generally need 2 to 3 times more fresh herbs than dried and will get the most intense flavor from herbs harvested just prior to flowering. Harvest herbs regularly to encourage new tender growth for future use. You can cut annual herbs back by 50 to 75% and perennial herbs by one third at a time when making large harvest for preserving or crafting. The plants will recover for future harvests.



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

Diane Kescenovitz
2427 W Plum Tree Court
Mequon, WI 53092
(Return Service Requested)



Tulips, Tulips, Good bye

*I think that I shall never see
A tulip nodding back at me.
A garden bed of waving faces
A handful placed in pretty vases
In spring I doubt if there will be
Bulbs I planted lovingly.
I'll search for sprouts so carefully
Did voracious beasties let them be
Alas, I know the traveling deer
Come hungrily from far and near.
To reach my beds in time to eat
The tender, greenish leaf tips sweet.
In future springs I vow attack
To thwart the visiting white-tail pack
I'll turn to plants they shun to chew
The daffodils will have to do.*

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 7/1/22 and 9/1/22.

