

"Love planted a rose, and the world turned sweet"

-Katharine Lee Bates

SAGE LEAVES

The Herb Society of America -

Wisconsin Unit

Jan/Feb 2023 – Vol XXXXVIII #1

Unit Meetings

Tuesday, January 17, 10 a.m.

Program: Grants & Scholarship Recipients' Reports

Presider: Lore Borth

Location: St Christopher's & Zoom

February 21, 10 a.m.

Presider/Program: John Forti, Author of "The Heirloom Gardener" (via Zoom)

Location: St Christopher's & Zoom

2023 Spring Symposium, April 1, at Woman's Club of Wisconsin

2023 Herb & Artisan Fair, May 20, at Boerner Botanical Gardens

2023 Holiday Party, Wednesday, December 6

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!

Subscription Rate: \$6 for 6 issues

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NEWSBUDS...



Wishing you 12 months of success, 52 weeks of laughter, 365 days of fun, 8760 hours of joy, 525,600 minutes of good times, and 31,536,000 seconds of happiness in 2023!

Winter weather will have us curling up with some hot chocolate by the fireplace, snuggling up with a blanket and a good gardening book—fact, fiction or a catalog. We can dream of what we will grow next spring, what new plant to buy, or what new herb to grow.

Winter can be the darkest and the coldest of seasons, but ample moments for cozy retreat.

I am looking forward to 2023 as we have herbal opportunities. Our meetings will be by choice: in person or by zoom. We have Tuesday meetings on Jan. 17 and Feb. 21. The January meeting will focus on the past grants and scholarship reports. February our speaker will be by zoom, John Forti, author of "The Heirloom Gardener".

We can continue to learn more about the International Herb of the Year, ginger, on the HSA webinar in January: *Sizzle and Snap with Ginger* with Pat Crocker, Author, Innkeeper, & Culinary Herbalist on January 19, 2023 at noon Central Time.

Personally, I'm registered to attend the Seed Savers event at the Chicago Botanical Garden on Jan. 19th; I'll share the information I gather.

May your days be filled with love from family and friends, and all the best for the New Year!

Melody

Repairers of the Breach 2022 Donations from our Members

For the eleventh year, our Unit has collected items for the "Repairers of the Breach" daytime homeless shelter in downtown Milwaukee. Our Unit donated \$500 worth of toiletries, warm clothes and household items this past December. The items were delivered as snowy winter weather hit our area. Your warm thoughts and generosity are helping the needy in a very immediate way.

Our members also made donations of \$45 to the Shelter to help cover their heat and electrical costs. We received a thank you letter from Repairers expressing that our donations were a tremendous help and very much appreciated by the homeless people who truly live on the streets.

Thank you for your very kind and generous donations!

Denise Nelson

Nominations

We will be accepting nominations for Chair and Vice Chair for our elections in April. Please consider nominating someone or stepping forward and nominate yourself. However, any qualified member who is interested in being included on the slate of candidates must apply to the Nominating Chair, Joan Amundson, by the end of the February meeting. Candidates for office should be an actively involved member in good standing for at least one year. The proposed slate of candidates will be sent to the unit membership in the March/April SAGE LEAVES.

Recipes

Garlic Parmesan Butter Recipe with Basil

(9/22 Pot Luck Luncheon)

1 stick	butter, softened
¼ c	grated parmesan
¼ c	finely chopped basil
1 small	clove garlic, minced
1 t	fine sea salt

Mash together the butter, parmesan, basil, salt and garlic in a bowl. Form and cover with plastic. Refrigerate for up to 3 days and let come to room temperature before using.

3-Seed Digestive Cordial Recipe

Yield: about 2 cups

3 Tbsp. organic fennel seed
2 tsp. organic coriander seed
1 tsp. organic celery seed
1 cup brandy
Raw, local honey to taste (up to 1 cup)

Directions

- Coarsely grind fennel, coriander, and celery seeds in a mortar and pestle
- Transfer ground herbs into a glass jar with lid
- Pour brandy over herbs to cover. Secure lid and shake well.
- Place jar in a cool, dark area and let herbs infuse in brandy for 4 weeks, shaking often.
- Strain herbs from brandy using a funnel with strainer and cotton muslin cloth, remembering to press down on the seeds to release as much liquid as possible.
- Add honey to liquid and shake well until incorporated.
- Store in jar in a dark cupboard.
- Shake well before drinking
- Pour 1/2 oz. into beautiful cordial glass and enjoy as an after-dinner drink

Denise's Caramel Corn Recipe

(2022 Christmas Luncheon)

Purchase "O-Ke-Doke Buttery flavor" pre-popped Popcorn (7-1/2oz) bags. Plan to use 1-1/2 bags per batch. This is the best popcorn to use as the kernels are large and sturdy. (You can use 11oz of another brand of pre-popped/flavored corn.)

Purchase 1 pound of salted, roasted nuts of your choice. Or, roast raw pecans in a baking pan at 250 for 20-30 minutes.

Other ingredients:

2 sticks of (real) butter (no "light" blends)

2 cups of light brown sugar, packed into the cup

1/2 cup Karo (clear color) corn syrup

1/2 tsp salt

Then measure (keep separate) and set aside:

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. real vanilla

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. If using dark finish pan, turn temp down to 225 or caramel corn will get bitter/burned taste. Try to use silver finish pans with sides...like roasting pans. No need to grease pans.

In a medium-sized sauce pan, put the butter, brown sugar, syrup and salt. Melt and stir the mixture over medium heat. Keeping the temp. on medium, bring the mixture to a boil. From the time it starts to boil, stop stirring and set a timer for 5 minutes exactly. When the timer goes off, pull the pan off the heat and stir in the baking soda and then the vanilla. Keep stirring...it will foam/sputter. If adding Rosemary, stir in several tablespoons of the fresh chopped herb at this point.

While the caramel mixture is boiling, open the popcorn and divide 1-1/2 bags of the popcorn into the two large pans. Sprinkle the nuts of choice evenly among the pans.

When the caramel is finished (after foaming up) pour it over the two pans of popcorn. Use a spatula to gently fold the caramel into the popcorn/nut mixture.

Place in the 250* pre-heated oven. Set a timer for 1/2 hour. open the oven, pull the pans out and stir the caramel over the popcorn again (it tends to melt to the bottom of the pan). If using both shelves in the oven, rotate the pans top to bottom to keep the bottom pan from being overheated. Break up any clumps with your spatula. After another 30 minutes take the pans out to cool. Stir the corn until it makes a crunchy sound as it cools. Store popcorn in airtight containers when totally cool.

ENJOY!

Using Dried Herbs When Fresh is Unavailable

Donna Frawley, For the Daily News 12/13/19

Anyone who grows and uses herbs knows that fresh herbs are best. With that said, we live in Michigan where we have about six months when we can't grow herbs. There are times that we need to use dried herbs. When I was growing up, my mom only grew chives, dill and parsley. So even in the summer if we needed an herb other than those three, we used dried. There are some times that using dried herbs is a fine alternative and other times using fresh is the only way to go.

If you are using dried herbs, make sure they aren't too old. If they are older than one year, it is time to throw them into the garden; they are organic material and will decompose, adding nutrients to your garden. Give them the pinch-and-sniff test to make sure they still have some scent. That is done by putting a little of the dried herb in the palm of your hand, rubbing it between two fingers on the opposite hand and smelling the aroma that is released.

When you buy dried herbs, write the date on the can or jar. You probably don't know how long it has been on the grocer's shelf, but you will know how long it's been stored at your house.

If you have a recipe that calls for fresh and you are using dry, use this formula:
1 tablespoon of fresh herbs = 1 teaspoon of dried herbs

There are some fresh herbs available at some stores in the off season, that is, when we aren't growing fresh, outside, in our area. Make sure they:

- Are not wilted but fresh and crisp looking with a bright green color.
- Have not been in the store too long and have lost their flavor.
- Pass the pinch and sniff test -- rub the fresh leaves between your fingers and make sure it has the desired aroma
- Have been stored properly at the store - basil bruises very easily and the leaves will show if they have been pushed and packed into their spot in the produce counter. They will not keep as long if they are bruised.

If you can't find nice fresh herbs, use dried. I use dried herbs for rubs, in my sixty mixes (it has a longer self-life than with fresh) and blends (like bouquet garni, Italian seasoning, Herbes de Provence). When I am in a hurry and don't have the time to either buy or harvest (depending on the season), or time to chop, I use dried herbs. For garnishing, I only use fresh herbs. If the food you are preparing has both dry and wet ingredients, like bread for instance, the general rule of thumb is, add dried herbs to the dry ingredients and fresh herbs to the liquid ingredients. You don't want the dried herbs to clump together in the liquid and you don't want flour coated fresh herbs if you put them in the dry ingredients. There are some herbs whose flavor is far superior fresh than dried: Cilantro, parsley, lemon balm, and chives, especially if you have had them in your cupboard for a while. So, use fresh when you can or dried all the other times.

The following are some of my favorites using dried herbs.

BEEF BAR-B-Q

3 to 4 pounds boneless beef roast (round, chuck, brisket or your favorite)

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

3/4 cup finely chopped onion

1 bay leaf - dried

1 cup catsup

1/2 cup vinegar

1/2 cup brown sugar

2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

1/2 teaspoon pepper

Rub salt into roast. Place in un-greased baking dish. Add bay leaf, cover and roast at 325° F for 2 1/2 to 3 hours or until tender. Meanwhile mix the rest of the ingredients in a small saucepan. Heat until bubbling. Remove roast from pan and shred the meat with two forks. Put meat back into baking dish, add contents of saucepan and stir thoroughly. Cover pan and put back into the oven for another hour. You may have to make more sauce to coat meat completely. Serve on buns.

FOCACCIA

3 1/2 cups flour

1 package yeast

1 1/4 cups warm water

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 1/2 cups chopped onion

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 teaspoons dried rosemary, crushed

1 cup oil packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and snipped

In a large bowl combine 1 1/4 cups of flour and the yeast. Add the warm water, the tablespoon of olive oil and 1 teaspoon salt to the dry mixture. Beat with an electric mixer on low to medium speed for 30 seconds, scraping sides of bowl constantly. Beat on high speed for 3 minutes. Stir in as much remaining flour as you can. Turn dough onto lightly floured surface. Knead in enough remaining flour to make a stiff dough that is smooth and elastic (8 - 10 minutes). Shape dough into a ball. Place in a lightly greased bowl; turn once. Cover and let rise in a warm place till double in size (about 1 hour). Punch down dough. Turn onto floured surface. Divide in half and shape each portion into a ball. Place on 2 lightly greased baking sheets. Cover and let rest 10 minutes. For topping: Sauté onion and garlic in 2 tablespoons olive oil in a medium skillet until onion is translucent.

Flatten each ball with hands to about 12-inch diameter. With fingers make 1/2-inch-deep indentations in dough every 2 inches. Spoon on topping and sprinkle on the rosemary. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled (about 20 minutes). Bake at 375° F for 25 minutes or until golden. Arrange snipped tomatoes on dough the last 5 minutes of baking. Remove from the baking sheet to a wire rack, until cool.

FINES HERBS OMELETS

1 tablespoon melted, clarified butter

2 eggs, well beaten but not frothy

salt and pepper to taste

1 teaspoon Fines Herbs, crumbled

Heat the omelet pan over high flame. Add clarified butter and heat until hot but not smoking. Ladle eggs into pan. Pull eggs away from sides of pan with a fork while moving pan constantly over the flame to prevent sticking. Just before eggs are set, sprinkle Fines Herbs on omelet. Gently roll 1/3 of the omelet over the center, tilting the pan and using a fork. Turn cooked omelet onto serving plate.

SOFT PRETZELS

Fun for young and old alike

2 cups warm water (105-115° F.)

2 packages active dry yeast or 4 teaspoons

1/2 cup sugar

2 teaspoons salt

1/4 cup butter, softened

1 egg

6 1/2 to 7 1/2 cups un-sifted flour

1 tablespoon dry Italian Seasoning
1 egg yolk plus 2 tablespoons water
Coarse salt

Measure warm water into large bowl. Sprinkle in yeast; stir until dissolved. Add sugar, 2 teaspoons salt, butter, egg and 3 cups flour that you have stirred Italian Seasoning into.

Beat until smooth. Add enough additional flour to make a stiff dough. Cover bowl tightly. Refrigerate 2 to 24 hours. Turn dough out onto lightly floured board. Divide in half; cut each half into 16 equal pieces. Roll each piece into pencil shapes about 20" long. Shape into pretzels. Place on lightly greased baking sheets. Blend egg and water; brush this on the pretzels. Sprinkle with coarse salt. Let rise in warm place until doubled in bulk (about 25 minutes). Bake at 400° F about 15 minutes or until done. Remove from baking sheets and cool on wire racks. Makes 32 pretzels.

JIM'S LAVENDER COOKIES

This recipe is from my friend Jim Long

1 1/2 cups sugar
3 tablespoons dry lavender flowers
1 cup butter, softened
2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 teaspoons cream of tartar
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup additional sugar

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Combine 1/2 cup sugar and lavender flowers in the food processor and pulse blend until the flowers are well chopped. Set aside.

Cream the butter and 1 cup of sugar in the food processor until well blended. Add the remaining ingredients, including the sugar-lavender mixture and pulse blend just until the dough is mixed.

Roll dough into balls, the size of a golf ball, then roll in the additional sugar, then place about 2 inches apart on a greased cookie sheet and bake at 375° F for 8-9 minutes, or until the edges begin to brown. Bake a minute longer if you like dryer cookies or take out at the 8-9 min. mark for softer, chewier cookies.
Makes about 16 cookies.



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Wintertime

Brings wonder

A peaceful

Feeling inside

A time to cuddle

By the fire

Or build

A snowman

Outside



If you have an event, article, recipe, books, 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 3/1/23 and 5/1/23.

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