



POTOMAC POTPOURRI

The Newsletter of THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA. POTOMAC UNIT

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Sept./Oct. 201

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

What a funny summer with some beautiful days, some really hot days, some weeks with no rain and now way too much. Somehow I can't seem to complain about too much rain, especially if it is not causing harm. This year in our community garden we are having a really good eggplant year. The squash are just fine, had some good cucumbers and are starting to get lots and lots of beans. I planted the okra late and just picked my first 5 today. The tomatoes are just not doing it, but the tomatillos are. We have a couple of pounds of smoked tomatillos in the freezer and four pounds to be smoked this afternoon. I will not have to buy any for the chile celebration October 14. When I walk through the community garden I see lots of plots with beautiful tomatoes. Why don't we have those? Thankfully there are lots of farm markets around to buy tomatoes and peaches. Really good year for peaches.

We just finished our annual membership drive. Kudos to Karen Kilday and Edna Mancias to get everything together and kept reminding members, thanks also to Barry Eigen for keeping the finances straight and Renee Johnson, our new corresponding secretary, for putting together the membership directory. And many thanks to all the members who submitted their membership on time. We have Alexandria Marynowych back and a couple of new members, Lisa Faustlin and Ric Tursan, who Karen Kilday, our membership chair, introduced in the last Potpourri. I hope you can make it to our September 20 meeting when membership cards and directories are distributed, along with an interesting program. But don't worry, they will be mailed to you if you cannot make the meeting.

I am looking forward to the Mid-Atlantic District Gathering in Richmond, October 6 - 8. As I have said, every event I have attended sponsored by the Virginia Commonwealth Unit has been excellent. I am not familiar with David Culp, the featured speaker, but others are and speak highly of his book. And then there is the opportunity to visit Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden on Sunday morning. It has been a while since I was there. They will be having an auction so if you have something to donate, bring it. We are also welcome to bring gifts for attendees, but are not required. My mind is a blank when it comes to this, but others may have an idea. In our new budget we are proposing to make a contribution to support the gathering.

I am also looking forward to the chile celebration October 14. I will be making the Yemeni Hot Sauce (it is cilantro based) that I made for the plant sale and Under the Arbor programs. If you want the recipe, let me know. Or come to the event and pick one up as Piper has 80 copies. Also on the same page is a chile cilantro vinaigrette recipe that Piper says is also good. I have a lot of coriander seeds in my garden and am hoping a number sprout in time for the celebration. One already has.

See you in the herb garden.

Penni

OUR NEXT POTOMAC UNIT MEETING -

Wednesday, September 20th at the Takoma Park Community Center, Azalea Room, 11:00 am. to 2:00 pm.

"Poisonous Medicinal Plants In the Garden, with a few common pharmacological mechanisms and example of plants that fall under those categories."

For the Guild of Natural Sciences Illustrators meeting at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum last year, our speaker described himself in the following way: "Jeff Day never outgrew his love for cartooning even after becoming a medical illustrator. Jeff shares comic lessons that can be applied to science art, and how he continues to use cartoons to communicate health and medical messages. Jeff is now an informatics fellow at the National Library of Medicine and draws deeply from his varied background as a medical student, pediatrics intern, natural history museum educator, and training in medical illustration. Yes, it was a windy path, but that's what you get for a guy that never outgrew cartoons".

When I read that, I jumped out of the comfortable rut I was in and got on the Red Line Metro downtown. I found that Jeff Day's mission is similar to that of the Herb Society of America. This talented young educator has a cheerful way of getting his points across; come and see!

Takoma Park Community Center (azalea Room)
7500 Maple Avenue and Philadelphia (MD Route 410)
Takoma Park, MD 20912 (301-891-7290)

Pat Kenny

NATIONAL HERB GARDEN

September 16 - Under the Arbor, NHG, 1 - 4 pm, South Jersey Unit presenting lemon herb
October 14 - Chile Celebration, Under the Arbor, NHG, 1 - 4 pm. Multi-Unit, join us bring chile infused food or just come and enjoy. Often a beautiful day at the Arboretum (but not always, we have the auditorium reserved.)

Penni St. Hillaire

HERBAL BEADS

After a long summer break we're ready to start building up our inventory of rose bead necklaces again. Our next workshop is scheduled for Friday, September 22, at the home of Eugenia Yang in Arlington. We'll meet at 10 and work until around noon, when we'll break for a potluck lunch. Never been to a workshop before? No problem. All hands are welcome, experienced or not. As the date of the workshop draws near, please let me know if you plan to attend so I can let Eugenia know how many to expect.

Mary Lou Winder
301.384.2566
jmlwinder@verizon.net
301-384-2566

TRIP

Looking for consumable gifts for your friends and family that have everything? November 2, 2017 at 11 am members that are interested in some early holiday gift shopping should gather for a shopping trip at Penzey's Spices at 513 W. Broad St. in Falls Church, VA (703-534-7770) Afterward we will lunch at the PLAKA GRILL (a Greek Restaurant) located next door. (703-639-0161) They don't take reservations at the restaurant so no need to RSVP to me if you plan to attend. Just come and enjoy.

Jo Sellers

HERB STUDY

. Sunday, October 22 at my house, 7817 Ridgewood Drive, Annandale, Virginia 22003 (off Aston just south of Gallows Road and I-495).

Hi Herbsters! It hardly seems possible that we are looking at autumn already.

The final 2017 Herb Study meeting will be held 2 pm We'll conclude our year's study with roselle, Hibiscus sabdriffa, another beverage herb and an African native. Roselle's many names are a testimony to its popularity around the world. "Red sorrel" is known as the active ingredient in Red Zinger tea. The plant is unusual in a number of respects. It is a warm climate plant but short-day sensitive, which means that vegetatively it can grow nicely in the mid-Atlantic, but (usually) ... doesn't... quite ... make it over the finish line in terms of harvesting at the end of the season. We can brainstorm cultivation in our discussion. The calyces used for flavoring and making beverages typically don't mature until after very cold weather has set in locally. Thanks to Pat Kenny, we'll have a demo plant on site for the meeting.

Sepals, calyces and flowers are used in many beverages from Mexico ('agua de Flor de Jamaica') to the Caribbean, Africa, the middle East and east Asia. Leaves are enjoyed as a vegetable and are sometimes available at local Asian markets. Jams and jellies are also made from the calyces/fruits.

Looking ahead, please share any ideas for next year's herb studies. The 2019 IHA Herb of the Year is the native, Anise-Hyssop (*Agastache* ssp.); let's work that in for sure. Themes might include herbs of the north, native herbs, and shade-tolerant herbs. It might be nice to enjoy some *Acer saccharum* (maple) syrup and desserts in late winter. What gets your culinary juices going?

Finally, is there any interest in visiting a nearby brewpub to continue our study of Hops, the 2018 Herb of the Year? We had a rollicking good time at Kim's in July but barely scratched the surface of hops and beer lore. Let me know.

The 2017 Herb Study gatherings close out on a beverage theme. Join us!

October 22 (Sunday)

Topic: ***Hibiscus sabdariffa* (roselle, red sorrel)**

Location: Mary Schwegler, 7817 Ridgewood Drive, Annandale, VA 22003 park in front or pull into drive.

RSVP if possible,
mary_schwegler@sbcglobal.net (preferred) or mobile, 703.774.6631

Tentatively October

Topic ***Hibiscus sabdariffa* (red sorrel)** or

other beverage plant

Location TBA

Stay tuned for October meeting details. A volunteer to host the October meeting would be much appreciated!

Mary Schwegler, 703.774.6631

JOAN BURKA MEMORIAL LUNCHEON

REMINDER, REMINDER..... The annual Joan Burka Memorial Luncheon. Chef Francois has once again agreed to welcome us to L'Academie de Cuisine on Friday, November 17, 11-2:00 p.m., \$50.00 per person, payable to Kim Labash and mailed to her home address as listed in the Directory. It will be held in the Gaithersburg location. First come first served and I still have space available. To those newer members..... this is truly a day not to be missed.

Kim Labash

FROM OUR MID ATLANTIC DELEGATE

MID ATLANTIC DISTRICT GATHERING

– The Generous Gardener-A Tribute to Joanna Reed

Hope you are all planning on joining us October 6-8 in Glen Allen/Richmond, the Virginia Commonwealth Unit have a wonderful program lined up for us.

Virginia Crossings Hotel, 1000 Virginia Center Parkway, Glen Allen, Virginia 23059

Reservations: 888-444-6553 Direct line: 804-727-1400 Accommodations: \$124/night - includes free daily breakfast, Wi-Fi and parking

Hotel website: Website www.vacrossings.com

SEEDS

As you deadhead those spring/summer bloomers please consider saving some seed for the HSA seed exchange. I will be happy to pick up the seed from you at a unit meeting or make alternative arrangements. Please make sure you include your name, the date you harvested the seed and of course the most important part.....the botanical name. Many thanks.

RECIPE

Tried a new recipe for our board meeting to see if it would pass the test for a return visit to the Under The Arbor Chile Festival and it did. I am attaching the recipe herewith for anyone interested in trying it before the festival.

Pickled Chow Chow

2 cups shredded red cabbage (about 1/4 head)
1 red bell pepper, small dice (about 1 cup)
1 medium onion, small dice
6 radishes, thinly sliced (about 3/4 cup)
2 tablespoons kosher salt
1/2 cup rice wine vinegar
1/3 to 1/2 cup honey
1/2 teaspoon mustard powder
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon prepared horseradish
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 bay leaf
1 Thai chili, quartered if fresh and left whole if dried (I used 2 fresh serranos)

Mix the cabbage, bell pepper, onion, and radishes with the salt and place in a strainer set over a bowl. Refrigerate overnight.

Press out as much liquid as possible from the vegetables.

Combine the vinegar, honey, mustard, turmeric, horseradish, cloves, bay leaf and chili with 1/2 cup water in a large pot and boil for 5 minutes. Add the vegetable mixture, toss to coat and bring it back to a boil. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. Transfer to a container and store in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.

Recipe courtesy of Damaris Phillips

WEBINAR

Hope you had a chance to watch 'our very own' Pat Kenny and the wonderful webinar she participated in titled Sea Vegetables and Ocean Herbs on July 13 – if you didn't, not to worry, you can simply log in to the HSA website (herbsociety.org) and watch it in the comfort of your home and you don't even have to brush the hair or get dressed!

HSA BOARD MEMBERS -

Wondering if anyone in our Unit has considered joining the board? We currently have two vacancies. The board is comprised of a lovely group of ladies. If you are interested please feel free to contact Susan Leichthy herbsdel@aol.com (past President, Nominating and Awards).

Great candidates should have:

- Interest & enthusiasm to serve on the national board
- Diversity in talents, life experiences and skills in many fields such as, accounting, development, marketing, public relations, technology and others

By serving, you will:

- Develop new skills and leadership abilities
- Strengthen the community in which you live
- Apply your skills, talents and expertise to a valued organization

Open board positions:

Term July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2021

- Development Chair
- Education Chair

Applications due at HSA Headquarters by October 31, 2017

2018 ANNUAL MEETING\

A reminder that the 2018 Annual Meeting of Members will be held in Tarrytown, New York on June 1, 2018. More information to follow.

. THE 48TH ANNUAL BLUEMONT FAIR

The Bluemont Fair (BluemontFair.org) is coming upSeptember 16 & 17, 10-5:00 p.m.. Look for the tents of two fellow Potomac Unit members – Loudoun Valley Herbs & Blooming Hill. Hope to see you there.

Kim Labash

BLOOMING HILL

Visit Blooming Hill's booth at the Bluemont Craft Fair, Saturday & Sunday, September 16 & 17.

Visit Blooming Hill's booth at Blandy's Autumnfest (State Arboretum of Virginia) Saturday & Sunday, October 14 & 15.

Stop by Blooming Hill Lavender Farm & a Gift Shop during the Loudoun County Fall Farm Tour, Saturday & Sunday, October 21 & 22 from 10am until 4pm. Enjoy savory and sweet scones, lavender tea and lavender ice cream (\$15/person) out in the autumn gardens, rain or shine. No reservations necessary.

Cyndie Rinek

MENTIONED IN THE NEWS-- BETTER HAVE THIS AT THE PLANT SALE

***Tagetes lucida*/MEXICAN MINT MARIGOLD, PERICON, ANIS, SWEET-SCENTED MARIGOLD, WINTER TARRAGON(TP)**

Native to Mexico & Guatemala, this favorite plant of mine was an important plant of the Aztecs; it was smoked by itself or cut half & half with tobacco in religious ceremonies, most often those for the dead. Called **Yerba Anis** and **Pericon** in today's Mexico, popular uses still include funereal religious ceremonies but for the beginning of life as well,

fragrant baptismal waters. Traditional herbal remedies start with teas made from leaves and flowers and drunk for stomachache, relaxation & sleep up to four times/day or added to the bathwaters of colicky babies or vomiting children.

On the dry rocky slopes, meadows and oak woods of its native habitat, it can reach two and a half to three feet. In their plant hardiness zone, friends in Texas grow it as a perennial substitute for French Tarragon, hence the name "**Winter Tarragon**". In our zone we grow it as an annual or tender perennial. I have a picture of it blooming in the National Library of Medicine Herb Garden on the NIH Bethesda campus in December! Several Montgomery County Master Gardeners volunteer with a couple Herb Society members as caretakers on Monday mornings there from April through November.

Winter or Mexican Tarragon is used in southwest cooking with corn, a variety of different squashes, robust meats, quail & wild turkey, with lemon herbs in catfish dishes, a pesto with pecans, chopped into goat cheese or simply try adding it to hot or cold tomato soup. Every summer, besides harvesting for use in kitchen herb blends, I substitute this "tarragon" for French in a grapefruit sorbet recipe. If you try to grow a plant and fail, as I've done in years past, add the dried leaves to the fragrant bulk of your potpourri-makings. It can also be used as a dye plant. Experimenting with different mordants draws different colors from the same dye bath and *Tagetes lucida* yields the following six: unmordanted – bright yellow, alum – gold, chrome – orange, copper – brown, iron – dark, blackish brown.

Pat Kenny

HOW TO GROW HOPS ON YOUR PROPERTY

The Herb of the Year 2018 is extensively cultivated in England, Germany, the USA, South America, and Australia. The Pacific Northwest of the United States grows more than 75% of the hops grown in North America. There are five species listed in The Plant List site. There are hundreds of cultivars. "Hops are adapted to a wide range of climates. In areas where rainfall is lacking, irrigation may be required". (Belsinger, Tucker)

The home gardener can just decide for what purpose one wants to grow hops: home-brewing, for ornament, for making relaxing sleep pillows, or just for the fun and learning of it. The female

fruiting bodies called *cones* or *strobiles* give a bitter flavor and distinctive aroma to beer. There is a science and an art to combining fresh or dried hops or hop pellets with the soaked, germinated, and fermented malt, usually barley, to create a drinkable brew. The bitter was thought to balance the sweet of the malt. Depending on the percentage of each, there is a range of alpha and beta acids that determine whether a cultivar is considered to be an aroma hop or a bittering hop. Among the numerous hop cultivars are a few that are highly recommended by recent writers: Stephen Facciola, Susan Belsinger, Arthur Tucker, and Michael Balick. I will include a list of each type with country of origin and description at the end of this.

Choosing a Site -

Home gardeners with a spot of full-sun or light shade, preferably southern or western exposure, can easily grow three to five plants, in a small hillock or *stool* of their own, up a trellis, a deck, or a tree, to obtain, for instance, enough female fruits for use in pillows used for comfort, sleep, or dreaming. Choose a site with good air circulation to prevent mildew and red spider mites, a favorite pest. This herbaceous perennial whose tough stems sport strong hooked hairs can spiral clockwise six inches in twenty-four hours so provide strong string and top support.

From the ground up – Besides getting a soil test, this is what several authors say about soil requirements:

"Hops like light textured, well-drain[ing] soil with a pH of 6.0-8.0...add organic matter such as manure or grass clippings to the soil as well as a slow-release organic fertilizer such as cottonseed meal, rock phosphate, oyster shells, etc.(Almqvist);"deep moist soil enriched with compost". – Balik "Deep, sandy loam in full sun...best...feed plants levels of phosphorus and potassium similar to those required for corn; since nitrogen is removed with the harvested portion every year, organic fertilizers with 2-5% nitrogen is recommended".(BelsingerTucker); there is little root system growth the first year so soil should not be allowed to completely dry out; mulch around the soil surface.(Almqvist).

Cultivation & Propagation-

Although hops can be grown from seed, the most common way to begin is the purchase of female rhizomes, runners, or underground stems that are at least 3/8 inch thick from a commercial grower; they are usually available in late March/April for

shipping. You can keep the hop rhizome cutting moist in the refrigerator until ready to plant in late spring. You could take a 6-8-inch long cutting from a healthy old crown of a hop plant in May from a friend; be sure there are 2-3 sets of buds on the rhizome.(BelsingerTucker).

Plant 3-5 rhizomes in the corners of a triangle about 2-4" deep, buds side up (some gardeners plant them vertically) and make a mound of soil about 4 inches high above them for good drainage (beersmith.com/blog). If you want more than one hill/stool, space them 6-8 feet apart.

When vines, also called bines, are 2 feet long, 2-6 strongest vines are selected for training up strings. Strings are easier than wires because vines can get more traction, strings are more flexible and, at harvest, the old vines can be slid off to harvest strobiles.(pk) When bines take hold securely the bottom 4 feet of leaves and side branches can be carefully removed to help prevent downy mildew and insect pests.(BelsingerTucker) At this time other "suckers" rising from underground can be boiled, steamed, blanched, or raw and eaten like asparagus.(Balik) Continually remove them until late summer/fall when their growth insures the strength of the crown. "[Commercially] weed control is usually by early mechanical cultivation 6-10 inches to incorporate surface organic matter, followed by shallow cultivation 2-4 inches deep later in the season. Any later cultivation can inhibit growth and lead to early ipening".(BelsingerTucker)

Harvesting & Storage-

Strobiles are ready for harvest in for only 5-10 days late summer/early fall when they are palpable, light greeny-yellow-rose-beige, when scales are slightly papery and the yellow lupulin is somewhat visible under them; they are overly mature if brown-spotted. Because phytochemicals are unstable (hop strobiles quickly lose 85% of their original vitality), the storage of homegrown hops be dried in a food-dehydrator or 125-150-degree oven, cooled, and stored in dark glass in a cool place for six months, refrigerate or freeze to insure constituents last longer. After fall frost, stems can be cut back and added to compost pile; the main crown (stool) top-dressed with compost for the winter

Choice of variety –

I have combed through a list of 120 to find fourteen aroma varieties that would contain the gentle, low

alpha acids suitable for comfort, sleep, or dream pillows. However, these are recommended for home gardeners who may also want to brew:

'Cascade'(USDA-ARS 1972)-#1 for home gardener-brewers, a Fuggle hybrid developed at Oregon State U., best for flavor & flowery aroma for American light lagers.(Facciola,BelsingerTucker,Beer Advocate)
'Centennial'(US)– has balanced floral, citrus notes, smooth bitterness.(BelsingerTucker,Beer Advocate)
Hallertauer(Germany)-an excellent versatile traditional German hop with mellow, mild spicy, aroma & flavor. Good for light & dark lagers. If you are looking to brew an authentic Bavarian European –style lager, this is the best choice. Noble aroma hop common to German lagers. (Facciola, Beer Advocate)
'Nugget'(US)- a good yielding, high alpha bittering hop with a heavy herbal aroma (Facciola,BeerAdvo).
'Tettang'(Germany)- exceptionally mild aroma that seems to enhance grain aromas. Medium bitterness, Excellent for finishing lagers. Matures a few days earlier than Hallertauer. Used by some of America's major brewers.
Humulus lupulus L.'Aureus"- showy ornamental (BelsingerTucker).
Humulus japonicus var. *variegatus* – same (Balik).

References:

Almquist, Donna. *Herb of the Month*, Prince Georges Herb Society Herblurb, June, 1998.
Balik, Michael J. Rodale's 21st Century Herbal. 2014. Rodae/NYC, p. 180.
Belsinger, Susan & Arthur O. Tucker. *The Culinary Herbal*.2016.Timber Press/ Portland OR, 121-123.
Facciola, Stephen. *Cornucopia II – A Source Book of Edible Plants*. Kampong Publications/VistaCA, 61.

MEMBERSHIP

Thanks to EVERYONE for renewing your membership. We only had a few straggler. Last year we had 61 members and this year we have 64! Keep the new members coming.

REMINDER to All members. Start putting aside some special items for the future Raffle.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The following members will be celebrating birthdays in September and October: Wishing you

a Happy Birthday and may you enjoy your special day.

Susan Belsinger
Donna Brandes
Bobbie Champaign
Marriann Kowalski
Ermona McGoodwin
Kay Mendenhall
Phyllis Sidorsky

WEBSITE UPDATES

The Potomac Unit website
<http://www.potomacunithsa.org/>

ENDNOTE

We encourage all our members to help get the word out to all plant interested friends and colleagues that the Potomac Unit is 'here and happening' and eagerly awaiting new people with a similar interest. We now have a variety of membership levels - \$15.00 for the Unit newsletter; \$25.00 for an interim (trial) one year Unit membership as well as the traditional \$60.00 HSA membership. We also have over half our Unit meetings scheduled on an evening or weekend day time to better accommodate those with a customary 9-5 work schedule.

Opinions expressed in the Potpourri are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Herb Society of America (HSA) or the HSA Potomac Unit. Responsibility for the safe use of any herb or herb product lies with the reader. The Herb Society of America is dedicated to promoting the knowledge, use and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community. As stated above, opinions expressed in the Potpourri are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Herb Society of America (HSA) or the HSA Potomac Unit. **Any herbal information provided is for educational use only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. If you experience symptoms, see a physician for treatment.**

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Submission deadline for the next issue of *Potpourri* is Sept. 20, 2017. News of member and civic or nonprofit horticulturally themed events is welcome. Publication is at the sole discretion of the editor, who reserves the right to edit for brevity or any other reason. Neither the Potomac Unit nor the Herb Society of America endorses any product or event unless the product or event is specifically sponsored by the Unit or Society.

Please caption materials "Potpourri article" and transmit email materials to the editor's personal address wajda.md@gmail.com Articles should be reasonably publication ready; minor typos are not an issue. Single-spaced Arial 10 point font is preferred; conventionally written text without unusual formatting is required. Be kind to your editor!

MATERIAL SUBMITTED IN ALL CAPITALS WILL BE RETURNED.

Oct. 6-8 Mid-Atlantic District Gathering, Richmond,
VA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept. 16 & 17 Bluemont Fair

Sept. 26 Under the Arbor, NHG – South Jersey
Unit

Sept. 20 Unit Meeting – Takoma Park Community
Center, Azalea Room

Sept. 22 – Bead Workshop, at Eugenia Yang's

Oct. 14 Chile Celebration, Under the Arbor, NHG

Oct. 14 & 15 – Blandy's Autumnfest

Oct. 21 & 22 – Loudon County Fall Farm Tour

Oct. 22 – Herb Study at Mary Schwegler's

Nov. 2 – Trip to Penzey's

Nov. 17 – Joan Burka Memorial Luncheon

June 1, 2018 – 2018 Annual Meeting, Tarrytown,
NY

