



# POTOMAC POTPOURRI

**The Newsletter of THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA. POTOMAC UNIT**  
**Vol. XLII No.06** **Sept./Oct. 2018**

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

Gardening, what a beautiful but cruel activity. All the rain has made some plants flourish. I think the hydrangeas and crepe myrtles have been spectacular this year, but it has also brought out all the weeds. We spend a lot of time in the Herb Garden pulling out mulberry weed and I have twice had run-ins with rue, not something you should do. I think this second time is not as bad as the first when people asked me what happened to my face. Now my neck just itches. The rabbit is eating all the foliage off my lilies and even almost did in a salvia. Rabbits aren't supposed to go for salvias, but this was especially pretty, salvia splendens dancing flame. At the community garden they topped off the first of the bush beans until Tommy made the plot rabbit proof. Now the squirrels are getting the tomatoes. The okra looks lovely, but after the first blush of okras, the plants are just growing, not producing. Edouard, the very precise French gardener, says the tomatoes aren't good anyway. They are too watery with all the rain. He was hoping for another week without rain, but we got a half inch last night.

We say good bye to Sally Baker who died at the beginning of July. Sally was a Unit member for 10 years, for a time served as crafts and culinary chair and was never shy about sharing her opinion. She was also a Master Gardener and lectured on growing vegetables and herbs and using them to make soaps and edibles. We will miss her.

We took a very pleasant trip to Marin County, California, north of San Francisco to visit with friends. This is lavender country and mid-July the plants were quite lovely. At the California HSA Educational Conference in California a couple of

years ago a member sent us to Matanzas Creek Winery, which also has lavender fields and conducts programs with lavender crafts. Having a glass of wine in a lavender field is quite pleasant. We also visited friends in Santa Rosa, where last year's destructive fires were. Our friend's home was the only one remaining in their hillside neighborhood, as they had put in a sprinkler system for just such a problem and kept the brush away from their home. The rows of lavender at the front on their house was gone, but the back garden was ok, lavender and all.

We are going to Portugal this fall, with our grandchildren who are 24 and 26 and a pleasure to be with. We'll be back in time for the Chile Celebration on October 6. This has been a good year for tomatillos. We have made one batch of salsa verde and there are some smoked tomatillos in the freezer. .

See you in the herb garden.

Penni

## **NATIONAL HERB GARDEN NEWS**

It is going to be a busy fall in the garden. On September 15, Curator Chrissy Moore and gardener Piper Zettel are sponsoring a beer tasting in the garden from 6 to 8 pm. There is a fee and registration is required. Check out Arboretum activities at [usna.usda.gov](http://usna.usda.gov). It looks to be popular and may be sold out. Be sure and check out the entrance garden at our September 12 meeting. It is truly a beer garden with plants used in making beer.

October 6 is our annual Chile Celebration. I hope you will join us. As many of you know, this is a

really fun event, especially if the weather cooperates. This year the chile border includes plants other than peppers which makes an interesting display. I learned it may also be to discourage visitors from picking the peppers when I said I was having a hard time finding the peppers I want. I have been collecting salsa recipes as we have been dishing up varying types of sauces, in addition to the smoked chile verde. All dishes are welcome.

October 27 FONAs has invited us to join their OAKtoberfest. The event goes from 10 to 4 and we have agreed to participate, but have not decided exactly how.

OUR NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 12, 2018, 11:00 am. to 2:00 pm.  
U.S. National Arboretum, 3501 New York Avenue, N.E., Washington D.C. 20002

We like to schedule our September meeting in order to further appreciate the educational displays and annual growth in our nation's most extraordinary herb garden; some of us volunteer on a weekly basis yet some of us can only visit once a year. Full attendance and attention also may show respect, excitement, and gratitude for the endeavors of the staff and volunteers who regularly work/play in The National Herb Garden. Don't miss the day - our new membership booklets, thanks to talented member Renee Johnson, will be ready to distribute.

This year the National Arboretum's Classroom was only available September 12th, instead of our usual third Wednesday of the month. We hope that Wednesday, mid-week and the hours 11 to 2 may be some sort of a "sweet spot" for traffic and car pool travel. Then there is that opportunity to relax with Garden curators, intern, the speaker, and each other during an herbal lunch to which we contribute foods laced with herbs.

Our speaker, Stefan B. Lura is the Arboretum's Gardens Unit Botanist, also in charge of Plant Records. Once in a great while he gets to go around the world to focus on the collection of herbal plant material, and, he is going to tell us about a trip to The Republic of Azerbaijan, a nation and former soviet republic bounded by the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus Mountains which span Europe and Asia. We, fortunate few get to live vicariously, in air-conditioned comfort, only the fun parts of the trip. Don't miss the day - our new membership booklets also will be ready.

## FROM OUR MID-ATLANTIC DELEGATE

### 2018 MID ATLANTIC DISTRICT GATHERING

Mid Atlantic District Gathering  
The Mason Dixon Unit are busy preparing for us. Please mark it on your calendars. Sept. 21-23. It will be held at The Wyndham Gettysburg located at Gateway Gettysburg Complex  
95 Presidential Circle, Gettysburg, PA 17325

- ◆ Greet old friends and make new friends
- ◆ Indulge in herbal goodies
- ◆ Learn more about herbs
- ◆ Visit vendors

### Volunteers Needed - USBG National Garden Festival – Saturday, September 29, 2018

The USBG is holding its annual National Garden Festival on Saturday, September 29 and we need volunteers to help at the pot an herb takeaway table.

The USBG will provide all materials and plants – the Potomac Unit will provide the herbal expertise!

You will have the opportunity to interact with members of the public and educate them on the importance of herbs while enjoying the autumnal beauty of the National Garden. We will have herbal plant care sheets and Potomac Unit membership information to distribute as well.

There will be two shifts - one shift from 9:30 am – 1:00 pm and one shift from 1:00 - 4:30 pm. We need 3-4 folks per shift. Light refreshments will be provided to the Potomac Unit volunteers.

Please contact Laura Anthony at [lanthony@aoc.gov](mailto:lanthony@aoc.gov) or call 202.359.1023 with your availability.

The USBG is located at 100 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC 20001 and street parking is available on Maryland Avenue SW – first come first serve. Public transportation to the USBG is available on the Metro system with the closest station Federal Center SW on the Orange, Blue and Silver lines.

Many thanks for assisting us to meet our mission of educating the public about the importance of herbs!

Laura Anthony

## NEW VENUE FOR POTOMAC UNIT SALES

I am delighted to share the news that we will be featured at the Bluemont Fair this year (in the barn) selling rose beads.

The fair is always held the 3rd weekend in September. This years dates are: September 15 & 16, 2018. [www.BluemontFair.org](http://www.BluemontFair.org)

Kim Labash

## MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME to our new members: Kathy Fricka, Kathy Guenterberg, Karen Kellam, Judith Mili and Mary Beth Mahoney.

These are our total membership numbers: 3 Business, 3 Joint, 1 Joint/Life, 5 Life & 42 Individuals.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

<i>September</i>	<i>October</i>
Susan Belsinger	Donna Brandes
Bobbi Champaign	Ermona McGoodwin
Mariann Kowalski	Kay Mendenhall
	Phyllis Sidorsky

## HERB STUDY

### PROGRAM UPDATE

Thank you to everyone for your questionnaire responses and other feedback regarding the Herb Study program. There is a dedicated core that enjoys the program and wishes that it continue. Members enjoy a variety of activities including the opportunities to stretch and show off their culinary chops. On the other hand, some of us have been interested in expanding our activity somehow, addressing a goal oriented activity beyond a solely discussion focused program. Ideas floated have included intense study of one herb and presentation of a program (like an "Under the Arbor" event). Other ideas include research and preparation of a written document(s). For example, the Potpourri has plenty of room for more herbal articles. After attending to basil, we will devote about half of the September 30 meeting to beginning our planning discussions for future programming, and see where that leads. Feel free to share your thoughts even if you will be unable to attend in September,

by emailing me or another member who plans to attend.

## MEETING SCHEDULE

This year we are focusing on herbs that are members of the huge Mint Family, *Lamiaceae*. A good general information source is *Mints* by Barbara Perry Lawton, which gives an idea of the variety of this large and useful family ... the good, the bad and the impossibly weedy. In honor of the family's namesake, please feel free to bring your favorite adult Mint beverage to any meeting!

A member of the family, Anise Hyssop, *Agastache foeniculum*, was *the subject* along with related species. It is the *was the subject* 2019 IHA Herb of the Year and a tried and trouble free perennial along with several other decorative and scented members of the genus.

September is frost free in most of our area and our gardens should still be green at the end of September. With a bit of luck some of our basil will be hanging on. Mountain mint is hardy and its flowers can be decorative even when dried. For the next meetings, bring any interesting basil and mountain mint specimens to share.

Following is an outline Herb Study calendar for September and October 2018 meetings. Unless otherwise noted, meetings occur from 2-4 on Sunday afternoons.

September 30, 2018 Basil and planning discussion Location: Betsy Reece residence, 3630 Camelot Drive, Annandale, VA

October 24, 2018 Mountain Mint (all species) Location: Jo Sellers Residence, Burke, VA

Hope to see you this fall! Meanwhile, enjoy the cooler weather, and happy gardening!

Mary Schwegler 703.774.6631

## ENDNOTE

We encourage all our members to help get the word out to all plant interested friends and colleagues as 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. 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 of 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 Oct. 20, 2018. 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](mailto: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.**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept. 12—Unit Meeting NHG

Sept. 15&16--Bluemont Fair

Sept. 21-23—Mid-Atlantic District Gathering

Sept. 30 Herb Study--Basil

Oct. 6—Beer tasting in the NHG 6-8

Oct. 16—Chile celebration

Oct. 24 Herb Study—Mountain Mint

Oct. 27—OAKtober fest, NHG