



POTOMAC POTPOURRI

The Newsletter of THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA. POTOMAC UNIT
Vol. XLIII No.05 September - October, 2019

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Since I have taken on this chair position, I have compiled a list of the activities in which the Potomac Unit will be involved from now until the end of the year. It is amazing how active we are--how involved we are at many events. Just this past month, a group of core volunteers spent an enormous amount of time updating our membership directory. The new directory will have a beautiful cover illustrated by Pat Kenny, an article about the 2020 herb of the year (thank you Pat and Barry Eigen), updated board and chair names, updated membership names and contact information, and new meeting times and dates. You would be amazed at how much time and how many e-mails fly back and forth to create an accurate directory. Thank you everyone for contributing and a special thank you to Karen Kilday who diligently keeps our membership roster up to date and to Renée Johnson for coordinating and producing such useful publication (I use it as a resource all the time).

In September, Mary Schwegler will facilitate an herb study at Jo Sellers' home (everyone is invited); Pat will coordinate our unit meeting on figs at the Arboretum; thanks to Kim Labash and Mary Lou Winder we will sell rose beads at the Bluemont Festival; and Mary, Kari Barrett, and I will provide educational information at the Arboretum's Botanical Brews event. Many of us will be running out to the store to purchase chili or chocolate related items to give to Laura Anthony for the raffle basket for the mid-Atlantic district gathering in Hershey. I already found a package of chocolate daisy seeds and a dark chocolate bar infused with spicy red chili (but still looking for

more items). In addition, if we have not had our fill of herbs and gardening events, we can visit the South Jersey Unit's Under the Arbor presentation on lemon herbs at the Arboretum. In October, we will host our Under the Arbor Chili Celebration where many of us will volunteer to staff and contribute chili related edibles. Later in the month, we will enjoy a guided tour of Brookside Gardens followed by lunch at the Stained Glass Pub. In November, we will have our Day of Remembrance meeting at the Takoma Park Community Center and then afterwards I am sure we will be busy with holiday festivities. In addition, this is just the fall, wait until you see 2020! As always, please contact me if you have any suggestions for Potomac Unit activities, any questions, or are interested in volunteering.

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OUR NEXT UNIT MEETING is scheduled for Wednesday, September 18th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. in the Classroom of the U.S. National Arboretum's Administration Building (go in the building entrance and make two left turns to find the Classroom which is beyond the restrooms).

We are usually allowed a gathering/set-up time before 11:00 when members bring in the food for the potluck herbal lunch, the projection equipment is set-up & tested with the speaker by Douglas Reingold, and the Membership Chairman, Karen Kilday (my extra in-good-condition-herbal-item can become a treasure for you), displays member-donated auction items.

Our speaker Jafar Vossoughi, retired bio-engineer has given this talk on the subject of FIGS to Master Gardeners and the public through the Maryland Grow It/Eat It program. "It covers the subject" is an understatement; he said he has tweaked it a little more especially for us. If I may make a suggestion, let us make some of our luncheon items with the syconia of this ancient tree.

(Syconium: The multiple fruit, such as the fig, which consists of an entire ripened inflorescence with a hollow, fleshy inverted receptacle bearing numerous flowers internally). Quite the opposite of the Rubus fruits of the Herb of the Year 2020, which are external. Some figs need no fertilization, but tiny wasps that live inside them fertilize others.

Pat Kenny

Remembrances In Memory of Ermona

McGoodwin Our dear sweet fellow Potomac Unit Member, Ermona passed away at her home in Wheaton, MD on July 11, 2019 after suffering an illness. She was a ray of sunshine and always willing to pitch in whenever needed. Ermona was responsible for raising the popular lemon grass plants for the annual herb plant sale among many other interesting plants. A native of Oklahoma, her funeral services were held there. She will be fondly remembered. Once we get details of any memorial services to take place in Maryland, we will be sure to send out a message.

In Memory of Art Tucker Another dear friend passed away on August 5 after suffering an

illness. Art was an herbalist, artist and research professor at Delaware State University where he established the Claude E. Phillips Herbarium. Author of nine books, including co-author with Thomas DeBaggio - The Encyclopedia of Herbs. A memorial will take place in the future at the Herbarium and we will send a notice once information is received.

National Herb Garden Events

September 7 Lemon Herbs by the South Jersey Unit, Under the Arbor from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm The Jersey Girls make a day of their programs. They get brunch on the road at a Cracker Barrel restaurant and they have dinner on the way home with a view of a river. Their programs are always interesting.

September 21 Botanical Brews: 5:00 to 7:30 pm for one night only, the National Herb Garden will transform into a beverage garden! Experts from all facets of the brewing industry will converge to celebrate hops and a myriad of botanical ingredients that make possible some of the world's most popular beverages! A must-attend event for craft brew and garden aficionados alike. Attendees will enjoy a private tasting of local breweries' custom creations, including limited edition small batches unavailable anywhere else! Picnic-style food will be served alongside the brews. Come "drink in" the garden! The list of featured cooperators includes Right Proper Brewing Co., Heurich House Museum, 3 Stars Brewing Co., Bardo, Rayburn Farm, Bluejacket, Supreme Core Cider, Atlas Brew Works and the Herb Society of America Potomac Unit! The garden also has great new signage for the beer garden.

Registration required \$45/person; FONA members \$36 (includes tasting glass.) Must be 21 years of age; sorry, no pets. ADA accessible. Tickets sales are limited. In the event of rain, tasting will be moved indoors. Please contact programs.usna@ars.usda.gov

October 12 Chile Celebration: Under the Arbor from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Always a fun event with lots of people and dogs when the weather is good and the chile pepper border is spectacular. This is a multi-unit event with the Philadelphia Unit bringing hot, hot chocolate, Billi Paris with her ice cream, South Jersey with many interesting chile

flavored foods and drink. Pennsylvania Heartland is usually there and Mason Dixon often comes. They make an arthritis cream using chile peppers. The Potomac Unit always has salsa, especially Tommy's smoked tomatillo salsa and often a salsa verde with either cilantro, parsley or both. Laura has made fruit salsa and last year Jo Sellers had chile pepper jelly. In the past, Virginia Commonwealth brought soup. Linda Martin brought a chile infused cake once. Pat Kenny is at the entrance introducing visitors to the genus capsicum. This might be a good place for some membership information. There is usually some chile spiced fudge or brownies around. In addition, of course there is an opportunity to taste the peppers from the border. Please come, either to bring something, help, or just enjoy. Let me know if you are bringing a tasting or planning to help so we can make sure there are enough tables and chairs. Contact me at tommyt@erols.com or 202 966 4087.

2020 is the 40th anniversary of the National Herb Garden. The National Herb Garden Committee is proposing to have a birthday party for the garden as an Under the Arbor program on June 13, with cake, ice cream and tussie mussies. Tussie mussies were taken to members of Congress to urge support of the garden. Five years ago, Susan Belsinger provided me with herbal cake recipes and I made a delicious thyme cake. We will ask Susan to come up with something special for next year. Linda Martin is known for a great lavender cake. In addition, although somewhat early in June, we may be able to make lavender wands. Put June 13, 2020 on your calendar.

Members are encouraged to do other Under the Arbor Events during the months of May, June, September and October. I would seem that something fun could be done with the genus rubus for an under the arbor. Let me know if you would like to plan something.

Penni St. Hilaire

Membership

Membership - Dues drive is complete!! We have 57 members. Numbers are down from last year, even though we have several new members. Let us Welcome Ursula Alebrand, Karen Barrett and Susan Miller.

Happy Birthday Wishes go out to the following:

September	October
Susan Belsinger	Donna Brandes
Bobbie Champaign	Phyllis Sidorsky
Mariann Kowalski	Kay Mendenhall

Karen Kilday - Membership

Trips & Travel

Please join our Unit when we visit BROOKSIDE GARDENS located at 1800 Glenallan Ave., Wheaton, MD for a private guided tour on October 17, 2019. Tour starts at 10:30 am and cost is \$8.00 per garden tour participants. Afterwards we will gather for lunch at the STAIN GLASS PUB located nearby at 12510 Layhill Road, Silver Spring, MD.

Jo Sellers

Mid Atlantic District Delegate News

Hope you are planning to join us at the Mid Atlantic District Gathering --, it promises to be a good one - Hershey, PA, September 27 & 28.

Seed Collection: Tis the season to start cleaning up those perennials and hopefully collecting seed. I would be delighted to take any donations – just need name of plant, your name, and date you harvested. Many thanks.

Business member outreach: If you are a business member, you should have received an e-mail invitation from the HSA Education Chair, Jen Munson to offer you space at the upcoming 2020 Annual Meeting in Charleston, SC, April 17.

HAS Webinar: An upcoming webinar by one of our Districts Members at Large *The Secrets to Cooking with Lavender with Nancy Baggett* on Tuesday, September 17, 2019 – 1pm Eastern

Rosemary Pins and Golden Sage Pins: This being the time for membership renewal, we were discussing same at the board meeting last week. I was asked to outline to our members, particularly our newer members, and the importance of continuous membership. You may have seen/heard us mention Rosemary pin recipients and or Golden sage pin recipients. These pins are awarded to members who are dues paying members for a continuous

period, in the case of the Rosemary it is 25 years and in the case of the golden Sage pin it is for 50 years. Unfortunately if you let your membership lapse then counting begins again anew at time of 're-upping', a hard lesson learned by at least one of our long standing members.

2020 Plant Sale: The dates for next year April 24 & 25 – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days, same location as last year, same size tent as last year. Susan Chapin (wearing her FONA hat) attended our board meeting last week and has already submitted the bill for next year's tent, space etc. This is a great help to us because in the past we have not known until spring what the fee will be, which affects our plant order that has to be in by Thanksgiving, causing something of a nail biter. Thank you Susan. We will have the same plants as last year – if there was something that you were looking for but could not find, please let me know so that it can be added to the list. We will NOT be ordering as many Oreganos next year – what WAS I thinking!!!! Pat (K) and Mary (S) are researching the availability of Rubus for us to have as our usual educational component at the plant sale and Susan is allowing us to have tables up against the front of the tent so that is probably – weather permitting – where we will feature the 2020 Herb of the Year.

50th Annual Bluemont Fair Saturday & Sunday September 21 & 22 10:00–5:00. Look for Unit members selling Rose Beads inside the shed in the Juried Crafts section. Mary Lou would welcome any volunteers. www.BluemontFair.org

In Search Of: Jo Sellers is 'on the hunt' to locate a quilt produced for the HSA's 50th anniversary, celebrated in Boston at the 1983 Educational Conference and Annual Meeting. Terry Wheeler (current Chair of the NC Unit) searched out a photo for us and it is lovely. Both Jo and I have reached out to members in and beyond our Unit but thus far no success. If you were at the 1983 Educational Conference & Annual Meeting and/or if you were the winner of the quilt and/or if you know anything about its whereabouts we would be delighted to hear from you.

Kim Labash

Mid Atlantic DISTRICT GATHERING September 27 & 28 Hershey Pennsylvania Fund Raising Basket

The Potomac Unit will be preparing a Chiles and Chocolate Basket for the fundraising efforts at the MADG. Please let Laura Anthony know of your contributions (lanthony@aoc.gov or 202.359.1023) and please plan to bring them to the September 18 Unit meeting.

Laura Anthony

HERB STUDY FALL UPDATE: MEETING NEWS & CALL FOR PARTICIPATION IN BOTANICAL BREWS, SEPTEMBER 21

Hi Everybody! Lots of big news this edition. Our next meeting will be September 8, 1-3 pm at Jo Sellers's house. **NOTE THE TIME CHANGE.** Our meeting will be brunch-style and Jo promises to make something yummily brunch-appropriate. Our topic of study will be sassafras and other "root beer" herbs like Piper auritum (acuyo, hoja santa), so get out your gumbo file, acuyo tamales and wraps, and beverage recipes. Other herbs of interest we might discuss include spicebush (Lindera benzoin, a HSA Notable Native), birch and sarsaparilla. So many herbs, so little time! Has anyone ever made root beer? If there is time, we could make some the shortcut way, with root beer extract and club soda. Unfortunately, sassafras root itself is banned because it contains large amounts of safrole, said to be carcinogenic. Commercial root beers and "extracts" are made from other flavorings like sarsaparilla and vanilla; we can discuss that too. Fortunately the leaves and other above ground parts have relatively little safrole and are not controlled. I will have some file powder, sassafras leaves to examine, and a small Piper auritum. A fellow member has purchased some Moxie beverage and we may be able to sample some.

There is a load of information out there on root beer and its herbs. Read up and bring your books and internet printouts. We need your contributions to the group study.

We will wrap up the year of studying back-yard woodies with a treat. Our final meeting will be held between mid-October and mid-November. Topic: the genus Vaccinium, including cranberries and blueberries. Many good things to eat there and maybe we will pick up some new

recipes for the holidays. Let me know (703.774.6631) if you are available to host a meeting, date is host's choice.

BOTANICAL BREWS EVENT AND PLANNING

Herb Garden staff at the National Arboretum has scheduled a second annual "Botanical Brews" event from 5:00 to 7:30 pm the evening of September 21. The Unit was invited to participate. This is a busy weekend for our members and officers, and on behalf of the Herb Study group, I have agreed for us to manage the Unit table. We need to quickly identify our focus of the display, educate ourselves, gather appropriate exhibits and assure proper staffing of the table. So far, it looks like root beer(s) will be our topic although we need to refine our focus. Because of the short time frame, some of us will be discussing our participation ahead of the meeting. Join us! Give me a call or drop me an email, even if you cannot participate on September 21 but just want to stay informed. The Herb Study meeting on September 8 will be less than two weeks before the Botanical Brews event, so at the Study we will finalize exhibit plans (subject to group approval) and table staffing. Read up on sassafras and root beer herbs and please, share your ideas to refine our program. FOCUS IS KEY.

We hope you can join us in planning a successful event and look forward to seeing you at the September 8 Herb Study, 1 pm at Jo Sellers's.

Mary Schwegler

Blooming Hill's 5th Annual Lavender Festival Took place on Friday and Saturday, June 14 & 15 and our very own Mary Lou and Judith manned the HSA tent for two beautiful days and sold the ever-popular and even more lovely lavender beads! Big thanks to these wonderful women for making the trip out to Western Loudoun County and helping to make the festival a complete success.

We had 350 visitors on Friday and 890 visitors on Saturday. The lavender picking was slim this year due to the continual rain since April 2018 but people came to learn about lavender and replace their own plants that succumbed to this year's weather. We have certainly experienced climate change these past couple of years in our lavender

field but after 25 plus years of growing this beautiful plant, we are not about to give up now!

Festival visitors savored our famous cream tea, a la Kim Labash who was in Wisconsin this year, and who worked hard to prepare our lavender goodies before she left. There were also craft vendors selling their wares and yoga in the field. Everybody had a good time. And, no—This guy in the clever lavender shirt was not there but his shirt conveys a great message to all lavender lovers everywhere!



Blooming Hill is once again a venue on the Annual Loudoun County Fall Farm Tour. Stop in and see our new glass greenhouse/orangerie, shop the shop and buy some lavender plants and enjoy tea and scones in the garden. Saturday and Sunday, Saturday & Sunday, October 19 & 20, 2019, 10-4pm both days.

Cyndie Renik
Blooming Hill

U.S. Botanic Garden Programs, Exhibits & Events

Come visit the U.S. Botanic Garden this fall to enjoy the plant collections and exhibits and participate in a lecture or tour. Most are free or otherwise indicated (fee based). Check out the website www.usbg.gov for additional courses, to register for a program and to learn more.

Some that may interest you include the following:

Exhibits: It's Hip to be Square: The Mint Family – on display in the Conservatory through November 25, 2019 - learn more about the interesting plants in this unique family. **Gardens Across America** – on display through October 1, 2019 – features vignettes from 20 gardens across the USA, which reflect the local communities they are located – outdoor exhibit on Terrace, National Garden and Bartholdi Park. **Season's Greenings: America Gardens** – on display November 28, 2019 – January 5, 2020 – popular holiday exhibit featuring model trains, plant-based models of iconic Washington DC landmarks including, memorials, monuments and buildings, and an outstanding poinsettia display.

Tours: Medicinal Plants Yesterday and Today – Explore the Medicinal Plant room and learn about the active compounds in the plants and the mechanisms by which they interact with the human organism. Offered Thursday, September 5 & October 3 from 1:30 – 2:30 pm. **Marvelous Morphology: Flowers** – Tour the Conservatory and discover flower structures and floral diversity on Thursday, September 12 from 11 am – noon. **Phenomenal Plants: The USBG Medicinal Plants Collection** – Join the gardener of this extensive collection Wednesday, September 25, Tuesday, October 15 & November 14 from 10:30 – 11 am. **Horticultural Backstage Pass: The USBG Production Facility** – behind the scenes tour of this 2-acre greenhouse not open to the public – Wednesday, October 16 10:30 am – noon. **Marvelous Morphology: Underground Structures** – Learn the difference between a tuber and a root and other underground plant parts – Thursday, October 17 11 am – noon. **Horticultural Backstage Pass: The USBG Production Facility: Poinsettia Edition** – behind the scenes tour of this 2-acre greenhouse not open to the public – with special focus of the *Poinsettia* collection Wednesday, November 13 from 10:30 am to noon. **Marvelous Morphology:**

Fruit – Learn about fruit structure and function while enjoying tasting samples – Thursday, November 14 from 11 am to 1 pm.

Workshops: An Introduction to Natural Dyeing (fee program) Using plant derived dyes, experiment with various colors and take home one hand dyed piece – Saturday, September 14 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. **Medieval Illumination: Painting Herbs using Glair and Gold Leaf on Italian Watercolor Paper** (fee program) – Learn how to mix glair (the white of an egg) with dry natural mineral pigments and paint herbs from the USBG's collection – two day workshop Saturday & Sunday, October 12 & 13 9 am – 4:30 pm. **Make Your own Seasonal Wreath** (fee program) Create naturally dyed wreath reflecting the fall season – Friday, November 15 from 6:30-8 pm

Lectures: The Coffee Challenge: Coffee Research for a Changing Climate – Tuesday, September 10 6:30-8:30 pm. **The History of Spices** – Learn about the botany, geography, ecology and economics of spice production – Monday, October 8 10:30 am – noon. **Chia in Art and Horticulture** – *Salvia hispanica* aka Chia is a member of the mint family and chia sculpture artists will discuss their work – Saturday, October 19 from 2-3:30 pm.

Events: Harvest Party (fee program) Celebrate the bounty of late summer with culinary creations, libations and live music – Thursday, September 19 6:00-8:00 pm. **Escape the Garden! A plant based mystery** (fee program) – Solve a plant forensics case while enjoying food and drink – Saturday, October 19 6:30 pm – 9 pm. **Festive Botanical Tonics and Restoratives** (fee program) Join in the discussion and samplings of traditional tonics and herbal elixirs – Friday, November 8 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm. **Afternoon Tea in the Garden** - Discover the history and biology of *Camellia sinensis* and make your own blend of tea or herbal tisane to steep at home, all while sipping a “cuppa” and nibbling on biscuits - Saturday, November 9 1- 3 pm.

Check out the USBG's website www.usbg.gov for additional information and to register for a program.

Laura Anthony

RECIPE

Tomato, Fresh Fig & Blue Cheese Salad

Ingredients:

1-tablespoon balsamic vinegar
½-teaspoon fine sea salt
3 tablespoons pine nuts
1 large (8 oz) ripe tomato thinly sliced
½ pound fresh figs quartered
1 ounce crumbled blue cheese
1-teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
Black pepper to taste

In small bowl, whisk together vinegar and salt and then whisk in oil. Toast pine nuts in small skillet over medium low heat, shaking occasionally, until light golden – about 2 minutes. Spread tomato slices on platter, scatter fig quarters and pine nuts on top, Sprinkle with cheese and thyme, and finish with black pepper.

Serves four - time to prepare 20 minutes

New York Times – submitted by Penni St. Hilaire

Botanical Bookshelf: Recently published Calendars related to herb gardening.

Herb-related Wall Calendars for 2020, can purchase via Amazon

Herb Gardens by Maggie Oster

Herbs Calendar by Rosemary Gladstar

Herb Gardens by Jane Shasky

Elegant Herbs and Medicinal Plants by Pomegranate Communications

Herbs, 16-month Calendar by Browntrout Publishers

Peggy Riccio

Herbal Beads

The first item on our agenda is the Bluemont Fair, which will be held on Saturday and Sunday, September 21-22, 10-5, in (where else?) Bluemont, VA. We will have a table at the fair where we will sell rose bead jewelry and demonstrate how we make the beads. Linda Martin will work on Saturday and I will do so on Sunday, but it is more pleasant to work in pairs. You can keep each other company and each person has the chance to browse the fair while the other staffs the table. If you can help one or the other of those days, let me know. It would be much appreciated. Our rose beads have been a profitable ways and means project for the Unit, but that only happens if we have people willing to work at events where we can sell them.

Moving on, our next bead workshop is scheduled for Friday, October 25, at the home of Eugenia Yang in Arlington, VA. As usual, we will begin at 10, work until midday, and then finish up with a potluck lunch. If you are new to the Unit or have not come to a workshop before and would like to try it, join us! They are a lot of fun, and every one of us started out as a beginner after all. As the date draws near, please let me know if you plan to come.

Mary Lou Winder

mlbwinder@gmail.com 301.384.2566



Judith & Mary Lou at Blooming Hill

Calendar

Sunday, September 8 1 pm – 3 pm Herb Study@ Jo Sellers

Wednesday, September 18 Potomac Unit Meeting, 11 am US National Arboretum Classroom

Saturday & Sunday, September 21 & 22, 10 am – 5 pm Herbal Bead Sale at Bluemont Fair

Saturday, September 21 Botanical Brews 6 pm US National Arboretum National Herb Garden

Wednesday, October 17 10:30 am Trip to Brookside Gardens & Luncheon

Saturday & Sunday, October 19 & 20 Loudon County Fall Farm Tour

Friday, October 25 Herbal Beads 10 am at Eugenia Yang's home, Arlington VA

Friday & Saturday April 24 & 25, 2020 Potomac Unit Plant Sale – details to follow

National Herb Garden Activities

Saturday June September 7 1–4 pm Under the Arbor South Jersey Unit Lemon Herbs

Saturday, September 21 5-7:30 pm Botanical Brews

Saturday October 12 1-4 pm Chile Celebration

Saturday, June 13, 2020 National Herb Garden's 40th Anniversary- details to follow

UPCOMING HSA WEBINARS

Tuesday, September 17 1:00 pm *The Secrets to Cooking with Lavender* with Nancy Baggett,

Tuesday, October 22, 1:00 pm *The Witches' Garden*, with Andrea Jackson,

Wednesday, November 20 1:00 pm *Soothing Herbs & Gut Repair* with Maria Noel Groves
Registration Coming Soon!

To register go to

<https://www.herbsociety.org/portal-log-in-page/>

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 (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.

POTOMAC POTPOURRI is published September, November, January, March, May and July by the Potomac Unit of The Herb Society of America, Penni St. Hilaire, Chairperson; Laura Anthony, Editor Spring & Summer and Cyndie Rinek, Editor Fall and Winter. Material appearing in the *Potomac Potpourri* may be reproduced. *Potomac Potpourri* should be credited as the source.

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The content deadline for the next issue of the Potpourri is October 20, 2019.

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.

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