

*"All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today."*

*--Indian Proverb*

# SAGE LEAVES

**The Herb Society of America Wisconsin Unit**

May/June 2023 – Vol XXXXVIII #3

## Unit Meetings

**Tuesday, May 16 – 9:30 a.m. Setup/Greet, 10 am. Meeting, 11 a.m. Program**

Program: Preparation for Herb & Artisan Fair held on May 20

Location: St. Christopher's Church and Zoom

**Saturday, May 20, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Annual Herb & Artisan Fair at Boerner Botanical Gardens, Hales Corners

**Saturday, June 17 - 9:30 Setup and Greet, 10:00 Meeting**

Program: Wrap-up Meeting for Unit Events

Location: St. Christopher's Church and Zoom



*How could such sweet and wholesome hours  
be reckoned but with herbs and flowers?*

Andrew Marvel, 1621-1678

Editor: Diane Kescenovitz – if you will be going out of town for an extended period, please notify Diane of change of address or request an email copy.

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Herb Society of America Website: [www.herbsociety.org](http://www.herbsociety.org)

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

# NEWSBUDS . . .

## **Notes from Melody**



I have spring fever! I have hundreds of daffodils that are a cheerful yellow in my driveway and gardens around the house. I planted alyssum and johnny jump-ups in my fairy garden. I've planted containers of lettuce, onions, pansies and alyssum. I set them out by the porch and drag them back in at night . . . or kept them inside the day of the snow. Spring is coming . . . I can't wait! My chives are a good 10 inches tall – time to make some chive/potato soup.

I'm looking forward to our Herb & Artisan Fair; please sign to volunteer on Saturday, May 20. If you haven't already had a chance to sign up, our May 16 herb meeting will have details for food and volunteer sign up.

Congratulations to AJ and Joanne for the positive election results. They will be a great team to lead our unit the next two years!

Summer Opportunities: We will be making plans for our Herb Day at Boerner on July 23. It's wonderful to see the herbs in full growth!

We will be guides for the Herbs used by Native Americans and "repeat" of the culinary and fragrant herbs. We've had informal talk about going to the lavender farm near Baraboo this summer. Let me or any board member know if you are interested. Suggest another possible outing if you think a small group of us would be interested in attending an event. There are garden walks, garden classes and herb cooking opportunities available.

### **April Election Results**

Congratulations to Chair-Elect Alice Jo (A.J.) Star and to Vice Chair-Elect Joanne Ruggieri. They will assume their new roles on June 1, 2023.

It is with great appreciation that we thank the outgoing Chair Melody Orban and Vice-Chair Marlene Mravik for four years of exemplary service to our Unit. They led us through the pandemic years and even taught us how to Zoom so our Unit could stay in contact. Their service will be acknowledged at the June Unit meeting.

### **HERB FAIR, BOERNER BOTANICAL GARDENS, MAY 20, 9 a.m - 3 p.m.**

This is a friendly reminder that our Herb & Artisan Fair will be on May 20 from 9:00 a.m. 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.

# HERB & ARTISAN FAIR

Saturday, May 20, 2023  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Boerner Botanical Gardens  
9400 Boerner Dr., Hales Corners  
WI



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 a.m. Venice Williams  
"Alice's Garden Urban Farm"
- 11:15 a.m. Jane Hawley Stevens  
"High Tea in the Garden, Elevate your  
Experience with Elegance"

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

## **Save the Date: Herb Day at Boerner- Sunday, July 23**

Presented by:

**The Herb Society of America - WI Unit**

Website: [herb-society-wisconsin.org](http://herb-society-wisconsin.org)

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

Questions: Contact Melody at 262-488-0324



## **REMINDERS FROM THE ARTISAN CAFÉ: MARY KAY MCDEVITT, LUNCHEON CHAIR**

Thanks to all of you who volunteered to bring your delicious food items to the Artisan Café, 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 Noon. Salads, casseroles, sandwich fixings, etc. - quantity to serve 10-12.
- Refrigerator 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 at 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 Mary Kay McDevitt. Marlene Mravik and Joanne Ruggieri have graciously volunteered to help us again this year in the Artisan Cafe.

### **Tea Room Donations – Denise Nelson**

The Tea Room is one of three areas at the Herb and Artisan Fair that earn money for grants and scholarships. Your donations to the Tea Room are greatly appreciated. Please donate generously. If everyone brings as much as they did in the past, we should be in good shape.

- Package your items in plastic baggies, with pretty ribbon.
- Label your items with the name of the item, such as, Chocolate Chip Cookies with Mint. Blank address size labels work well. Please add the word NUTS on your labels if your items contain them.
- Cookies, bars, and scones work well in baggies. Crumbles, crisps, slices of tea bread, and cakes do well on plates, then wrapped in plastic. Small tea breads can be wrapped whole.
- Kate Normoyle has generously offered to print labels for our members. Please send her an email. Let her know what you will be baking and the number of labels you will need. Please do this ASAP, so the labels can be picked up by Denise and brought to the May 16 Unit meeting.
- On May 20, please bring your packaged items to the Boerner Atrium where the Tea Room table will be set up. Please bring them as early as possible. They will be priced with stickers at that table.
- Please let Denise know what you will be bringing. Call and leave a message. Thanks for your kind contributions.

### **Unit Membership Renewals are due May 16, 2023**

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 2023-2024 business year to me by May 16. You should have received a renewal form with the amount due for your type of membership (individual, joint or business). 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 Denise Nelson at the address in the membership listing. Thanks! Denise Nelson – HSA-WI Unit Treasurer

## **May 2023 Herb of the Month - German Chamomile**

(Nino Ridgway)



Chamomile is one of the first herbs I ever used. As a child, I used to pick and eat the little greenish yellow blossoms of pineapple weed, *Matricaria discoidea*, a close relative of German chamomile. Pineapple weed is a low growing plant that grows in gravelly areas along streets, sidewalks, and parking lots. We nibbled the fruity tasting flowers and later we learned to make "tea" by pouring hot water over them.

German chamomile (*Matricaria recutita* aka *M. chamomilla*) has many properties in common with pineapple weed. It is however much taller, has tiny white petals around the yellow disc, and will thrive in a variety of garden soils. It is native to Europe but is now widespread around the world. The fruity flavor is a mix of pineapple and apple. It is little used in cooking but has a long herbal history. German chamomile tea is a soporific, an aid to digestion, and has a general calming effect. Its antispasmodic properties are useful for stomach and menstrual cramps. People new to chamomile should exercise caution for 2 reasons. First, it can put you to sleep, which is great if that's what you want. Not so great if you're about to give a lecture or have an interview! Second, chamomile is in the same family as ragweed (Asteraceae). A few people have a mild allergy to this herb (the flowers are the part consumed). Proceed with caution.

Chamomile is easy to grow in any sunny location with well-drained soil. It is an aggressive self-seeder, so once you have plants established they will persist from year to year, despite being annuals (much like poppies). Roman chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*) is perennial and more easily cultivated, but it is primarily ornamental. The flowers are more bitter and have different medicinal properties.

## **June 2023 Herb of the Month - Lovage (*Levisticum officinale*)**

(Nino Ridgway)



Lovage is one of the easiest and most rewarding herbs to grow, as long as you have room for it. It is a very large member of the carrot family (Apiacidae) and is native to Central Asia. Lovage looks like celery on steroids (like 6 feet tall)! It is an incredibly hardy perennial yet is not aggressive. Just plant it in full sun and stand back.

It is the first herb to emerge in spring, showing green growth as early as mid-March. It is one of the last to go dormant in the fall. The only maintenance required is to prune the plant back hard as it sends up seed stalks. These stalks double the height of the plant and cause the entire plant to turn a sickly yellow as all the plant energy goes into the developing flowers and seeds. Removing flower stalks as they appear snort-circuits that cycle and allows the plant to continue producing nice green foliage without the bitterness that often comes with herbs as they flower and set seed.

Lovage has the combined flavor of parsley and celery, but a little heavy on the celery. Since it produces green leaves in abundance, it is an excellent main ingredient for lovage soup. The leaves can be cut up finely and added to any salad or soup in place of celery. Lovage makes a good pesto! The stems are hollow, so they can be used as straws to sip tomato juice or V-8. The root is also edible. Medicinally lovage has been used for kidney and urinary tract problems. It also has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Lovage may interact with anti-coagulant and diuretic medications. Exercise caution.

# **Recipes**

## **Celery Salad**

(Helene Pizzi – Mar 2023 Mtg)

Celery Salad (make day before)

1. Slice bunch of celery cut into 1/4" slices
2. Rinse in water with baking soda (to remove pesticides)
3. Rinse in water and put in big bowl with ice water for 2-3 hours (crisps up celery)
4. Drain - add evoo, salt and wine vinegar to taste
5. Can add grilled red peppers and poppy seeds (or anything else you feel would go well with this salad)

Crème Fraiche (make 2-3 days ahead to thicken)

1 pint Heavy Cream  
1/2 pt Buttermilk

1. Stir well in mason jar
2. Let sit overnight then put in fridge. It will keep 1-2 weeks

## **Lemon Curd Crepes (Gluten Free and Vegetarian)**

(Jean Longenecker – Mar 2023 Mtg)

- Make gluten free pancake mix according to package directions, then add extra milk to thin the mix. Add 1 teaspoon each of rose geranium syrup and vanilla extract. Make crepes just as you would make pancakes.
- When cool, spread each crepe with a mixture of 1/2 cream cheese and 1/2 Greek yogurt. Put a spoon of lemon curd over cream cheese mixture and roll up to make crepes.
- Refrigerate until ready to serve.

## **Pineapple Chicken Salad Sandwich**

(Marlene Mravik – Mar 2023 Mtg)

2 c	cooked chicken breast	1/2c	mayonnaise
1/2 c	crushed pineapple, drained	1/4 t	onion powder
1/4 c	chopped pecans	1/4 t	garlic powder
1/4 c	chopped onion	1/4 t	paprika
1 T	sweet pickle relish		

Brownberry Sandwich Thins – round, honey wheat flavor

- In small bowl, combine ingredients, mix well.
- Place mixture on sandwich thins, cut in 4's (4 triangle shaped sandwiches).
- Dab mayo on top with a triangle shaped pineapple slice and mint leaf.

## **Rose-Scented Leaf Water**

(“The Herbalist’s Kitchen Cooking and Healing with Herbs” by Pat Crocker)

Use this rose-scented infusion whenever rosewater is called for. To flavor cakes and other baked goods, replace up to half the liquid in the recipe with Rose-Scented Leaf Water. Use it as the liquid in hand cream or as a fragrant face or hair rinse.

Makes 2 Cups

1 1/2 c chopped fresh rose-scented Pelargonium leaves)  
1 c filtered water

1. In a nonreactive saucepan, combine leaves and water and bring to a boil over medium heat. Cover and adjust heat to gently simmer for 10 min. Turn heat off and let stand on the stove for 30-60 min.
2. Strain the water into sterilized, clean jars. Cap, label, and store in refrigerator for up to 4 days or in freezer up to 3 months.



## **Strawberry Lavender Chocolate Chip Scones**

(AJ Star – Mar 2023 Mtg)

2 c	Flour	4 T	Butter, cold salted, cut into pieces
1/3 c + 1 T	Sugar, divided	1 c	Strawberries, chopped, freeze-dried
2 t	Baking powder	1/2 c	Mini chocolate chips
1 t	Culinary lavender, dried	1 c	Heavy whipping cream, cold
1/2 t	Salt	1/2 t	Vanilla extract

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper
- In a large bowl, combine flour, 1/3 c sugar, baking powder, lavender and salt – whisk together
- Cut butter into flour mixture until it resembles coarse crumbs
- Add chopped strawberries and chocolate chips, stirring until combined
- In a liquid measuring cup, combine cream and vanilla, stir. Then add to flour mixture, stirring until mixture is evenly moist. If feels dry, add more cream (tbs at a time)
- Working gently, bring mixture together with hands until dough forms.
- Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface to knead gently 4-5 times. Roll out to 1/2" thickness.
- Use 2" biscuit cutter to cut scones from dough
- Place 2" apart on prepared baking sheet, sprinkle tops with remaining sugar
- Bake until edges are golden, approximately 18-20 minutes.



## **Dirt = Happiness!**

(Ebert's Village Gardener Express, March 3, 2023)

As avid gardeners, you are all familiar with how good it makes you feel when you finally get to put your hands in the soil - especially after a long winter. There is research that shows that dirt really does make you happy and healthy!

**Handling soil in the garden enhances your mental capacity.** When you get your hands in the soil in your garden, you are also getting fresh air and likely basking in the sunshine, which is great for your physical and mental well-being. Because you are using more of your senses (sight, smell, tactility, and sound) simultaneously, your brain is consequently getting more of a "workout" which is making it stronger - it's a great bonus!

**Exposure to the bacteria in the dirt is good for your immune system.** Studies have shown that exposure to the soil can be beneficial in aiding in the prevention of auto-immune/inflammatory disorders such as arthritis and asthma.

**Microbes in the soil are a benefit to your mental health.**

Mycobacterium vaccae, is a microbe present in soil that can affect the neurons in your brain similar to how antidepressants do. According to Gardening Know How, a study showed that cancer patients who were exposed to this microbe expressed feeling happier - and the aftereffects can last up to three weeks! So, get out in the garden as soon as you can! We all need a little dirt in our lives - it feels so good!



## **Friendship**

How warm to greet is a friend  
To glow in the light of their eyes  
How comforting their clasp  
How engaging their grasp  
Even across many miles  
Thoughts of a friend ring true  
And bring a breath of freshness  
Like a garden blessed with dew.

*J E Janssen, "Under The Leaf"*



If you have an event, article, recipe, etc. that you feel members might be interested, please send to Diane and she 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 July 1 and September 1, 2023.