

POTPOURRI



The Austin Herb Society Newsletter

August 2009

Greetings

The Austin Herb Society (AHS) invites you to renew your annual membership. In turn, we are doing great things to support herb awareness and herb-loving businesses like yours.

To kick-off the season, we invite you to attend our September 1 program and luncheon. Invitations will be sent soon.

For more herbaceous fun, October has been proclaimed Herb Awareness Month. October 10 is our local HerbFest at the Sunset Valley Farmers Market. The Austin Herb Society will play a leading roll in expanding awareness and building support for all things herbal, just one of the many benefits of being a member. Be sure to send me your October events so we can promote you!

Annual Sponsorship benefits include:

- Business information printed in annual brochure
- Business information listed on Austin Herb Society website, with link to your website
- December Holiday Bazaar & Tea: Sell and display merchandise, shop, eat, socialize. (free booth)
- Distribute brochures, handouts and event announcements at meetings
- Opportunity to write an educational article in the monthly Potpourri.
- Free attendance for you or your staff at monthly educational member programs, 1st Tues.
- Sponsor a field trip (members-only activity)

- Plus, creative ways to interact with our members. Ideas include a special tour of sponsor businesses, speaking engagements, open houses, member-only shopping days, coupon book, etc. Please voice your interest. All sponsor activities are sponsor initiated.

Through our sponsorship program we wish to expand and unite the herbal community – and everyone benefits. If you would like to get involved in the planning and development process, we have opportunities to help or lead.

If you are ready to join, click here:

[Registration](#) for the
AHS Sponsorship Agreement
& HerbFest Vendor Booth

SPONSORS NOTE: If you would like to be listed in our annual brochure, please have your information to us by August 15.

The Austin Herb Society is a 501(c) (3) organization that provides charitable and volunteer support for public gardens, libraries, schools and special projects. Please know that your support provides important monetary backing while building interest for all things herbal. We hope you will join us.

Thank you for your commitment to the Austin Herb Society!

Cindy Boyle VP Sponsorship,
Austin Herb Society

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Remember there is not meeting in August. In September the meeting will be the annual luncheon.

Tuesday July 07, 2009

Austin Herb Society July Meeting.

Cindy Philips, immediate past president of the Austin Herb Society, presented a program discussing herbs that do well in her Texas Summer garden. She introduced us to an herb called quillquina which is used as a culinary seasoning and medicinally as a blood pressure aide. The herb has a pungent aroma and although some describe the aroma as similar to cilantro, Cindy thinks it has a more lemony flavor.

Quillquina, Porophyllum ruderale is native to Bolivia where it is called Killi. Cindy said the herb can be aggressive, spreading with dandelion-like seeds but they were easy to control by pulling young plants as they appear. She recommended the plant as a year round, attractive addition to the garden.

Cindy recommended crushing herbs to release the flavor when cooking and demonstrated how toasting seeds and crushing them would result in rich, intensified flavor. She passed a sample of cilantro seeds for us to smell, then used a mortar and pestle to crush some of the same seeds that had been toasted. The scent from the crushed seeds filled the air and when the crushed seeds were passed around, the strong scent lingered for some time.

Recommending caution when experimenting with herbs without a recipe, Cindy suggested adding the herbs in small amounts to your food preparations to start with until you got the strength of flavor you wanted. She reminded us that dried herbs and fresh herbs have significantly different strengths. She also warned that placing herbs in oils were attractive and safe when the herbs were covered with the oil in the bottle, but as you used the oil and parts of the herb were left uncovered with oil, mold was possible. Cindy enjoys cooking with herbs and

encouraged us to share ideas and recipes. A discussion followed the presentation.

Simple Heat Shield

Richard (Dick) Nelson recommended solutions to the problems of our garden plants wilting from our Texas heat. He reported that simply surrounding the plants with a layer of 4-5 sheets of newspaper and covering this with grass or leaf mulch has made a substantial difference in his plants ability to withstand the heat. The newspaper effectively blocks the weed seeds from germinating and eventually decomposes adding organics to his garden beds,. He added a soaker hose to the garden and the mulch combined with a hose has given his plants a new vigor during this heat spell. Protecting the roots will certainly pay him back with fewer plants lost due to excessive summer heat. Helping the soil hold moisture will be reflected in the reduction of Dick's water bill. Simple and terrific!

(Mary Mills)

Read a good book lately? or do you have a favorite book about herbs? Many older books are still available online both new and used. Write a review for us to share. Here is one of my favorite books. (Mary Mills)

Ladybugs, Tiger Lilies & Wallflowers. A Gardener's Book of Words. Robert Hendrickson. Prentice Hall, 1993. First Edition.

Published in 1993 and out of print, this delightful book is available from several sites on the internet for under \$10. You may even find the small volume tucked into a shelf at a used book store. Any nature lover will enjoy the old lore, legends and stories behind the names of garden flowers, vegetables, fruits, trees, herbs and insects. Robert Hendrickson, a noted wordsmith and garden writer enjoys sharing an informative, entertaining and "groundbreaking" look into the origins of many garden related phrases and words that have become common parts of our language. This is a book worth seeking out and adding to your garden book shelf.

Austin Herb Society members:

Do you love to share advice, articles, tips, or photos from your garden? We would like to add them to the Potpourri.

Please send articles, comments, tip or Jpeg photos to the president. or pgherbfarm@aol.com

We will add them each month as space permits.

Thank a Green Plant Today

Mary Mills, The Purple Gate Herb Farm

My next door neighbor, Susan, came bouncing into my home often with the greeting, “Hi, have you thanked a green plant today?” Once she even recommended that I read up on the sex life of oak trees! I didn’t give much thought to her comments I considered her enthusiasm a bit goofy and the result of her majoring in botany at the local university.. Years later I began a small herb garden. This opened up a whole new world of study that I suspect will last my lifetime. As I found more and more history and uses for the herbs I was growing, I began to have Susan’s reverence for plants in general and a growing wonder at the versatility of the herbs.

We all know that roots, stalks or leaves of vegetables provide valuable nutrients to keep us healthy. Spinach, salad greens, collards, kale and the tops of turnips and beets protect overall health. On this list we should include the flower buds of asparagus and artichoke as well as the seed and pods of beans and peas. The list of culinary plants available to us has expanded with the introduction of many vegetables from other countries into our grocery stores. Cookbooks describe how to enhance the flavors, add variety and visual appeal to our wealth of edible plants. Prominent in these recipes are the seasoning herbs that add depth and savory richness or a burst of fresh flavor to our food preparations.

The benefits of herbs have been recognized for thousands of years and in many cultures around the world. In addition to enriching our diets, herbs revive energy and spirits, restore health, sooth, beautify and heal many physical discomforts. There are many ways to describe what a herb is and there are many opinions. Here

is a description by Judith Benn Hurley in her book, *The Good Herb*.

To me, a herb is an aromatic plant whose properties are indispensable in cooking, health or body care.

Other ways to appreciate herbs are to recognize the wide range of plants that are valued for their flavor, fragrance, medicinal and health supporting qualities as well as industrial uses and pesticidal properties. Herbs are hard to beat! Designing, maintaining and harvesting herb gardens provide intellectual, physical and creative challenges. Even weeding a herb garden fills your lungs with uplifting “Living Aromatherapy”.

I am finding that historically and in the present, herbs play a greater role in our lives than most of us realize. The study of horticulture, botany and the science of bio-medicines derived a wealth of information from the study of herbs. Early mariners explored and colonized vast areas in the world in part because of the quest for herbs and spices. To add to my list of the benefits of herbs, I must count the entertaining and enlightening study that have occupied hours of evenings I spend entranced in reading authors who share my curiosity and interest. I often fondly picture, my botany student, neighbor, Susan, bouncing into my livingroom and radiating her enthusiasm and her appreciation of the plant world.

Thank you, Susan, for planting that seed of thought into my brain. It took years for it to develop and bloom into real appreciation of the plants around me. So now, I ask you-all,

“Have you thanked a green plant today?”



Aztec Sweet Herb Leaves

balancing act

Chinese medicine is all about harmonious balance, which we could all use. It addresses the equilibrium between our physical and mental state, as well as the attunement and harmony created between humans and the [natural elements surrounding us](#). [Andra Millian](#)

To simplify with a visual clue, keep in mind the dual nature of balance. Ancient Chinese sages pondered, deliberated and came up with “the shady side of the mountain and the sunny side of the mountain,” known respectively as Yin and Yang.

Everything in our natural world has aspects of Yin and Yang. Yin is shady, cool, receptive, deep, soulful, wet and feminine. Yin moves inward and down. Yang is sunny, warm, assertive, outgoing, social, dry and masculine. Yin plus Yang make up one balanced whole. Yin is the root; Yang is the flower.

The Chinese sages studied the changing character of the seasons from peak Yin (winter) to peak Yang (summer). They came up with five seasons: Winter, Spring, Summer, Late Summer (our ‘Indian Summer’) and Autumn. Each season’s observable qualities are used as tools to create a better sense of balance and harmony in our lives.

Our current season is called the Yang of Yang, the sunniest, warmest time of year. Summer is characterized by the color red, for vigorous activity, and the manifestation of ideas we thought up in the cooler months. Red fruits like cherries, watermelon and tomatoes are wonderful seasonal treats, recommended to create more harmony. Red is also the color of spices like chili and cayenne, that make us perspire. In traditional Chinese medicine, using heat to cool us off is called ‘treating yang with yang’. Fire is the element of summer, which is treated by the most yin of substances, ice and water. Therefore, staying hydrated is referred to as treating yang with yin.

The taste of summer is bitter, known in Chinese medicine to have a ‘heat clearing’ property. Baby spinach salads and icy stuffed celery are all ‘bitter’ summer flavors that enhance your tranquil state of mind.

This summer, throw on some cherry lip-gloss or red flip-flops while sipping a celery garnished Bloody Mary, slightly bitter Campari and Soda or Cranberry Cooler. The Chinese seasonal direction for summer is South, so head to Mexico or the Mediterranean. Or, make the best of the Lone Star state by kicking back to enjoy Texas.

Keep your life in balance during these hot summer months by combining the robust and energetic aspects of yang into your daily routine. Make fresh pico de gallo or watermelon and mint salad before heading out on the water for fun and laughter with friends and family. Don’t forget the sunblock. Remember, red is also the color of sunburn, but if it’s too late, slather on some bitter cooling aloe vera gel to take the burn out of your skin. Moderation is key to maintaining peace of mind. Keep your



top 10 chinese herbs

- Rosemary
- Garlic
- Hawthorn
- Ginkgo Biloba
- Andrographis
- Bromelain
- Kudzu
- Echinacea
- Ginseng

Article from
26 july/august 2009 www.brilliantmagazine.com



Ginseng

What I learned from the Austin Herb Society by Cindy Phillips

Herbs make everything better – your food, your health, your landscape, your outlook on life. Have some in your life. Chocolate is a good herb.

Dirt is good stuff. You can grow dirt by composting. A “chocolate cake” consistency is good. Don’t compost animal products. The laziest gardener can compost just by letting the pile sit there, but watering and turning speed up the process.

Don’t get perturbed by little snags; it saps your energy. Don’t get upset by the big ones, either. Take a deep breath and do what’s needed, and just go on. Life is good.

Vive la difference – in people, food, art, and life.

Celebrate everything good in life. Flaunt your flair. Share your talents.



Those caterpillars eating your passion flowers are potentially beautiful butterflies. Plant some for them, and some for you.

To keep feeling young, keep younger people in your life.

If you meet someone great, tell them in specific terms what you like about them. It is good for them, good for you.

Ask for what you want. Give what you can.

Share your plants. It makes your garden a memory garden. In my garden are irises from my mother, lilies from my great aunt Ora, herbs and flowers from many AHS members, veggies from the organic garden where I volunteer, seeds gathered on trips, vines and bushes from neighbors. I think of each individual when watering, a great meditation.



Make occasions for special foods - that rosemary candy from Vee Fowler that you make every Christmas, the chocolate cake your Mother made for your birthday, the special potato salad from your college friend, those pickles from Aunt Gertrude. Make em and eat em to celebrate their special days or yours, or for no reason. Share your recipes with the stories that make them special.

There is always something more to learn, it is never too late to learn, and it’s fun. Everyone you meet has something to teach you. You have something to teach them too.

Spend a little quiet time each day, in the garden, on a walk, in a peaceful setting. Don’t think, just BE.

Your friends will exceed your expectations in terms of love, sympathy, friendship, and help. Thanks!



2009 - 2010 AHS Sponsorship Agreement & HerbFest Vendor Booth Registration

Celebrate Austin Herb Society October Herb Awareness Month Join us at our annual HerbFest event

Saturday, October 10

Sunset Valley Farmers Market

Choose the following:

- AHS Annual Sponsor Membership: \$85.00
- Additional HerbFest Vendor Booth:
10 x 10 Vendor Booth: \$35.00
-OR-
10 x 20 Vendor Booth: \$70.00

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Your fee is a fundraiser. There will be no refunds. HerbFest goes on rain or shine.

Sponsorship payments are due by August 15 in order to be listed in the brochure.

Make checks payable to:

Austin Herb Society, Inc.

Mail this form and check to:

Cindy Boyle

380 Kaanapali Lane

Bastrop, TX 78602

Please review your information on our website:

http://www.austinherbsociety.org/?section=sponsors&topic=visit_sponsors (If link doesn't work, cut/paste this in your browser.)

List any changes here:

Business Name	
Street Address	
City, State, Zip	
Phone	
Website	
Contact Name	
Email	
Business description or tagline	

