



HERBAL GREETINGS

A Wonderful New Year 2003...is upon us all. We'll be seeing new plants and herbs in the catalogs that we can peruse on cold, windy days and very soon there will be new bedding plants to purchase and take home from the nurseries. Winter in Austin gives us little time to rest, investigate and decide on changes to our gardens and too little time to contemplate new ideas for both the Herb Garden at Zilker Botanical Gardens and at Mayfield Park. But we need take this opportunity to envision new ideas for our own 'Herb Society' and to reorganize the way we have our festivals and to incorporate new ideas for seminars for next year. A new 'Action' Committee is being formed and we need volunteers to give it life. There are lots of wonderful ideas that have come up and need exploration so please volunteer your time and expertise on this new and exciting committee.

In addition, a new section for the existing Zilker Herb Garden is in the planning stages. Paula Middleton has been asked to come up with a drawing and plan to complement the existing herb garden and 'Rosemary'. More information will be presented as this is developed. Sandra Holland, MaryAnn Somers, Nancy Wackerbarth and myself are currently working on the project at this time. We are hoping that we can get our Sponsors as well as our Members involved. If you would like to be part of this committee please let me know. Everyone is encouraged to volunteer and be an integral part of YOUR Austin Herb Society.

Herbally yours,
Michelle Chaput, President

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday, January 7th

General Meeting, Zilker Botanical Garden, 9:30 am. Dan Hosage from Madrone Nursery presents "Botanists of Texas, 1825 to Present".

Thursday, January 9th (Note Date Correction)

Study Group, Zilker Botanical Garden, 7 PM. Carrie Boyles, AHS member and owner of ScentGarden, presents a program on "Aromatherapy".

Friday, January 17th

Pressed Flower Note Cards. Learn how to make these lovely cards. Call Ellen Zimmerman at 301-5838 to reserve a spot. Space is limited.

Tuesday, January 28th

Mayfield Park Work Day – Join us on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Please think positive thoughts about the weather, we don't work when it is raining or freezing. However, the December rains saturated the ground, making it impossible to plant. And while the plants and beds are in good shape, we do need to put in some new plants in January. Bring trowels and pruning shears. Call Anna Prothro for information, 476-8025.

Thursday, February 20th

An Herbal Cooking Demo by Cindy Phillips and Vee Fowler will be held at the home of Jan Bland. Space is limited. Call Ellen Zimmerman at 301-5838 for reservations.

Attention all Herb Lovers

You are cordially invited-**Susan Wittig Albert** will be signing her new book, *Indigo Dying*, the latest in her popular mystery series starring China Bayles, herbalist and part-time sleuth. She'll be at Book People, 6th & Lamar, on Wednesday, **January 8th**, at 7pm. Austin Herb Society members are requested to come at 6:30 pm so we can be nicely set-up and (possibly) chat with the author. The Austin Herb Society has been specifically invited as Ms. Albert's favorite charitable organization for this event. Mark this on your calendar!

OPPORTUNITIES

Calling all Cooks

The Austin Herb Society, along with the Austin Pond Society, will host the **January 14th** meeting of the Austin Area Garden Council. Our turn for this event comes up every two years. If you can help furnish food for this meeting, contact Judith Craft at 451-2064(home), 478-2667(work) or dunstone@austin.rr.com

Get Growing and Keep Going Symposium

In February, AHS will have a booth of ideas for educational activities for children involving herbs. This is a great opportunity to help the Austin Community. Contact Lydia Noble at 266-7174 or lyd@austin.rr.com.

Help Needed at Zilker Botanical Gardens:

On December 10th Michelle Chaput, Anna Prothro and Joyce Billings attended the AAGC meeting to present a check for \$5000 from the Austin Herb Society that was raised through HerbFest 2002. Even with this wonderful donation from us, Zilker Botanical Gardens needs your help both as volunteers and donations. This year ZBG really needs our help in maintaining the beds, planting and watering, working the gift shop and money to implement all the educational programs that it is becoming nationally known for. To help out in anyway please contact Tomye Zittner at 477-8672. As you all know this year the AAGC is getting even less help from the City and Parks Dept. to implement all the programs and to maintain this facility. It's time to roll up your sleeves and help out this wonderful botanical center. What would we all do without Zilker being the garden that it's become? Thanks so much, Michelle Chaput

Keep Our Society Strong and Active, Volunteers are needed in a variety of positions this year. The following positions are open:

1. Chairperson(s) for both Mayfield Park and Zilker Herb Garden. Two positions are open. This person(s) will create a volunteer committee to work the herb garden. You don't need to have a lot of gardening experience just a willing spirit to do this job and two or three hours each month. It is a lovely experience and lots of fun. These positions can both be co-chaired.

2. Vice President for Sponsors also needs a chairperson. This person will send out letters to our current Sponsors and potential Sponsors and follow them up with a phone call. You will get lots of assistance in this position. Having a computer and typing skills makes this job easy. Also, this position is often a shared position or 'co-chaired' making it much easier. You'll get to know more about our club and sponsors in this position.

3. Action Committee needs a chairperson or persons and volunteers. You will investigate new ideas for festivals and seminars and determine how to implement them.

If you'd like to serve on the Board of Directors or on one of the various committees please contact Michelle Chaput at president@austinherbsociety.org or 343-7677.

SPONSOR NEWS

Correction: The phone number for **Gardens** is 451-5490.

Many Thanks To

...**Cindy Phillips** for coordinating the Holiday Bazaar. It was delightful this year as always and the food was wonderful. Thanks goes out to **Roberta Showerman** and **Judith Craft** and all those who brought edible delights to share with us all.

We also encourage our members to bring a favorite dish to share each month with everyone. Please call Roberta Showerman at 442-8018 and let her know what you're planning to bring!

...**Nancy Wackerbarth, Michael Zitzvancih** and **Michelle Chaput** who turned out to decorate our tree this year at Zilker Botanical Gardens. It was full of sparkling ornaments, herbs, fruit and pinecones and was a lovely tree. Hopefully you all got a chance to see it.

...**YOU** for making our first Holiday Party a wonderful success. This well attended event was a first for the Austin Herb Society. It was held at the festively attired home of President **Michelle Chaput**. It was a pleasurable and memorable experience for all who attended and enabled us to get to know each other a quite bit better too. Next year please plan to attend. It's a night not to be missed!

LIBRARY BLUES

These books are missing from our library:

Taylor's 50 Best Herbs and Edible Flowers

Complete Guide to Herbal Medicines

The Herb Book by John Lust,

Back to Eden

Successful Gardening A to Z Perennials

These books are overdue:

Butterflies - Peterson's Field Guide

*Dr. Pitearn's Complete Guide-Nat. Health
for Dogs and Cats*

The Complete Guide to Herbal Medicines by
Charles W. Fetrow,

Landscaping with Herbs

Neil Sperry's Complete Guide to Texas Gardening

*Native Texas Plants: Landscaping Region by
Region*

The Herbarist

Check your shelves and please **immediately** return books to Dorothea Mims. You can contact Dorothea at 258-9364 or drmims@sbc.global.net.

Herb Extravaganza

The 4th Annual Herb Extravaganza, sponsored by the Cameron County Master Gardener Association, will be held at the Event Center in Brownsville Texas on **February 8, 2003**. The keynote speaker will be Deni Bown, author, photographer and herbalogist from England speaking on "Key Herbs for Health, Vitality and Longevity"

Austin Herb Society members Gwen Barclay and Madalene Hill, authors of *Southern Herb Growing* will speak on "Herbs for Festive Occasions." There will also be a number of demonstrations and exhibits. The event includes an herbal lunch, herb plant sale, demonstrations and herb and garden bookstore by Lucia's Garden of Houston.

Seating is limited. For more information contact Diane at (956) 364-1998 or email dcox2@worldnet.att.net.

Nasturtiums

Michele Chaput

These lovely edible herbs add to our winter gardens and containers. They thrive in cool temperatures. Plant the big seeds and keep them watered and in the sun. Shelter them when the temperatures start to freeze. You can plant them in the early fall or later in the early spring to have a beautiful and taste tempting herb to brighten even the gloomiest day.

Nasturtiums are native to Peru and Mexico and are related to watercress. They have the same peppery tang. They have a high C content too.

Website Watch

Try visiting some of these websites gardening and herbal information and inspiration:

To find recipes for battling your garden's pests and problems as well as monthly advice for Austin gardens go to The Natural Gardener at:

<http://www.naturalgardeneraustin.com>

To see photos of medicinal herbs visit The University of Washington Medicinal Garden at:

<http://nnlm.gov/pnr/uwmhg/index.html>

Visit the website of the popular KLRU television show, Central Texas Gardener, and discover a wealth of information, including yummy recipes from Trisha Shirey:

<http://www.klru.org/ctg>

To learn more about Zilker Botanical Garden, read past issues of *Down the Garden Path* or find a listing of clubs that belong to The Austin Area Garden Council, go to: <http://www.zilker-garden.org>

Herbal Forum in Round Top

The 8th Annual Herbal Forum at Round Top, Texas will be held on **Saturday, March 22** with optional workshops on Friday. Brochures will be mailed in early January. Contact Gwen Barclay at 1-979-249-5283 or gwenbarclay_herbs@hotmail.com if you are not already on the mailing list.

Zilker Garden Festival Tickets Available!

Don't forget to purchase **tickets** to the Zilker Garden Festival! Although this fun event isn't until March 29th and 30th, tickets are already for sale. Anna Prothro will have them at our January meeting or call her at 476-8025 to arrange to pick up some tickets. The advance price is \$3.00. Tickets at the gate are \$5.00!

The Eternal Pomegranate

Sara Moore

Suppose there was a plant that was easy to grow in hot, dry, poor soil; that yielded pigments for dye and astringent and estrogen-like compounds for medicine; and that produced a mysteriously beautiful red fruit, bursting with seeds and sweet juice. And suppose that fruit passed from the hand of one beloved goddess to another over thousands of years, kept company with Spanish queens, traveled to the New World with conquistadors, and all the while inspired artists, wordsmiths, and storytellers.

Such a plant exists and is none other than the pomegranate, *Punica granatum*, one of the first plants to come under cultivation in the Middle East. Perhaps because the fruit's leathery rind resembles ruddy skin, and because of the abundance of seeds inside with their fleshy, juicy seed coats, the fruit became a ready symbol for uterine fertility, and ultimately for spiritual regeneration and eternal life. At the same time, the fruit is strange and unlike any other (because of its unique flower and fruit, botanists place the pomegranate into a single genus family), and perhaps this strangeness accounts for the association of the pomegranate with death as well as life.

Here are just a few of the artistic roles played by the pomegranate: first and foremost, in artistic renderings, it appears in the hands of the great earth goddess Demeter, and later in the hand of the Virgin Mary, or sometimes in the hand of the infant Jesus. Artifacts from the Egyptian New Kingdom include alabaster cosmetic jars carved into the shape of a pomegranate, and as in Greece, the pomegranate appears in the hand of ancient statues of goddesses.

The pomegranate was the emblem of the city of Granada, which derived its name from the pomegranate, and as such was attached to the royal family of Spain. (Pome = apple; granate = seedy). The unfortunate Catherine of Aragon, princess of Spain and first queen of Henry VIII, wore the badge of the pomegranate. Their daughter Mary Tudor, half sister of the future Elizabeth I, wore the same badge to underscore her Spanish ties and to repudiate her father for casting her

mother aside. Spanish aristocrats decorated their jackets with tiny silver pomegranates, and when they wore them in the New World, they were copied by Navajo silversmiths. The motif evolved into the familiar "squash blossom" pendants on Navajo necklaces.

Classical balustrades are modeled after the calyx of the young pomegranate flower, and the very word "balustrade" derives from the Greek word "balaustion," meaning the pomegranate flower. The very fact that such a word exists indicates that this plant had special standing.

The pomegranate is common in Austin's older neighborhoods. If you want to give the pomegranate a try, put a dwarf variety in a pot on the patio. It will respond well to topiary work if you wish, and for a tiny investment, you can reap a rich crop of history and romance.

Sara is a member of The Herb Society of America and volunteers at the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center.



Austin Herb Society

2002-2003 Officers

President	Michelle Chaput	343-7677	president@austinherbsociety.org
Past President	Kim Lehman	707-0113	kim.lehman@sbcglobal.net
1 st VP Programs	Cindy Phillips	264-2779	cindyphillips@imagicmail.com
1 st VP Field Trips	Ellen Zimmermann	301-5838	ellen@ezherbs.net
1 st VP Sponsors	Cindy Burrows	250-2147	dburrows1@austin.rr.com
2 nd VP Study Group	Vee Fowler & Eloise Doherty	345-0719 927-8478	engdesign@grandecom.net
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4 th VP Publications	Kris Hands & Ann Wilson	260-7640 453-7815	starbuckmine@hotmail.com e.l.wilson@ieee.org
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Zilker Herb Garden			

Looking for back issues of Potpourri? Find them on our website at www.austinherbsociety.org under "News". The September issue has a complete listing of programs for 2002-2003

To contribute articles or announcements to Potpourri send them to info@austinherbsociety.org or call Ann Wilson at 453-7815

The Austin Herb Society, Inc. has been organized exclusively for the purposes of providing education regarding the benefits of cultivating and using herbs to promote better health and well-being, encouraging the growth and use of herbs for many beneficial purposes, and providing charitable and volunteer support to community gardens, libraries and/or other community projects.

Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only. It is not meant to diagnose, treat, or replace the advice of a health professional

Austin Herb Society 2002/2003 Sponsors

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** 10% Discount for AHS members

Be sure to thank our sponsors when you visit their establishments this year, check www.austinherbsociety.org for news and updates in our sponsor listings



The Austin Herb Society, Inc

Zilker Botanical Garden

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