



Hot, Wet Herbal Greetings to All!!

The heat of summer is upon us and we are close to our yearly sabbatical from another wonderful season of sharing and entertainment at AHS. We have truly enjoyed the honor of presiding over the meetings, soaking up and sharing all the 'herbal' wisdom and getting to know AHS members and friends. We can hardly wait until next season!

There is a meeting in July but after that, until meetings start again with our September Members' Luncheon, bring your friends and family and check out how the Vee Fowler Native Texas Herb Garden is filling out! We'll all be looking to catch some shade in the coming months of Texas summer sizzle. How about a shady picnic at Laguna Gloria and a stroll around Mayfield Gardens? Your volunteerism is always needed and appreciated at these two gardens that AHS fosters. Put in some volunteer time and you'll have some bragging rights when you bring friends to visit. You can say, "I helped grow that!" and you know the saying around these parts; "It ain't braggin' if it's true."

Summer picnics are a great time to use the abundance of summery herbs from our gardens to cook with and keep us fresh! Rosemary and garlic add so much flavor to baked chicken and it's great cold. Add marjoram to spring lamb or burgers for added zest. Snip some fresh chives into your Independence Day potato salad. Basil and mint come in many varieties and are easy and exotic for spicing up everything summery, from fruit salads to iced teas. Make an icy melon ball salad with fresh mint leaves for a taste of Morocco or even use one of the many varieties of fresh basil if you're really adventurous. Try some lemon basil in your lemonade or make a tomato and basil salad Mediterranean style!

And of course, don't forget the chile peppers to heat you until you feel cool again. Make some fresh pico de gallo with your favorite chile peppers; add cilantro and you have a winner! Try making a fresh mango or pineapple salsa with chiles, chopped Texas sweet onions, red onion, and cilantro. Yum! Bring your herbal successes to the table at our fall AHS meetings or to the AHS culinary group. Have a wonderful summer and *hasta luego* – see you soon!

Cindy Phillips and Andra Millian
Co-Presidents AHS

Tuesday, July 3, Monthly Meeting, 9:30am-12:00 at Zilker Garden Center

Member Give and Take

In this, our last meeting of the summer, we will have an exchange of seeds that we have harvested over the year, herbs we've cut and dried for teas, etc., and cuttings we've taken. We will also exchange tips and ideas and things we have learned in our gardening endeavors. There will be a Program Idea sheet passed around as we want your input for next year's programs. Whether you have an idea for a program or a particular speaker that you would like to hear, we want to hear it. Come if you want to share or if you just want to listen.

No Culinary Group meeting this month

The group had a lovely lunch at AHS sponsor Eastside Café in June and started planning for our first (hopefully annual) Holiday Tea to be held in conjunction with the Holiday Bazaar in December. We're planning on having a nice selection of teas served by our tea ladies, sweet and savory treats, and comfortable seating for sipping tea, listening to music and chatting with friends in between shopping with our talented members.

No Study Group

Just a reminder that we won't have study groups anymore. We will reinstate field trips so watch this space and pick up an AHS brochure for 2007-2008 when they become available in September.

Zilker Park Herb Gardening Day. Call Judith at 944-2787 or Michelle at 343-7677 to volunteer to help out in the Zilker Herb Garden or the Vee Fowler Native Texas Herb Garden. Judith says her schedule is flexible this summer so you can probably find a time when she will meet you there.

Mayfield Park Gardening Day. Call Julie Crouch at 339-0193 to find out when she'll be working at Mayfield. This is a nice shady place to help out and get a little exercise in the bargain.

AHS Business, Updates and Related Announcements

Thank You!

Thanks to Gabrielle Matthieu for her introduction to Traditional Chinese Medicine, Harmonizing Through Herbs, at the June meeting. And thanks to member Ellen Zimmermann for her very knowledgeable Herbal Tip of the Month on *Vitex agnus-castus*, chaste berry. It's one of our wonderful and beautiful herb trees to add to your garden if you don't already have one. Remember that the Herbal Tip of the Month is every member's opportunity to shine by sharing something you know about with the group.

¡FIESTA! September Member Luncheon

If you have never been to the AHS September Members Luncheon, it is one of the highlights of the year. You think the food is good at the regular meetings? Imagine when we ALL bring something yummy and fill up the tables in the library as well as the ones in the meeting room.

Austin's own **Lucinda Hutson** will be the speaker at the luncheon and we are going to celebrate the start of our fall-spring season with a fiesta using recipes from her book, *The Herb Garden Cookbook: the Complete Gardening and Gourmet Guide*. If you don't have a copy, and you don't want to wait to buy one autographed by Lucinda at the September luncheon because you need a recipe before then, you can get one at the AHS book corner at the July meeting. Or you can get recipe ideas from the book from Pam Bell. Pam needs to know if you are coming and if you are bringing a guest so she can plan the seating and make sure there is enough food. If you bring food, you get into the luncheon for free. Otherwise it costs \$5 per person. If you bring a guest, bring two dishes and you both get in free. So let Pam know as soon as possible by emailing her at Hbell5@austin.rr.com or by calling her at 894-0767.

You won't want to miss this. In addition to great food and a lovely speaker, you get a chance to dress up in your colorful duds and *partay* the south of the border way!

Your Book Corner

In addition to Lucinda's, the AHS book corner has other local authors' cookbooks. Want to find a sweet treat for the December Holiday Tea? Pick up *The Pastry Queen: Royally Good Recipes from the Texas Hill Country's Rather Sweet Bakery & Café* by Rebecca Rather and Alison Oreson. Need a way to use all those 'maters and chiles you're growing? How about Robb Walsh's *Tex-Mex Cookbook: A History in Recipes and Photos*. Too hot to cook or just not interested? Well, if you've got a

garden, you've probably got some bugs with all this rain we've been getting. Maybe you need *Texas Bug Book: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* by C. Malcolm Beck and Howard Garret. These guys know insects and how to get rid of them the safe and natural way. Been looking for that ultimate Texas herb book? You can get that from AHS too. It's called *Southern Herb Growing*. Don't let the title fool you, herb mavens Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay wrote it for us Texas herbies, even though it also works for folks who live other places in the south. You get a great discount on these books so do your part to help clear the shelves so Susan and Robin can get some new titles in time for our holiday shopping this fall.

Book Reviews

I've been propagating plants since I was a bitty thing when my mom showed me that putting the top of a carrot and a little water in a jar lid on the window ledge would result in edible greenery. I quickly progressed to sticking any seed I could get my hands on into whatever soil was around. I've grown more new plants from leaves and pieces of leaves and broken off pieces of plants than I can count and I'm currently nurturing a 3' grapefruit tree that grew from a sprouted seed that I found in a fruit I was eating. So I guess it's no wonder that I find plant propagation books fascinating.

My latest find is *The American Horticultural Society Plant Propagation* (DK Publishing, 1999, ISBN 0-7894-4116-0) edited by the appropriately named Alan Toogood. This is an extravagantly illustrated, step-by-step manual for the many ways of starting plants, from seeds to root division to separating bulbils to taking cuttings and layering. After a short introduction to how Mother Nature does it, the book covers tools and equipment, appropriate growing media, propagation climates, plant problems and the importance of hygiene.

The really spectacular thing about this book though is that it addresses specific propagation techniques for more than 1500 individual plant genera. Plants are grouped by type (e.g., trees; shrubs and climbing plants; perennials; annuals and biennials; cacti and succulents; bulbous plants; and vegetables). The best propagation methods for the group are discussed then each genus is addressed with tips on propagation and soil type and any special requirements for success.

So if you're leaving a place where you've lived for years and you can't bear to leave all your plants behind but you can't dig them all up and take them with you, or you're staying put and you need a new hobby or just want to dabble in starting new plants so you can share with friends, this may be the book for you. –Gayle Engels

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