

Summer 2008

Herbal Greetings, fellow Herbies,

Apologies for the length of this newsletter. There's a lot of great things happening, so please read to the end, since this letter is taking the place of the Potpourri, until we find a volunteer editor.

### **HAPPY 25<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY, Austin Herb Society**

The Austin Herb Society starts our 25<sup>th</sup> year as an Austin Area Garden Council Garden Council club this September. On Tuesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will greet our year with a Tea Tasting presented by tea expert Amy March of the Steeping Room. We will meet in the Zilker Garden Center. PLEASE BE SURE TO RSVP for yourself and guests, and also remember to VOLUNTEER to help, as well. Fun is guaranteed. You may renew your membership or sign up as a new member at the event.

### **AHS EVENTS TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR:**

Saturday October 4 2008 - AHS HERBFEST @ Sunset Valley Farmer's Market – VOLUNTEER at our booth, Sign up for a BOOTH of your own. This is a great event with an AHS information booth featuring speakers and herbal information. There will be plethora of wonderful herbal, organic, and interesting products. Sunset Valley Farmer's Market is said to be the largest in Texas, and is a great Austin experience.

Saturday October 11 - HERB DAY at American Botanical Council – another opportunity to volunteer at the AHS BOOTH, or have a BOOTH of your own. Sponsor ABC is an international herbal research organization with have wonderful gardens. You are sure to learn something and have fun, too. Contact Cindy Boyle to sign up for our booth, or the ABC office 926-4900 to learn about having a booth.

September 6, – November 30 - DINOLAND will feature BIG DINOSAUR Sculpture in the gardens. There will be lots of tours and special events, mostly staffed by AAGC volunteers. Docents, ticket takers, water sellers and others are needed in 4 hour shifts. Visit the Zilker website at [www.zilker garden.org](http://www.zilker garden.org) and visit the support section to sign up, or call 477 8672.

FEBRUARY 21, 2009 Our annual AHS SEMINAR will feature renowned mystery writer Susan Wittig Albert, whose protagonist China Bayles runs a fictional tea shop and herb business in a nearby fictional Texas town. We will be using some of China's recipes. Susan's books are full of herbal information and lore, with memorable and sympathetic characters and a fine mystery to boot. We expect a great crowd of her many followers, so put this date on your 2009 calendar NOW.

### **ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES:**

GARDEN in our ZILKER and MAYFIELD gardens. Working in these gardens is a great way to learn about herbs, and there is usually something to take home, too. If you are new to gardening in the area, it is a great way to learn what thrives here in the summer heat.

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AHS maintains 2 gardens in Zilker and one in Mayfield Park:

- 1) The Rosemary Herb Garden and Vee Fowler Native Herb Gardens. Our gardens here include herbs from all over the world, and native herbs of Texas. If you are new to the area, here's a great way to learn what thrives here. Judith works most Fridays at the garden. Contact Judith Craft [jecraft@grandecom.net](mailto:jecraft@grandecom.net) to volunteer or sign up at a meeting
- 2) Mayfield Park, a historic Austin house with an English cottage garden, where we maintain a large herb garden. Contact Julie Crouch [am2ouzel@juno.com](mailto:am2ouzel@juno.com) or sign up at a meeting to volunteer on the New Work Day - THIRD THURSDAY of each month.

THE AHS CULINARY GROUP meets on the third Friday of each month at the AMERICAN BOTANICAL COUNCIL to share herbal recipes, food, and information. Each member is expected to bring food and participate as a presenter. Meeting with this great group of herbal cooks will sharpen your herbal cooking skills. Contact Sandra Holland [Sandra\\_hollandjr@yahoo.com](mailto:Sandra_hollandjr@yahoo.com)

#### STILL NEEDED

- A Potpourri Editor to put together our newsletter
- A person or persons to put together and give short (less than 5 minutes) Herb of the Month and Culinary Tip of the month presentations
- A Publicity Chair to collect and disseminate info about our events  
Contact Cindy Phillips [cphillips78669@yahoo.com](mailto:cphillips78669@yahoo.com) to inquire about the above events.
- Speakers for the Speakers Bureau. Speakers Bureau matches up speakers with sponsors, clubs, businesses, and events that contact us for a speaker. If you are interested, contact Brenda di Simone with information on topics and types of programs you can present, your credentials, how far you are willing to travel, if you ask for a speaker's fee and how much, if so. [Brenda.desimone@gmail.com](mailto:Brenda.desimone@gmail.com)

#### **AHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS NEWS: recent decisions:**

- 1) Elected Gayle Engels a lifetime member for her contributions to the club, including holding the posts of Programs Chair, Potpourri Editor, Seminar Chair, and speaker for the club. Gayle has recently moved to Portland Oregon, but vows to return for visits. Thanks Gayle for your contributions.
- 2) Voted GAS REIMBURSEMENT for members who are on Bona Fide AHS business trips over 20 miles. Contact Cindy Phillips [cphillips78669@yahoo.com](mailto:cphillips78669@yahoo.com) for more information.
- 3) Hired member Paula Middleton to maintain our website. Contact AHS at [presidentaustinherbsociety@yahoo.org](mailto:presidentaustinherbsociety@yahoo.org) to submit information, articles or photos to our website.
- 4) Purchased a new sign for our Zilker Garden.
- 5) Purchased bricks on the Walk of Friends in memory of Eloise Doherty and Mary Albrecht.
- 6) Created a new post, VP of Internal Communications held by Jan Bland, for coordinating and directing email messages sent to AHS.

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**TIPS and INFO from our Summer Meetings:**

For our June meeting we asked members to wear hats, bring tips for gardening, recipes, and herbal lore. Only three people wore hats, Cindy Phillips in her poke bonnet, Roberta Showerman in a pretty straw, and Susan Norwood. Susan won the contest with her own custom made hat combining a visor and a placemat.

Here are a few of the hints and info offered:

- 1) For Poison Ivy - Gan Mao Ling, an internal Chinese herbal remedy; bathing in Naptha Soap available at hardware stores; ice; aloe vera; the inside of a banana skin; a clay poultice used within 6 hours. Eating a small leaf each day to inoculate yourself against poison ivy was NOT recommended, as one person known to our group developed a systemic reaction when trying that.
- 2) Mary of Purple Gate Herb Farm reported that the leaves of American Beauty Berry have recently been found to be better than DEET as an insect repellent.
- 3) A gardener's tip – Polident cleans your nails, says Pam Bell
- 4) Culinary tips: watermelon rinds may be used like squash in soup. To use lavender or rosemary in a dessert recipe, blend it with the recipe's sugar. Freeze selected herbs in with wine in an ice tray to use in soups and sauces.
- 5) Herbal Drinks – to make your own carbonated drinks, make a simple syrup infused with ginger, mint, lemon mint, lemon grass, or other favorite beverage herbs and store it in the refrigerator. Use it by stirring it into sparkling water to it to taste.
- 6) Salad Spicer – add a few thinly cut strips of fresh herbs like basil, dill, thyme, mint, or rosemary to your green, pasta, or fruit salads.
- 7) Got lots of Mint? Here's a cooling Mojito recipe:  
Muddle 3 to 5 mint sprigs in a glass with 1 tsp sugar. Fill the glass with ice, add 2 oz of rum, a dash of triple sec, juice of ½ a lime, and top it off with sparkling water. Garnish with lime and mint. Don't drink too many.

Speaker at our July meeting was sponsor Ellen Zimmermann, who presented her Dynamic Dozen herbs for our area. Try these in your garden – Purple Coneflower, Chaste Tree, Passionflower, Garden Sage, Aloe Vera, Horehound, Mullein, Rosemary, Lemon Balm, Gotu Kola, Comfrey, and Calendula.

Parting advice – try herbs, particularly natives, in your landscape, garden, or containers. You will find that with very little care, they can weather even the hot weather we have been experiencing this summer.

Grow good – Cindy Phillips and Andra Millian, co-presidents, Austin Herb Society