



NEWSLETTER OF THE MASON-DIXON UNIT
OF
THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA

WILD THYMES

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 11

DECEMBER 2009 - JANUARY 2010

NEW YEAR GREETINGS

Dear Folks,

As I was reviewing the calendar to identify monthly newsletter submission deadline dates, the fact that we were already more than half way into the first month of the new year, which is actually 1/26th of 2010, jumped out at me.

With the advent of a new year, did you go through the typical end of the year/beginning of the year motions? Did you make any resolutions?

In this day and age of "too much" to own, manage, eat, do, or commit to, perhaps you are looking to simplify. (If you ate too much, see page 8). If you have too many obligations on your home front, perhaps you can delegate or eliminate so that you can make more time for yourself. Outside the house obligations can be minimized by enlarging your vocabulary so you can access this sentence when others ask you to be a joiner or to take on responsibilities: "Thank you for thinking of me, but I am not available at this time." As to your current outside of home commitments, ask yourself, "What benefits do I get out of my membership?" Then revise your commitments, as necessary.

Taking my own advice, I skipped resolutions, but asked myself about membership benefits of the groups I participate in. I concluded that I actually get CASH from M-D U. Now you weren't thinking about the ordinary dictionary meaning of CASH, were you? I am talking about the acronym, CASH, and I am very happy with this benefit. So, I'm planning on maintaining my M-D U membership to keep my CASH coming. If you are interested in CASH, meet me here next month, and I will elaborate.

My wish for you this year is lots of time for yourself so that you can plan for the spring, plant, nurture, and then spend your time with your herbs!

For the moment though, stay warm.

Herbally yours,

Diane L.M. Wittig, Editor



Dill

Anethum Graveolens

Herb of the Year

Did you know . . .
that the dill seeds are not true seeds, but tiny aromatic fruits - containing the true seeds?



BIRTHDAYS:

- *January 12, Gerrie*
- *January 23, Pat S.*

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NOVEMBER MINUTES

By Annette Steger, Acting Secretary

After a delightful presentation of Scarborough Fair Herbs by representatives Priscilla Plucinsky and Billie Beadle of the Pennsylvania Heartland Unit, the business meeting was called to order at 8:35 PM. Priscilla and Billie's information included facts, uses, and some myths related to Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme. Additionally, they shared some visuals which we were able to pass around and examine. Also, Priscilla and Billie supplied our refreshments for the evening, including some of the foods they discussed during the presentation.

Treasury Report

Pat H. reported a balance of \$859.28 in our treasury.

Old Business

- The October minutes were accepted.
- Issue 75 (2009) of "THE HERBARIST" has some very good articles.
- November 21 there will be a program at the Norrisville Library, titled "Bringing Nature Home", which involves Rock Gardens. There is a social at noon, and the meeting is at 1PM.
- Pat S. was again in contact with Brown's Orchards about a possible educational event the weekend of December 5 and 6 at the new Emigsville location. Bay cards would be given out. Pat and Pat can work Saturday, and Shirley and Gerrie can work on Saturday.
- We have contacted Paul Smith Library about a plant exchange in June. There has been no response from them yet.
- Annette was asked by a co-worker to do a presentation about herbs at a Farm Women's Meeting in Dillsburg, in March 2010. She offered to do it on dill since that is the herb of the year for 2010. The Dill Board will be completed by our January meeting.
- April 30, 2010 is a "work day" at the National Herb Garden. It was suggested we could go and help out. No decision was made.

New Business

Welcome is extended to Patti Stinchcomb Guevara who is a new member from south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

Ongoing Business

In keeping with our timeline for preparations in a timely manner, we discussed the Fall 2010 symposium preparations.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 PM.

CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE FOR FALL 2010 SYMPOSIUM

By Pat Herbert, Conference Chair

Herbal History of the Civil War - A Step BACK in thyme



All roads lead to . . .
2634 Emmitsburg Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325



Phone: 717-334-8121 or 800-776-8349

Fax: 717-334-6066

<http://www.eisenhower.com>

UPDATE: I spoke with Mike Elliott (Sales Executive for the Eisenhower Conference Center). I plan to meet with him and Joby (the caterer) on February 2nd to discuss our symposium plans. I need to bring a complete list of all details and all our needs so they can all be put into writing. Please bring any details you may think of to our January 21 meeting so I won't forgot anything. Thanks.



FINANCIAL REPORT

By Pat Herbert, Treasurer

Checkbook balance is \$682.78

Checks written in Nov, Dec 09 were:

- Herb Society of America - \$100 for brick (see above)
- Herb Society of America - \$50 for Patti's membership
- Emig Mansion - \$26.50 for extra guest who did not show



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR--PAT SWEETMAN



Greetings . . .

I just have the best outlook for 2010. I do not know if it is the snow or the seed catalogs coming in or the great new tea I discovered or the fact that I still have Kaliteri oregano and rosemary looking good in the pantry window, but January seems bright and cheery to me . . . and it has snowed a bit about every day . . . I just love it.

The Richters Herb Catalogue came this week, and it is a great one this year. I have found some wonderful new herb plants to order even though they are not going to winter over in our zone. So, I am just going to accept them as annuals and not whine when the first frost of fall does them in.

If you do not get a Richters catalog for some reason, just contact me. I will give you their email address. It is just the best herb catalog to read through.

Dill is our new herb of the year, and I must say that I am much more appreciative of the whole 'herb of the year' idea than before. I was always a stern . . . "I really do not like dill" person. But with being more aware of it and realizing that a couple of recipes my family just loves could not do without dill . . . well, I am glad I am more aware of it.

This new year is bringing a great challenge and a lot of fun and excitement to our group. I am very sure our Fall gathering will be a success in October. I am so looking forward to it. Our great ideas are coming into fruition, and with all the help offered by the other units . . . It is going to be educational and a good time in Gettysburg.

All the best wishes in the coming year for family, health, wealth and great herb gardening.

Pat



FAMILY STORIES FROM A FARM GIRL

The Charlie Brown Christmas Tree

By Annette Steger



Farm life teaches people to be resourceful. One example of that resourcefulness has now become known as the Charlie Brown Christmas Tree. The acreage had fields for crops, pasture fields for the cows to graze during the day, and wooded areas. In addition to the lovely maples that I had shared about earlier, there were pine trees and pine saplings. These were long needled pines with a sparse number of branches, and the clusters of needles were not close together either. However, Dad would choose one of these about six feet tall, cut it, and bring it back to the house. This he placed on the porch next to the front door where he would put a string of lights on it. He then plugged the light cord into the porch light socket. There were no outlets outdoors on the house. Many friends and neighbors watched for that spot of cheer. My nephew, Shawn, has continued the practice and the neighbors have expressed their relief that this practice did not pass away with Dad. It was Shawn who so termed the tree a Charlie Brown Tree.

In case you are curious, the indoor trees were always hemlocks. They were floor to ceiling while Kathie and I were growing up, but later Dad chose a smaller tree each year that would fit on the table. He continued to have a small tree for a few years after Mom died. One of my traditions was to make or purchase a hand made ornament each year for my Mom. I now have some of these on our tree here in Glen Rock.

FIELD TRIP--THE PIT BULL, ASIAN MARKET, & CALICO CAT

By Shirley Smith

My husband says I'm like a pit bull. I won't let go. It's the beginning of December and my flower pots should have been emptied, cleaned, and put away for the winter. They weren't.

My Impatiens and wax begonias were still blooming outside my kitchen door. How could I toss them out?

I held on to the scraggly plants. The flowers were few, pale, and wan, but they still gave me joy. And then it snowed. Oh no! My flowers turned to green slime.

I walked out to my garden to check on my chives, sorrel, parsley, par-cel, lovage, and cilantro. I was still picking and using them until the snow. Great. They were frozen. What did I expect? OK, so I'm an optimistic pit bull.

I started to walk towards my garden bench. I was going to sit and mourn their passing. And there it was—a patch of lemon balm underneath my bench. I wasn't the only one hanging on. I pinched off some leaves and ate them.

So here it is, Winter. I will have to seek herbs elsewhere. It's becoming easier to find them fresh in stores this time of year.

When Diane Wittig, myself, and two other friends went shopping at an Asian market (H Mart, 800 N. Rolling Road, Catonsville, Md. 21228), I found packets of fresh Taiwan basil, thyme, tarragon, rosemary, curry leaves, chives, bay and bunches of dill, just to name a few. We even found herbal toothpaste.

At a wonderful gift shop called Calico Cat (2137 Gwynn Oak Avenue, Baltimore, Md. 21207), I found soy candles with enticing names of Egyptian Bergamot Rose, Zanzibar Cinnamon Almond, Pacific Red Ginger, Wild English Clary Sage, and Thai Lemon grass. There were soaps of Olive Blossom and Coriander, Eucalyptus Aloe, and numerous ones of Lavender.

Many of the items I saw that day, along with my own herbs that I have stored, will help get me through the winter. And I will also be sustained by remembering the taste of lemon balm while standing in the snow.



Shirley in a full-length aisle of fresh herbs



Shirley holding a carton of herbal toothpaste

FIELD TRIP--THE EMIG MANSION

By Diane L.M. Wittig



Pat H., Shirley, Pat S., and Diane (left to right)
in the front of the Christmas Tree in
The Emig Mansion

On a brisk early December Saturday, four M-D U members went to an Afternoon Herbal Tea Luncheon at the Emig Mansion in Emigsville, Pennsylvania. Shirley drove and the others all navigated.

Upon our arrival in the parking area, we saw beautiful stained glass windows in the charming Victorian home. As we entered the home, we were greeted by the pleasant hostess, Sharie. She enthusiastically shared about how she and her husband came from the west coast, purchased Emig Mansion, and put their personal touches on this welcoming 19th century B & B, which had been built in 1810. Sharie graciously showed us the first floor, which had holiday decorations and period antiques.

For our dining experience, we began with a spinach and butter lettuce salad that was dressed with raspberry balsamic vinaigrette. Next were the triangular shaped lemon and ginger scones. Finger sandwiches of almond chicken, pineapple and cream cheese, and smoked salmon were the main course. For a light after main course taste, we were provided skewered fruits and cheese sticks. No meal would be complete without chocolate, herbs, or fruits for closure. To conclude our dining adventure, we indulged in tasty mini-desserts of brownie bites with cream cheese, lavender lemon sugar cookies, and fruit tarts displayed in tiers.

THYMELY NOTE~ HAPPY FIRST BIRTHDAY

By Diane L.M. Wittig

With this issue, *Wild Thymes*, the newsletter of the M-D U, celebrates its one year birthday. The articles and pictures in *Wild Thymes* capture the active involvement of members both within their unit endeavors and while out in the community. Readers of this volume have seen that during the past 12 months M-D U members have taken educational field trips, learned much about herbs at monthly programs, provided educational outreach programs for the community, welcomed new members, taken organizational steps to fulfill the unit's hosting commitment for the Fall 2010 Symposium~ Herbal History of the Civil War - A Step Back in thyme, and still managed to make significant contributions to *Wild Thymes*.

Members may recall that to promote article submission deadlines, dates would be mentioned at meetings and reminder due date emails would follow. Finally, with a year of experience having passed for publishing *Wild Thymes*, there is a better sense of the timeline needed to put out the newsletter. Thus, in order for *Wild Thymes* to be published one week before the monthly M-D U meeting, all the submission deadlines now are consistently set for the first Thursday of each month. A table with submission deadlines and a work column follows.

This table, combined with the 2009-2010 Calendar of M-D U Meetings (in the November Issue), should help all to keep track of M-D U events and *Wild Thymes* commitments.

ISSUE MONTH AND NUMBER		ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE DATE	TOPICS THAT I WILL BE CONTRIBUTING
February	Volume 2, Issue 1	Thursday, February 4	
March	Volume 2, Issue 2	Thursday, March 4	
April	Volume 2, Issue 3	Thursday, April 1	
May	Volume 2, Issue 4	Thursday, May 6	
June	Volume 2, Issue 5	Thursday, June 3	
July	Volume 2, Issue 6	Thursday, July 1	
August	Volume 2, Issue 7	Thursday, August 5	
September	Volume 2, Issue 8	Thursday, September 2	
October	Volume 2, Issue 9	Thursday, October 7	
November	Volume 2, Issue 10	Thursday, November 4	
December-January	Volume 2, Issue 11	Thursday, January 6 (December would be acceptable too :)	

GREAT SOUP--SPICY TOMATO WITH DILL

Submitted by Pat Sweetman-Her take on a Paula Deen Recipe

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup plus 3 tablespoons butter, divided
 1/2 cup Wondra flour
 1 medium onion, diced
 2 cloves garlic, diced
 3 cups canned chicken broth
 1 (29-ounce) can tomato sauce
 1 (29-ounce) can diced tomatoes, with juice

Few dashes of Tabasco sauce
 1/4 cup honey
 1 tablespoon dried dill weed
 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 1 teaspoon chili powder
 1 teaspoon dried basil leaves
 Small hit of balsamic vinegar

DIRECTIONS:

In a 4-quart heavy-bottomed saucepan, **melt** half (5 1/2 tablespoons) of butter.

When melted, **whisk** in the flour and **stir** until very smooth-about 5 minutes.

In a small skillet, **melt** the remaining butter.

Sauté the onion and garlic over low heat until translucent, about 3 to 4 minutes.

Add the onion and garlic to the flour mixture and **combine**.

Slowly **add** the chicken broth, 1 cup at a time, **stirring** well after each addition, and allowing the soup to thicken slightly before adding more broth.

When all the broth is added, **add** the tomato sauce and the diced tomatoes, 1/2 can at a time, **stirring** well and **allowing** the mixture to thicken before adding more.

When all the tomato sauce and diced tomatoes have been added, **season** soup with hot sauce, honey, dill weed, pepper, chili powder, basil, and a small hit of balsamic vinegar.

You can either then **cool** and **refrigerate** to **serve** another day or heat over low flame for 30 to 45 minutes and serve.

STIR FREQUENTLY BECAUSE THE SOUP WILL STICK EASILY TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PAN.

GREAT PIE--MANGO CHUTNEY PIE

Submitted by Pat Sweetman

INGREDIENTS:

8 oz cream cheese
 2 tablespoons Curry powder
 9 to 12 oz jar of Mango Chutney
 (Major Grey's can be found near the catsup at Giant)

1/4 to 1/2 cup Coconut flakes
 1/4 to 1/2 cup chopped fresh green onions
 1/4 to 1/2 cup chopped peanuts
 Pita chips, bagel chips or sturdy crackers

DIRECTIONS:

Combine cream cheese with curry powder. Spread evenly on flat serving plate (a 9" pie plate can be used).

Cover and refrigerate over night.

In the follow order, layer evenly, the Mango chutney, coconut flakes, green onions and peanuts.

Serve with pita or bagel chips or sturdy cracker.

Goes great with Spicy Tomato Soup with Dill.

MUSING ON A GOOD READ—

By Shirley Smith

**The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.**

"The Death of the Flowers".....William Cullen Bryant

I picked up the mail today and started singing Handel's Messiah. Not out loud mind you, just in my head. I find it best not to scare my dogs. So I am silently belting out Hallelujah. Seed catalogs have arrived! It's a frozen, dreary, arctic January day, but the flowers are blooming profusely. Yes, flowers are in full bloom, vegetables are lush and ripe, and herbs are perfectly poised to be picked. They're still only on the pages of the catalogs, but I feel the summer sun on my back already.

I told my husband he needs to get a job. No more of that leisure and enjoying his retirement stuff. I will need a garden cart full of money because I intend on buying every single plant I see on those pages. They are all so vibrant and colorful, spilling over with life and warmth. I want them all. The allure of spring overtakes my good sense. I will eventually be brought back to reality by the balance in my checkbook. But in the meantime, there's a whole catalog just on tomatoes! I wonder if my husband can say, "Welcome to Wal-Mart", without cussing about those damn seed catalogs.



A POST-HOLIDAY HUMOROUS READ-By Author Unknown

'Twas the month after Christmas, and all through the house, nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.

The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I'd taste...all the holiday parties had gone to my waist.

When I got on the scales there arose such a number! When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber),
I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared; the gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared.

The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese. And the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."

As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt, and prepared once again to do battle with dirt---

I said to myself, as only I can--"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So--away with the last of the sour cream dip, get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip.

Every last bit of food that I like must be banished, 'til all the additional ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie--not even a lick, I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.

I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie, I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore---but isn't that what January is for?










Unable to giggle, no longer a riot, HAPPY NEW YEAR to all and to all a good diet!!*

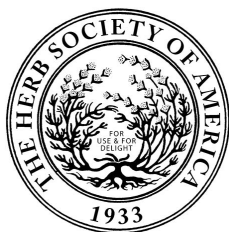
*Perhaps this person could benefit from being at our January 21 meeting where tasty dill-based goodies will be served while dill facts and uses, including ways to enhance food flavors with dill, without adding calories, will be presented--

Just a thought . . . DLMW

2009-2010 MASON-DIXON UNIT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

To give our new members a sense of where we have been and where we are going this year, this calendar is intentionally being included again.

MONTH	FOCUS	RESPONSIBLE
October 	Layered potpourri	Pat Sweetman
November 	Scarborough Fair Presentation	Priscilla Plucinsky and Billie Beadle, PA Heartland Unit
December 	Christmas Tea at the Emig Mansion	Gerrie Snow
January 	Dill presentation	Annette Steger and Diane Wittig
February 	Lotions and Jojoba Oil	Pat Sweetman
March 	Snakeroot	Candy Riddle
April 	Tea	Shirley Smith
May 	Herb Sales	
June To be determined		
July Lemon Balm 	Lemon Balm	Diane Wittig
August To be determined		
September 2010 symposium	Final preparations for the symposium	Mason-Dixon Unit Members
October 2010 symposium	Symposium October 15 & 16	Mason-Dixon Unit Members and other herbies



WILD THYMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASON-DIXON UNIT
OF
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HSA MISSION STATEMENT

The Herb Society of America is dedicated to promoting the knowledge, use and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community.

Calendar of upcoming events

- January 21 **Monthly Meeting of Mason-Dixon Unit at 7:00 pm**
2595 Rehmeysers Hollow Road, Stewartstown, PA
Information: Pat at 717-235-2823
- March 27 **Mid-Atlantic Social Symposium**
Hosted by the North Carolina Unit
Greenville, North Carolina
- April 16-17 **Pennsylvania Herb Festival**
York Expo Center/Memorial Hall, 334 Carlisle Ave., York, PA
Info: <http://www.pennsylvaniaherbfestival.com/services.html>
- May 27-30 **HSA Educational Conference and Annual Meeting**
Lowe's Vanderbilt
Nashville, Tennessee
Information: HSA website
- June 21-22 **28th Annual Herbal Delight Symposium**
Conrad Weiser HS, 347 E. Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA
Information: Barb Jefferis at 610-375-8061 or Mary Ellen Johnston at djohnston47@gmail.com or Jane Brubaker at either 610-372-5011 or JBCollectibles@PennData.com
- Oct. 15-16 **Fall 2010 Symposium**
Hosted by the Mason-Dixon Unit
Eisenhower Hotel and Conference Center, Gettysburg, PA
Information: Pat at patricia.e.herbert@bankofamerica.com

MEMBERSHIP CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MASON-DIXON UNIT

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THINK NEW MEMBERS...THINK NEW MEMBERS...THINK NEW MEMBERS...THINK NEW MEMBERS